

Listen



Singer.
**Jessica
Andrews**
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**PEER PRESSURE
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Hey, four-eyes! Wake up!"

I had been reading my social studies assignment when suddenly I felt a jab in my back.

"You're in my chair. Go sit over there next to your buddy fatso. You two are such losers!" taunted Donnie.

My seventh-grade classmates snickered at Donnie's remarks. Slowly I got up and moved to another chair next to my friend Bill. He grimaced in sympathy at me and gave me a thumbs-up sign. As I stared at my social studies book, a tear rolled out of the corner of my eye and onto my glasses.

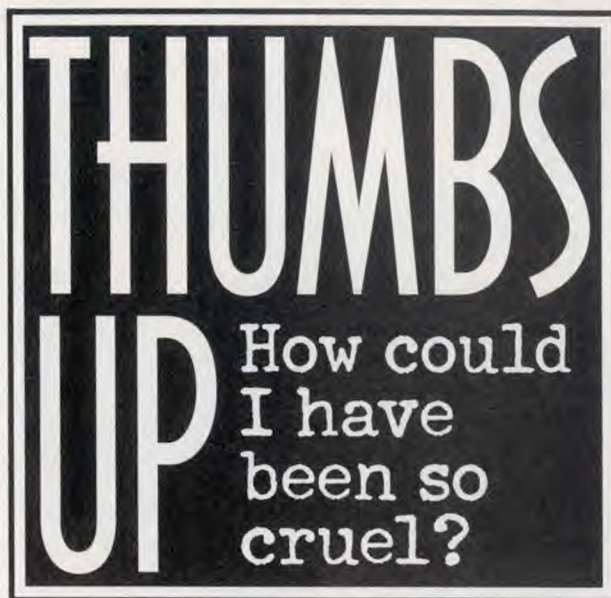
Why did I have to be different? Not only did I have glasses, but I also had braces and made straight A's. Daily I heard such cruel remarks as four-eyes, metal mouth, nerd, and teacher's pet from the other kids.

I enjoyed making good grades and having the teachers think that I was a responsible student. But there were times I would daydream about how nice it would be to be popular like Donnie and his friends. They had a club they called The Skaters, and all the members carried purple and black packs and wore these really awesome black leather jackets. Oh, how I wanted one of those jackets. But I knew that they would never ask me to join them.

After social studies it was time for physical education and softball. Of course, Donnie was chosen to be one of the captains, and he got to choose first. He smirked as he looked around. Then he picked me—first. All right! (Even though everyone thinks I'm a nerd, they all want me on their softball team. (I'd developed a formula for hitting home runs by using the theories of physics.)

Both teams were quickly chosen. Poor Bill was the last one and ended up on the other team.

Our team was the first to bat. The first three batters got on base with singles. Donnie quickly



switched me to the cleanup spot. The bases were loaded. As I selected my bat, Donnie came over to give me some last-minute instructions. He got so close to me that I could see the pores in his nose and smell the onions and ketchup that he'd had on his sandwich at lunch. Donnie quietly said in a menacing tone, "Doug, I want to win this game. You get me a home run." He pretended to swipe some dust off my shoulder and gave me a hard shove, so hard that I fell down. The Skaters burst into jeering laughter.

I picked myself up, and as I walked toward home plate, I looked at Bill in the other dugout. He smiled at me and gave me the thumbs-up sign. I was fuming so much that I didn't use my formula on the first pitch and it was called a strike. Donnie cleared his throat. On the second pitch, I used my formula and calculated the degree of the swing necessary to change the trajectory of the ball to sail over the right fielder's head. *Crrrrack!* The ball sailed over the fence! As I rounded third base and headed for home, my teammates lined up and gave me high fives and swats on the rear. Donnie was yelling and screaming, "All right, Doug! Way to go!"

I glanced over at the other team's dugout. As usual, Bill was sitting by himself. He looked over at me, smiled, and gave me the thumbs-up sign.

Our team was leading by three runs when it was Bill's turn to bat. Donnie and the others snickered as he walked by our dugout. Then Donnie paused and quickly walked over to me. "Does he know your formula?" he whispered.


"Yes. I gave it to him last night," I whispered back.

"You idiot! What were you thinking? Umm, I've got to think of something." He paused for a few seconds, and then exclaimed, "I know! We'll start making fun of him. That should distract him."

"No," I protested, "that's not fair."

Donnie jerked on my arm and said, "You go along with us on this, and I'll see to it that you get into our club!"

As Bill got up to the plate, Donnie and his friends started jeering. "Batter's got a big butt! Batter's got a big butt!"



Bill slowly turned around and looked at me in shock and total disbelief.

Bill ignored them. The first pitch was called a ball, as was the second. Bill continued to ignore the taunts and jeers of my teammates.

As Bill got ready for the third pitch, Donnie angrily yanked on my arm. "Come on, Doug. You're the only one that can distract him. Do it! He's so fat, he can't really be much of a friend anyway!"

I looked at Donnie and then at Bill.

I know what I should do, I thought to myself. I should stand up for what's right and not make fun of Bill.

But then I started thinking about those totally awesome black leather jackets; how good it had felt to have the others cheering for me earlier; black jackets, fitting in; black jackets, belonging; black jackets.

I took a deep breath and started chanting, "Fatty! Fatty! Eight by eight! Couldn't get

through the chicken gate! Fatty! Fatty! Eight by eight! Couldn't get through the chicken gate!"

The whole team quickly picked up the chant. Bill slowly turned around and looked at me in shock and total disbelief. His face turned red; he started to cry and then ran off the field. Of course, that meant our team won.

Donnie and the others were screaming in delight.

But I felt awful. How could I, who had been on the receiving end of so many hurtful and thoughtless remarks, have been so cruel to someone?

I started to run after Bill, but Donnie stopped me.

"All right, Doug! You did it! You really surprised us. It shows how much you want to be one of the gang. What size jacket do you wear?"

For a moment that stopped me. Thoughts kept going around in my head. Thoughts like black jackets, sitting with everyone else at lunch; black jackets, being cool; black jackets, no more "nerd" remarks; black jackets.

But then other thoughts intruded. Thoughts like Bill accepting me unconditionally as his friend for the past five years. And those horrible words that I had said kept ringing over and over in my head.

