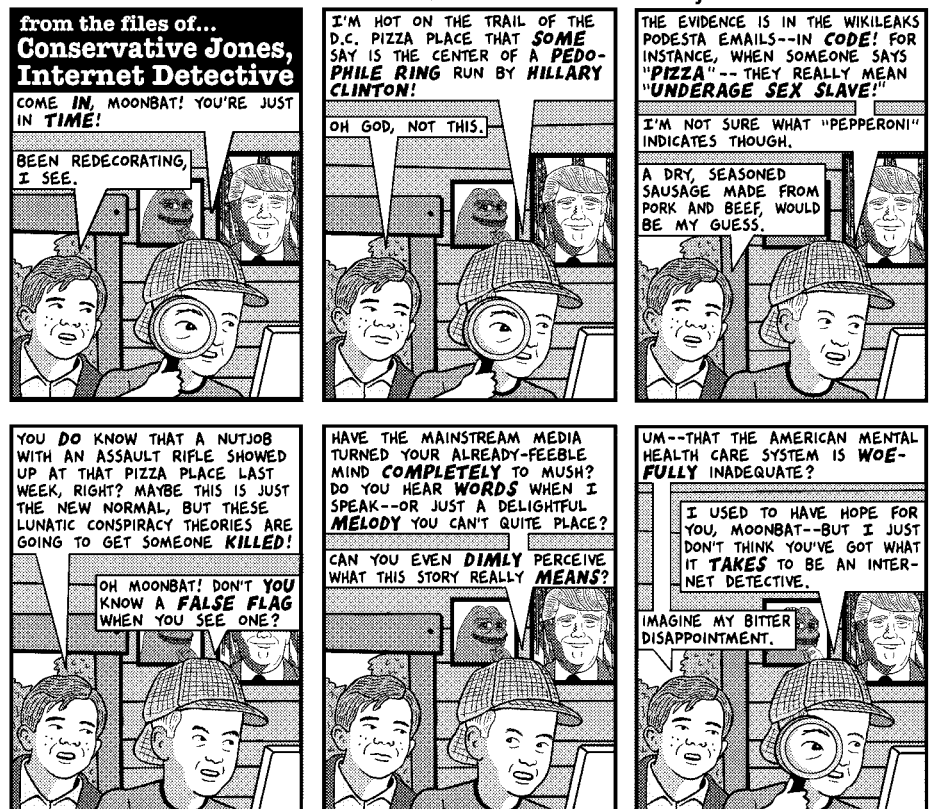


THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



lum we will be borrowing from, go to nyurl.com/zfz6a3y. The struggle continues.

Katie O. and Daniel Williams
Springfield

TOILET POLITICS

Being an open-minded medium, I would like to express my views on a very private subject.

Yesterday, after my third cup of tea at The Beanery in Corvallis, I headed towards the bathroom. There was a woman holding the key, talking to one of the baristas. In my distress, I asked politely: "May I go before you and I will be quick."

She handed me the key and said something that I did not hear, as I was quite focused on the task at hand. Quickly as I could, I performed my act and returned the key to the woman and returned to my conversation with my friend.

A short while later, this same woman stood at my table, handed me the key and stated: "You did not lower the toilet seat!" Neither impolitely nor politely I explained that it is a public toilet and I had no obligation to do so. To which she said, "I told you to lower the seat," and I apologized to her that I don't hear well.

I also noted that the seat was already up when I went in, which she acknowledged. She began to get quite agitated, saying she did not like to touch the toilet seat. I said that I don't, either.

I suggested that there was more going on than with her than just the position of the toilet seat, and she acknowledged this. She left quite upset, leaving me to return the key to its proper place.

Women sit all the time; men sit, let us say, one in three times. We could expect that men and women visit the toilet equally. Therefore, when one approaches the toilet, 12 out of 32 times the seat is up, and 20 out of 32 times the seat is down.

This means that a woman will have to move the seat 12 out of 32 times. The man will have to move the seat three-quarters of the 20 times and one-quarter of the 12 times, or 18 times. If the man lowered the seat after his business, the woman would have to take no responsibility and the man's responsibil-

ity would increase to 24 of 32 visits.

Perhaps this is fair, in that the species need only to move the toilet seat 24 out of 64 times instead of 30 out of 64 times.

But here is something to consider for those, like me, that do not like touching the toilet seat. When the toilet seat is up, one knows that the previous user only touched the seat with his hand. When the seat is down, more often than not, it was touched by someone's ass.

I don't know about anybody else, but my technique is to grab a small piece of toilet paper, lowering the seat if necessary and wiping the seat before I sit on it.

As long as I'm on the subject of public toilets: How about gender-free public toilets? Sinks outside and a series of booths with toilets. I just want privacy while I'm doing my little work, but I don't mind sharing a sink.

P.S. Fold your yoga mat in half before you roll it up. The top will stay cleaner.