I looked at Donnie and said, "I can't be part of your group. I was wrong to go along with you and make fun of Bill. I never should have listened to you."

"You'll never be asked to join again, Doug. It'll be back to being the class nerd for you," warned Donnie.

"Fine. I'm used to it anyway. Now I'm going to go apologize to Bill, and see if I still have a friend."

I turned around and there was Bill. He had come back out onto the field and had heard everything.

"Oh, Bill. I'm so sorry. I was such a jerk. Please forgive me," I cried.

Bill looked at me, smiled, and gave me the thumbs-up sign. ▀

ASK GARY

B Y G A R Y L . S O M D A H L

Can you give me any advice on how to make certain my little brother never uses drugs? He's 12, and my parents don't seem to understand how much pressure there is today for kids to try drugs and develop a drug problem. Kathryn

I'm really glad you're looking out for your little brother! Being a good role model is the greatest tool against drug abuse. Let your brother see how wonderful your life is and how you are able to cope with daily stresses and problems without a need to get high. Encourage him to choose friends who have set positive goals for themselves. You might also want to inform him of the bad things that can happen to people involved with chemicals. And don't forget to let him know that you are concerned for his future. Tell him how much you care, and don't forget to show your love for him as often as you can. Hopefully he'll understand and stay drug-free forever.

I can't recall the last time I got stoned on pot, but it's been months. Hardly any of my friends believe me when I tell them I feel better and am happier. How can I convince them that I'm telling the truth? David

Congratulations! It takes a strong will and a positive desire to break free from using drugs.

Don't worry what others think about your decision to change your life for the better. Only you know what a difference it has made. Maybe in time your friends will come to the realization that you are serious about how wonderful you feel since giving up pot and decide to do the same themselves. Until then, keep up the good work and don't quit bragging about the great news. It's definitely something to shout about.

At an all-night dance club for teens last weekend, someone offered me what they referred to as "Special K." Though I declined it and they didn't pressure me, I'm curious what it is. Do you know? I'm 18. Mary Jo

How wise of you to refuse what is also known as K or vitamin K on the streets. Ketamine, its actual name, is a powerful animal sedative used by veterinarians. A close cousin to PCP, Ketamine blocks signals to the brain and produces paranoia and hallucinations. These can be extremely dangerous to the user. Ketamine is considered highly addictive and used mostly by those in their late teens and 20s who frequent all-night dance scenes. Consider yourself smart and responsible for not joining the crowd. You saved yourself a heap of trouble now and in the future. ■



Go ahead, ask Gary his advice on some of those big, serious, touchy questions. This guy enjoys the rough-and-tumble of helping teens with some serious problems. Gary Somdahl is a dad who puts his skills as a licensed youth chemical dependency counselor to the real-world test all the time. His latest book is *Drugs and Kids*.

Send your questions to:

ASK GARY

Listen magazine

55 West Oak Ridge Drive
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.

LISTENING

FEEDBACK FROM READERS

Catching the Cookie Monster

I can remember how much I admired my nursery school teacher. I thought she was so pretty and smart (especially compared to us 3-year-olds). She was tall and slender with long wavy hair that rippled down her back, almost reaching her waist. She treated us all special, and we thought she was wonderful.

One day she invited all of us girls in the class, with our parents' permission, to sleep over at her house. We were all bursting with excitement. The day finally arrived. When we got inside the house, she told us to put our things in the living room by the fireplace. Then she called us into the kitchen so we could bake a batch of chewy chocolate-chip cookies. While they were cooling we went into her backyard to play.

When we came back in there were a few cookies missing, and we couldn't figure out who had taken them until our teacher saw her husband's car in the driveway. We ran around her house shouting, "Where is the cookie monster?" When we found him we all jumped on him and told him to confess. He got on his knees and begged our forgiveness while we all giggled.

I can still remember falling asleep to the sizzling and popping of the fire in the fireplace.

I can't remember my teacher's name, but I will never be able to forget her. When you are little, it's really important to feel safe and loved. She showed all of us that she genuinely cared. Every time I make cookies with my family or friends, I'm reminded of the night we caught the cookie monster; the night I felt so at peace with life.

—Erin Lapayover, 15
New City, New York

A Fall Evening

Trees, their branches alight with colorful leaves,
Sway in the cool autumn breeze.
While a few laughing children dance

And a team of graceful horses prance,
Bouncing merrily all the way.

A girl looks out and sees
Trees swaying in the breeze.
She wishes the nice weather would stay
So children could continue to dance and play.
And then she could sit and watch till
The cool autumn sun sets behind a hill.

Then darkness swirls around this magical place,
And the children are called indoors from the race,
And the girl is left alone at her windowsill
Watching the world that seems so still.

She rests her head against the cool glass and sleeps.

—Mollie McDougall, 12
Camillus, New York

DRUGS

Drugs are bad for your wealth and your health.
You may think you're cool at the time.
You may not know it, but using is a crime.
So please don't do this to yourself.
They'll just make you feel like slime.
You won't have any money—not even a dime.
Don't do drugs and you'll have health and wealth.

—Levi Caudy, 15
Hebron, Nebraska

LEMON DAY

drums an ephemeral beat on dewy green innocence
the sun is raw today
it came from polynesia in a kimono of cirrus clouds
transcending moon and earth
it knows we will wait for its warmth
touch its timbers of light with our expectant fingers
black, white, yellow hands reaching to grasp its
pulpy pith
tell me if i am right or not
because if we can all look at the sun from
inconsonant angles
why can we not look at humans the same way
forget homogeneous existence
and let it be a lemon day—everybody together
under ripe citrus sun
sipping lemonade from each other's cups
moving along to the pulsating cadence of the
ancient strains of
heartbeats together

—Lisa Taddeo, 15
Short Hills, New Jersey

THE CHANGING SEASON



Autumn—what a beautiful season.

Leaves changing color from green to shades of orange, yellow, red, brown . . .

They fall, one by one, and soon the trees are bare, stripped of their autumn beauty.

We come outside with rakes and form heaping piles of color.

Taking turns we jump into the piles, crunching the leaves till they're in our shoes, mouths, and hair.

Then the wind comes, cold and harsh, blowing away the leaves, until only a few remain.

We go apple-picking, filling our baskets with juicy red apples.

Then pick out a pumpkin, always searching for the biggest one in the patch.

Sadly autumn comes to an end, and the first snowflakes of winter touch the ground.

—*Amelia Davern, 15*
Syracuse, New York

Autumn

Green leaves turning red and orange.

Heavy jackets and warm clothes.

Exciting passes, runs, and touchdowns.

Kids playing football.

Hiking up colorful mountains;

Rolling down grassy hills.

This is autumn in my hometown.

—*Kelly Crowe, 16*
Jonesboro, Georgia

The Offensive Lines

I am a helpful person who loves football.

I wonder if I'll ever play pro ball.

I hear the hitting and the yelling;

"I see the end zone," I am telling.

I am a helpful person who loves football.

I pretend I will play in the pros.

I feel the smashing of my toes.

I worry that I have failed.

I cry when I am nailed.

I am a helpful person who loves football.

I understand that winning or losing comes and goes.

I ask, "Will we win?" Who knows?

I dream of running to win by a nose.

I try to win even though losing comes and goes.

I am a helpful person who loves football.

—*Kyle Worley, 16*
Lewisville, Texas

AFTER THE STORM

Twisting, turning, spinning carefree;

Picking up everything—some cows, some trees.

Watching with wonder from a peephole in the cellar, with my ma and pa and my puppy Ol' Yeller.

With the snap of a finger it was over like that; we were released from hiding and greeted by our cat.

Ol' Yeller and the cat were reunited with glee, but the puppy got too happy and the cat climbed a tree.

To our amazement our house was still there, With little damage; it didn't need much repair.

I looked at the cellar—it was down in the ground so low,

Then I looked to the sky and saw a beautiful rainbow.

—*Carley McAnally, 15*
Carrollton, Texas



CHOICES MEET THE COPYCAT COOL GANG

BY KAY D. RIZZO

Every school has 'em—the copycats who think they're "so cool." These are the teens who are so busy trying to be considered cool by the other kids that they are messing up the rest of their lives. And if you aren't careful, they might mess with yours as well. A savvy teen will be wise enough to avoid making the same stupid choices.

Take Doty Ditzoid, for instance. Her eyes ringed with mascara like a deranged raccoon's, she's the one flashing the nose and tongue rings, despite her seasonal allergies—*eeugh!* Doty will try anything to look cool, even the purple-striped shrink-wrap jumpsuit. Doty "hangs" with Denny Dufus.

Like Doty, Denny sports the latest and loudest garb. You can see and hear him coming from a mile away. His bad choices are made to impress the largest crowd. He has a pair of kissing parrots tattooed on his stomach.

On the other hand, Axel Geekdom is always trying to be cool. But no matter how hard he tries he comes off looking a little pathetic.

Barbie Wannabe "looks" cool, and she'll go to any length to maintain her doll face, figure, and giggle. She enjoys being seen

with Cool Luke. She doesn't particularly like the guy—nobody does. He's tough. He's mean and treats her and others like rancid refrigerator scum—but he's "too, too cool" to ignore.

So are you a copycat cool too? Take the following true-false quiz and find out.

1. Doty Ditzoid believes a girl can't get pregnant the first time she has sex, and never if she does it standing up.

2. Axel Geekdom swallows ecstasy to be cool at parties.

3. Cool Luke uses steroids to "bulk up" for football.

4. Barbie Wannabe has discovered that she can eat all she wants and maintain her "fashion-model" figure if she upchucks within minutes of eating.

5. Denny Dufus holds the title as the local beer chuggin' champ.

6. Barbie Wannabe says she can drive while talking on her cell phone, drinking a Coke, smoking, and applying mascara all at the same time. She has a driving citation to prove it.

7. Doty Ditzoid believes you can't catch one of those nasty sexually transmitted diseases from kids you know. Only a skuzzy stranger could infect you.

8. Barbie Wannabe says she needs to smoke to stay slim.

9. Axel Geekdom gets furious at other drivers on the road. When he's cut off, he fanaticizes about ramming the other guy's car to teach him a lesson.

10. Denny Dufus believes that each time you inhale, you breathe in 150 million molecules of air—something he's been doing since the day he was born.

ANSWERS

1. Duh! Yeah! Right! What do you call someone who believes those tales? A mommy or daddy, that's what!

2. Ecstasy, or whatever other mind-altering drug of the day might be, will do the opposite from making you look and act cool. If you later saw yourself on video, you'd be embarrassed—that is, if you didn't, in your stupor, overdose and kill yourself!

3. Cool Luke's football stardom is doomed if he continues using steroids that attack his heart and liver functions.

4. Barbie isn't any smarter than Cool Luke, so it seems. Eating, then "purging," the term medical professionals use for making oneself vomit, will weaken her heart, causing irreparable damage.

5. Poor Denny. He's so proud of his dubious honor. Hasn't



**DOTY
DITZOID**

**DENNY
DUFUS**

**AXEL
GEEKDOM**

**COOL
LUKE**

**BARBIE
WANNABE**

• *The copycat cool gang are so busy trying to be considered cool by the other kids that they are messing up the rest of their lives. If you aren't careful they might mess with yours as well.*

anyone told him about the number of guys his age who have died "on the spot" from too much alcohol consumption? At least he and Barbie both understand the "purging" bit—all over the back seat of his 4x4.

6. I've heard about Barbie Wannabe's driving record. From where I sit, she's lucky to have any driving record at all—alive, that is. The same is true for anyone else who might be on the highway at the same time as she!

7. Beware! Sexually transmitted diseases (i.e., AIDS, herpes) have nothing to do with how often your partner bathes, or if he dresses cool, or lives next door to you. The AIDS virus doesn't care which neighborhood you're

from or how important your parents might be. It's just looking for a warm, moist environment in which to blossom and grow.