Gregg Ferry
Corvallis

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, NOAM

Noam Chomsky turned 88 on Pearl Harbor Day. I urge everyone to listen to or read the transcripts of the *Democracy Now!* broadcasts for Dec. 5-6, where Chomsky talks at *Democracy Now!*'s 20th anniversary party. He clearly describes the seriousness of the corner into which our nation has painted itself by pursuing greed over justice.

Chomsky has been documenting that paint job for well over 40 years. As early as 1988, he predicted the dire consequences of increasing greenhouse gas concentrations. That same year, he predicted the eventual likelihood that the American working-middle classes, abandoned by the corporate-governmental elite, would turn to a supposedly plain-talking demagogue who promised simplistic solutions, especially by blaming minorities and foreigners.

But on *Democracy Now* Chomsky also offers an optimistic assessment of the opportunities for the 99 percent to organize and resist the phony populism of Trump, to resist the increasing concentration of wealth and power already playing out in Trump's promises to the 1 percent and to

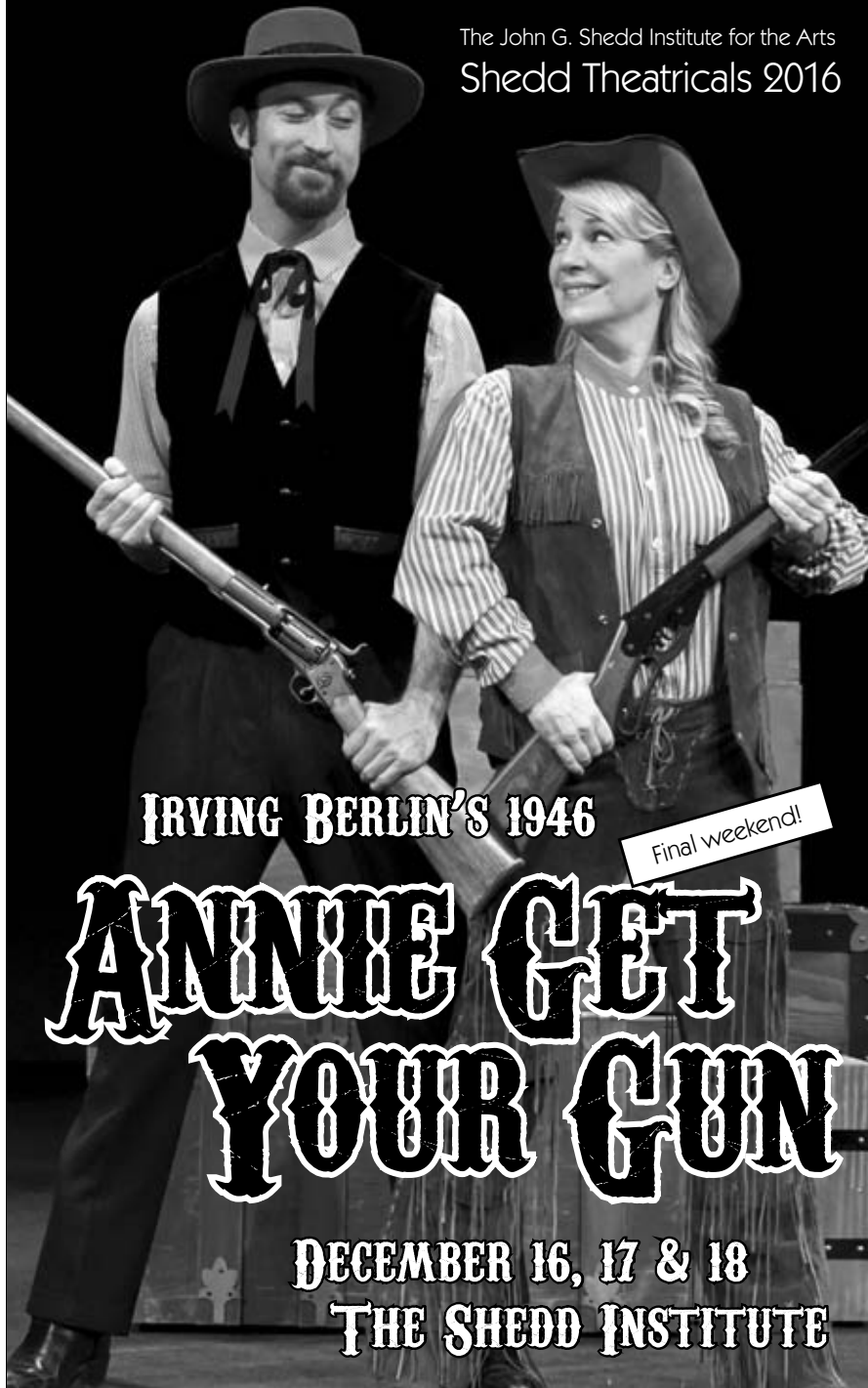
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