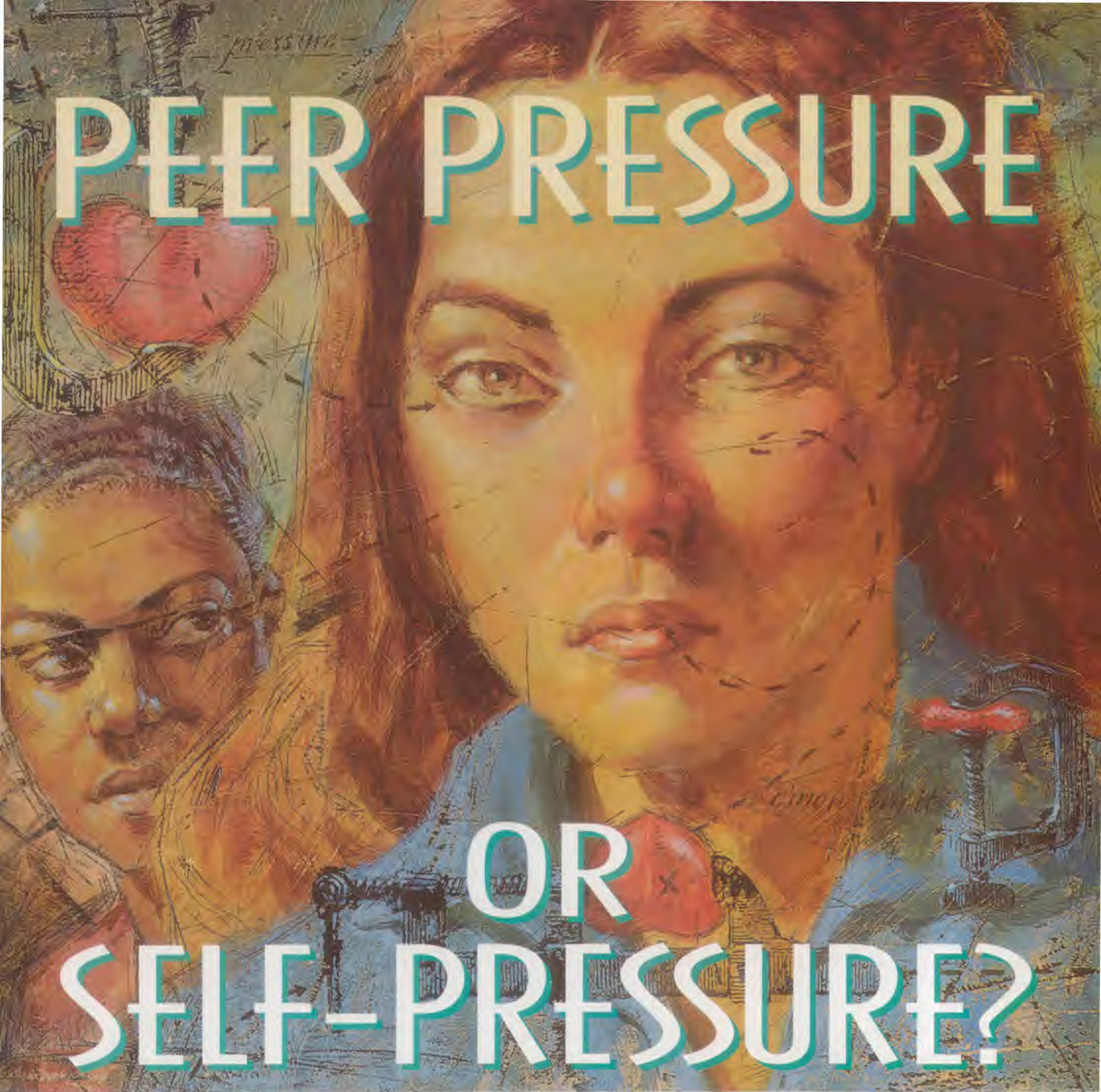
8. Smoking to stay slim? One thing is certain, Barbie won't live long enough to find out if it really works. She'd better get used to wearing a lot of yellow, as her nails and teeth will definitely turn yellow from the tobacco stains, her skin will wrinkle, and her breath and mouth will taste like the bottom of an ashtray.

9. A boy like Axel is worried that people don't treat him right. He takes everything personally, from a slight from the football coach to a driver "cutting him off at the pass." Axel needs to "chill out" and realize that the

world isn't out to get him.

10. Denny Dufus is right. That's right. Surprised? Well, even a stopped clock is right twice a day. It's not always who's saying it that makes something true or false, but what is being said. Check the facts for yourself. If you don't have the facts, research in the library or on the Internet. Don't be fooled by either the lie or the packaging.

As to Denny's statement, 150 million molecules of air with every breath you breathe is something you've done all your life. Isn't it amazing? Isn't it also interesting how every activity listed above kills, steals from, and destroys the very fiber of your life? ▀



PEER PRESSURE

OR SELF-PRESSURE?

BY KRISTIN ABRAHAM

Who says your inner voice is always right?

What are you, chicken?" Johnny shook his head, clearly disturbed by the accusation. He really didn't want to take the beer, but everyone else was urging him on. Surely they would never speak to him again if he didn't do it; in fact, they would probably make

fun of him whenever they saw him at school. He didn't want to be referred to as a chicken, a loser, by all these people. Who would? So he took the bottle and placed it to his lips, attempting to save his reputation.

This scene is a typical scene from any after-school special

informative booklet or skit produced to warn young adults about the dangers of peer pressure when the issue of alcohol is involved. But this is not necessarily the way Johnny's first sip of alcohol should be portrayed when trying to inform teens of peer pressure. The situation

ILLUSTRATION: PERRY STEWART

might more accurately be depicted like this:

"Hey, John, wanna beer?" Johnny shakes his head and continues to joke around with his friends. All of them have been drinking except him, and at the moment each of them holds a bottle of beer in their hands. They are laughing and carrying on, having a great time, and so is Johnny. But it looks like everyone else is having more fun than he is. When someone suggests that they go skinny dipping, the whole group runs off to the pool, laughing and shedding their clothes behind them. "Come on, John! Don't make us strip you and throw you in!" someone shouts. But Johnny stays on the couch. He can't imagine taking off his clothes and swimming naked with a bunch of girls and guys from class. But he still wishes that he could let go of his inhibitions so he could have as much fun as his friends seem to be having. He finally reaches for a bottle of beer in the cooler and places it to his lips.

* * * *

When kids grow up, they are coached on the hardships of facing something called peer pressure. They are taught that it is a very harsh tool that friends and others their age try to use in order to coax them into smoking or drinking or using drugs. But as I went through my four years of high school, I found that peer pressure was not what I had been told it would be.

I began my freshman year of high school prepared for drugs and alcohol by television programs, my parents, and educational courses such as DARE. We were required to watch peer-resistance skits performed by our peers and

some older students. We were informed that we would be urged to do things that weren't legal and that we wouldn't necessarily want to do. Sometimes, they reminded us, people who we thought were our friends, boyfriends or girlfriends, would be mean to us and make fun of us to get us to do what they were doing. "They may call you names, make you feel like an outcast, and threaten to end your friendship if you don't join them. They could even go so far as to say that you aren't 'cool' if you don't smoke or drink with them." We were taught to say no firmly and walk away. We were also coached to avoid the situation altogether.

When I reached high school, though, I found that what I had been taught was not necessarily the way it was. My experience and that of my friends was different than what we had expected. We did not encounter peer pressure as the in-your-face, cruelly persuasive mode that we had been taught. Instead, what we found was a more subtle and self-induced pressure to do the things that we were taught not to do.

Whether it was drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol, just like any other high school, our school had its share of experiences with them. Parents were bound to go on vacation and kids were bound to have parties. Even at a friend's house or in a park after school, drugs or alcohol could surface. We were teens entering the adult world, and we were curious.

But we did have respect for each other and our decisions. That was where we strayed from the normal peer relationships. If someone decided that they would rather not drink or smoke, we respected their decision. No one was out to tell someone else

what to do, and they definitely were not going to be mocked or ridiculed for the decisions that they made. There was no need to pressure anyone into doing anything. Respect was given to anyone who chose to be sober

"WHAT TEENAGERS SHOULD BE WARNED ABOUT IS SELF-PRESSURE."

at a party. They were not harassed with drugs and beer. Yet many people who outwardly announced their decision to stay drug- and alcohol-free found themselves going back on their pledge even though they were not pressured by their peers.

Why would teens end up doing something that they had been against? In general teens may not experience the peer pressure that adults think exists, but they do experience a self-induced pressure that in many ways is more painful and persuasive than peer pressure could ever be. It is hard to be young and want to experience everything, to sit back idly watching while others seem to be having so much fun. So they end up convincing

themselves to do anything in order to experience more fun.

When I would go to a party and there were people drinking or smoking pot, I would be drawn to join everyone else. It wasn't because they were telling me to or threatening to end friendships if I chose not to. The truth was that they knew I didn't want to drink and they simply left me alone. The problem arose for me because I felt excluded. Everyone still spoke to me and included me in conversations or games they were playing, but since I was one of the few who chose not to drink or smoke or do drugs, I felt like they were having more fun. If something funny happened, they would laugh harder. If we were playing a game of Twister, it was more fun for them to fall down and lose than to try to win.

I felt like an outsider. Something inside me let me know that I didn't fit in. I wanted to laugh just as hard as they did, and as strange as it may sound, I wanted to look just as stupid as they did as they fumbled around. Although no one pressured me into drinking or doing drugs, I wanted to see for myself what I was missing.

One night when my parents were out of town, I had a few friends over. Someone brought a fifth of vodka, and we stood in the kitchen drinking straight shots directly from the bottle until it was gone. Then we walked around pacing the lines on the rug to test how drunk we really were. What I learned about myself was that I was forcing myself to act foolish and have a good time when actually my stomach was churning, I could barely walk, and from my hands-and-knees position on the floor nothing seemed funny at all. I remember attempting to watch a silly TV program and forcing myself to laugh, but none of it

"TEENS NOW SEEM TO RESPECT EACH OTHER AND THE DECISIONS THEY MAKE."

seemed even remotely funny.

I don't know how many times I threw up that night, or how long my headache lasted the next day, or how many glasses of water I drank to get rid of the bad taste in my mouth, but I do know I'll never forget the way my stomach churns at the thought of one more drop of vodka in my mouth. To this day I get sick at the smell of rubbing alcohol or the scent of some hair sprays.



"I DIDN'T HAVE CONTROL OVER MYSELF TO DO THE THINGS THAT I NORMALLY COULD DO."

I had finally gotten drunk. Not because someone pressured me to, but because I was curious and wondered what I'd been missing. What I learned was that it didn't change who I really was, even for the dizzy moments during my drunken stupor. In fact, if anything, it was really worse, as I didn't have control over myself to do the things that I normally could do. Afterward my friends treated me the same as they had before. Their opinions of me had not changed, but mine had.

Peer pressure is a type of intimidation from friends to entice someone to do something they don't want to do. But this tends to be changing as teens now seem to respect each other and the decisions they make. Pressure now comes from the feeling of being left out, of not experiencing the world and all that it offers, no matter the consequences. It is not uncommon to hear a teen say that they tried something because they were curious. What today's teenagers should be warned about is self-pressure. I drank because I was curious. The pressure placed on me to drink I placed on myself.

I had been taught how to say no but wasn't given an option of what to do afterward—how to have fun without being under the influence of abusive substances. I knew how to stand up to peer pressure, but I was not able to stand up to the pressure from within myself.

My lesson in self-pressure was learned the hard way, and it was a valuable lesson. As I head off for college, I will certainly be less tempted to join the parties and raves on campus. If I do choose to go, however, I've learned what to do to handle the pressure. I listen as my inner voice tells me that things aren't always what they seem. I am no longer curious. ■



YO! JENNY

Listen up, teens. Say Hi to Jennifer Acklam, a Miss Texas coed and America's homecoming queen. Jenny wants to hear from you. Send your letters to us at **LISTEN** magazine, P.O. Box 859, Hagerstown, MD 21741, and we'll pass them on to her for the column.

I really like this new boy at our school. He has the best sense of humor and is so witty and fun to be around. Kevin (his name) and I have a great time together. The problem is Kevin cusses so much. He has a trashy mouth all the time. How can I get him to stop the cursing without ruining our relationship?

Cursing and swearing are real turnoffs.

Swearing is started

by someone trying to sound grown-up and cool, but actually quite the opposite is true. Someone who curses makes himself or herself sound uneducated and very unintelligent.

Swearing is a behavior that becomes a habit very quickly. I agree with you that Kevin probably doesn't even realize when he is talking this way. It has become very normal and nonchalant speech for him. Kevin needs to

understand that people judge other people to a large extent by what comes out of their mouths. He may have a heart of gold, but that is not the impression other people will be left with if they hear him swearing. I think that if you let Kevin know you are really bothered by his cursing, he will make an effort to stop. In the long run, Kevin stands to *gain* greatly by giving up his cursing habit.

My parents used to like my boyfriend, but now they want me to break up with him. The only reason that they don't like him anymore is that he has a motorcycle. They are afraid that I will ride on the back of his bike and get hurt. How can I convince them not to make me break up with him?

It sounds as though your parents are only being good parents and are worried about your safety. They love you and don't want to see you get hurt. You need to have a good discussion with your parents about this. They need to express their fears to you, and you need to relay your side of things to them. Your parents may have other reasons that they don't want you seeing this boy any longer. Possibly they feel he has changed in other ways also. Be honest with your parents and keep an open mind to what they are telling you. A frank, open, honest

conversation will surely clear the air, and both you and your parents will come out winners. Good luck!

I have an older sister who is 25 years old, and whom I love very much. I'm only 15, but we are still close. She has smoked since she was a teenager, and I'm constantly trying to get her to quit. She has tried a couple times but never succeeded. The problem is that now she is pregnant, and I'm afraid her smoking will harm the baby. What can I say to her to make her stop smoking?

You are a very smart little sister. Your sister needs to quit smoking for her own health, and now even more for the sake of her unborn baby. You know, and she probably knows too, all the harmful effects of smoking.

However, she needs to consider also the damage smoking can and will do to her baby. Some of the harm smoking can cause her baby is a premature birth or a low birth weight. In either case, her baby will suffer from not having fully developed organs. Underdeveloped organs can cause many serious problems. Talk to your sister and explain all the harmful effects she is causing her baby. Tell her you will support her in every way you can. Be gentle and loving, but firm and insistent. She will thank you, and her baby will thank you someday. ■



BY RENITA FREEMAN ASHMORE

A KID CALLED SHOTTY

The reason Dusty Hubbard shoots up several times a day is that he has Type I diabetes, but he doesn't let that slow him down. He makes no excuses and he's shouting his own declaration of independence.

I know a young man who's only 17 and appears to be a typical, everyday, run-of-the-mill teenager. He wears pants that are a size too big and a wrinkled T-shirt. He takes off for school in his 1986 Nissan pickup with the windows down, stereo blasting, and, of course, bass full tilt. Tapping out a tune on the steering wheel, he grins and winks at girls while waiting at a red light. He goes by a variety of nicknames, such as Dusty, D, Dustinova, and his least favorite, "Shotty." He earned the nickname Shotty because he shoots up several times a day, but it's not what you're thinking.

The young man is Dustin Hubbard, a high school senior in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dustin is a highly motivated, goal-oriented teenager. He is a gymnast, one of the youngest NCAA judges in the nation, a boys' coach, and a girls' cheerleading coach. He has set some pretty high standards for himself, and his goal upon completing college is to have his own business. Dustin has a desire to succeed like few young people his age.

The reason Dusty shoots up several times a day is that he has Type I diabetes, but he doesn't let that slow him down. He doesn't wallow in self-pity, mope around

because he has to draw blood from his fingers four or five times a day, or complain about the routine injections he must give himself in his stomach or thigh before every meal.

Dusty was diagnosed with diabetes on his sixth birthday—clearly not a favorite birthday memory, as it was spent in intensive care at the pediatric unit of the hospital where he was born. However, instead of feeling sorry for himself, Dusty has chosen to make very different decisions about how he leads his life. He states, "I feel diabetes has helped make me a better person. I have a greater respect for life, not to mention an overall respect for my health."

When asked how he has been able to lead a healthy, normal life

with diabetes, Dusty answers, "By staying athletically active." He has waded through a multitude of personal obstacles with diabetes, not to mention peer pressure to participate in the use of dangerous and illegal drugs. He remembers that when he was in elementary school, one of his classmates called him a freak. Because of hurtful memories such as this, it would have been easy for Dusty to want to do anything to fit in and be like everyone else.

But instead, he looks for opportunities to give presentations in school to help people understand diabetes better. For this his high school presented him with the Best Speaker for Communication Skills award for his speeches on diabetes awareness. Dusty's positive communication efforts among his peers has not been limited to just diabetes education. Having diabetes didn't prevent his exposure to tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs as used among his classmates and friends.

Dusty understands that he and his peers are eager to take the first step in stating their own declaration of independence. He states, "A lot of kids are using drugs to make a point to the adults in their lives. They simply want to do it because their parents and



• "I feel diabetes has helped make me a better person. I have a greater respect for life," says Dusty.

teachers say they can't. Getting high can give you a sense of gaining control over your own life; you feel as if you're in charge, and you're the one making decisions. It's kind of like moving out on your own for the first time.

"But," Dusty warns, "it can really mess with your sense of reality. When you are high, you have to work really hard at appearing that you're not, because you don't want to get caught. I've seen drugs take people, snatch them up, and spin them around. For example, I've known athletes who were really awesome athletes and really cool guys, and then they started using, just to fit in, because it seemed as if everyone was using. Pretty soon all they wanted to do was get high. I watched their performance with sports decline, not to mention the way their personalities changed. They began to get edgy, defensive, and secretive. But worst of all, they still thought they were legends, even though they were legends only in *their* minds. As I said, drugs really change your reality."

Dusty has some advice for his fellow teenagers. "Be strong in your own opinions, even about drugs. You don't have to share your parents' opinions; let your decision not to use drugs be your own. In your first year of high school you will get a lot of peer pressure to try stuff. *Be strong in your opinion because your opinion is you.* I know it's not cool to be close to your family. They are supposed to be the enemy. But don't lose touch with your family. They're the people who are going to be there for you your whole life—no matter what. Friends come and go, but your family sticks with you. Believe it or not your parents aren't necessarily going to punish you if you go to them with a problem. You may think you won't be able to talk to them about drugs, but parents have been through it all.

"I've known athletes who were really awesome athletes . . . then they started using. Pretty soon all they wanted to do was get high . . . drugs really change your reality."

Also, don't lose touch with reality and the world you know—the world before drugs. Don't forget what you've worked so hard to get, where you're at, what your interests are. Try to find a different way of stating your declaration of independence."

In Dusty's determination to be himself, he received the Coach of the Year award in 1998 for his dedication to the kids he has taught at Duke City Gymnastics. His own coach and mentor, Jerry Nickels, states, "Dustin has been a tremendous asset to our competitive program at Duke City Gym. He does a great job of demonstrating leadership qualities. He has a mannerism that has gained him the respect, trust, and friendship of his peers as well as the younger competitive gymnasts." Mr. Nickels goes on further to comment on Dusty's honesty in dealing with other

people, his self-motivation, and above all, his display of respect for others.

You can ask many people whose lives Dusty has influenced or touched in some way, and most will agree that he is indeed a unique individual. Take some words of wisdom from the kid they call Shorty. He makes no excuses, and he hasn't let his diabetes or peer pressures prevent him from being the individual he has set out to be. Dustin Hubbard is shouting out his declaration of independence, and he's doing it his own way. And so can you. ■

• *Dustin in action. A skilled gymnast, Dustin received the Coach of the Year award for his dedication to the kids he taught at Duke City Gymnastics.*



A close-up portrait of Jessica Alba. She has dark hair and green eyes, resting her chin on her hands. She is wearing a red top and a ring on her finger.

Jessica

“Work hard,
keep your head
on straight.”



G R O W N U P I N N O C E N C E

by Kimberly Cheney

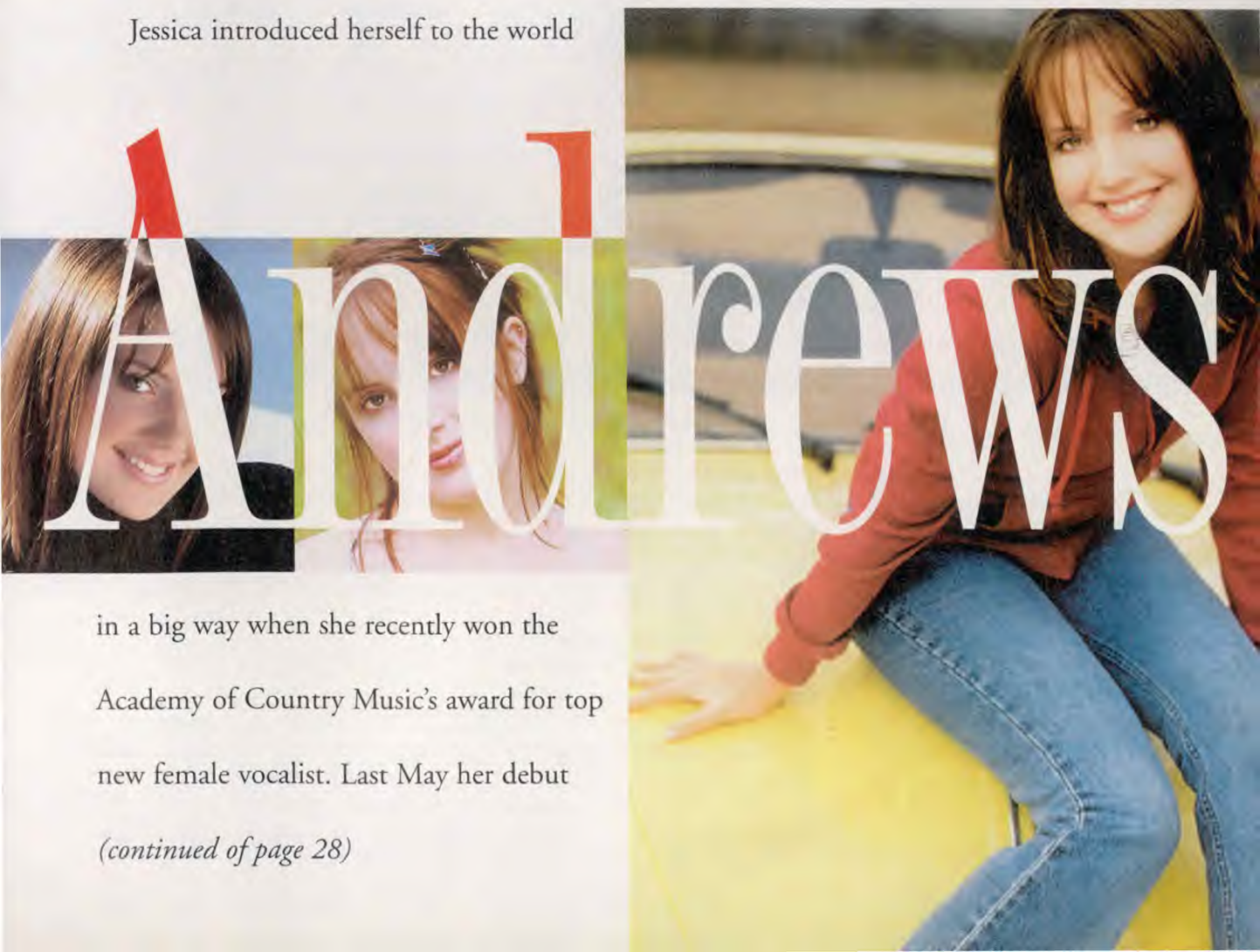
Even at age 16, country singer Jessica Andrews is one grown-up lady. Jessica successfully blends being a teenager with having a self-assured, adult outlook on life.

"I've always been a leader, not a follower. Don't follow what everybody else is doing. Stick to what you believe in."

While Jessica may be young, she possesses a mature, wise, beyond-her-years singing voice. Jessica has not only a sophistication about her, but wisdom and self-confidence. And that adds up to success in anyone's book.

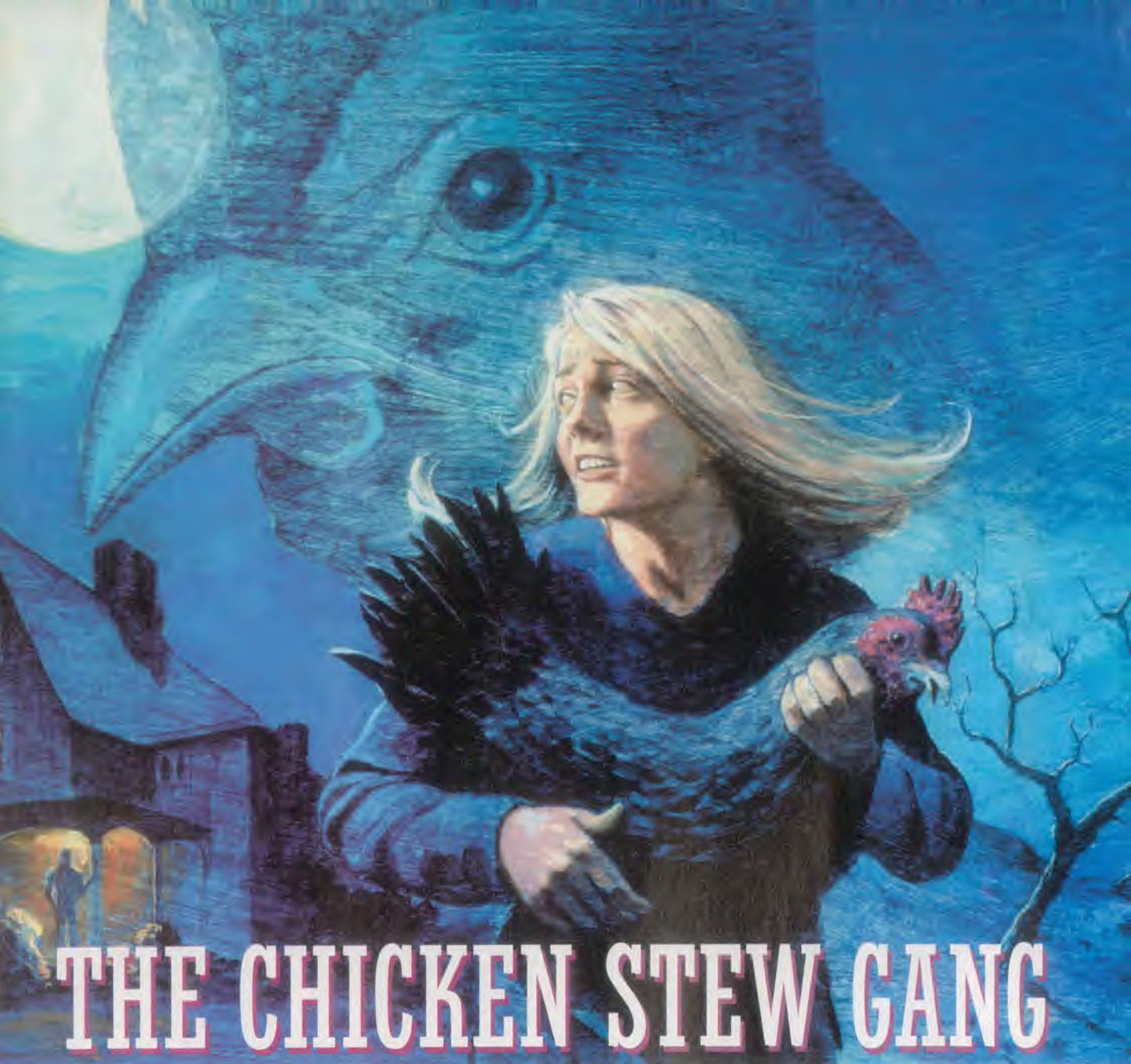
And it looks as if major success is on the horizon for this young star.

Jessica introduced herself to the world



in a big way when she recently won the Academy of Country Music's award for top new female vocalist. Last May her debut

(continued of page 28)



THE CHICKEN STEW GANG

IT WAS NEVER MY PLAN TO BE A GANG MEMBER

The light from the 40-watt bulb from across the yard seemed blinding. I could see the outline of a man peering through the screen door of the farm kitchen. Had he heard me? Could he see me? My eyes were bulging in their sockets. My heart seemed frozen solid. I held my breath and waited.

Was he going to cross the yard and find me? From the outline of the shadow I could

see that his right hand was holding a long straight object. I'm not a gun expert, but I could recognize the shape of a shotgun. Why was I here? I'd rather die than be found in the Cuthler's Yellow Brick Farm chicken coop. My parents would be mortified with the news. Their daughter Dorothy—a thief. I'd be disowned. I didn't dare move, as any movement might get the hens clucking again. The

farmer would come for sure, and then instead of shooting a chicken-stealing fox, he'd shoot me.

It was never my plan to be a gang member. I didn't have to look deeply into my subconscious to hear my conscience chastising me.

My family was a farming family. Everyone had chores and other duties to perform in order to survive. We didn't have much

BY GEORGE W. J. LAIDLAW

money, but all summer long we had fresh vegetables such as squash, string beans, tomatoes, etc. I'd spent hours in the garden with a hoe attacking the weeds. From spring to fall we enjoyed the fresh strawberries, peaches, plums, and apples that grew on our farm.

My friends were from farm families too, with parents who had a strong belief that hard work was good for us. We didn't get rides into town very often, so we walked everywhere. My older brother, Joe, would sometimes let me ride his bike. Looking back, I wonder why, with all this going for me, I became a gang member.

Maybe peer pressure was involved. The need to feel a part of a group or the fear of being labeled "chicken" might have been a couple reasons for joining.

It had started out as a lark. I was invited to attend a secret meeting at the Burns farm one afternoon. Katie's parents were away for the day. Several of my friends were there. We talked and laughed while Katie was in the kitchen fixing supper for us.

"What do you think of my stew?" she asked.

I tasted it. The chicken stew was delicious. "It's great! Would you share the recipe with me?" I asked.

My reply caused the group to burst out laughing.

"Dorothy, the chicken in the stew was stolen from Backster's chicken coop. Every other week we get together for supper. New members who join our group take an active role. They pass the initiation by 'obtaining' a chicken and cooking a meal for the next day," Katie explained.

"Wouldn't it be easier to bring a chicken from our own farm?" I asked.

"Yes, but the stew wouldn't

taste as good," she answered.

"But that doesn't sound fair for the farmer," I responded.

"We never hit the same farm twice," someone explained. "No one misses one chicken. Foxes take them all the time."

I did want to be a part of the group, so with my mouth full of chicken stew, I was sworn into the secret society.

Now here I was, in the darkness of the chicken coop. As I thought over my foolish decision to join the gang, I thought of how stupid I was. Finally the porch light switched off, I grabbed a black hen, and ran.

The next evening we met at my house. A boy I had not seen before was welcomed into the group. "Something sure smells good," he said. "What is it?"

"It's just one of my secret recipes!" I answered.

As we all sat down around the table eating, Katie said, "Dorothy, you're a great cook." The others all agreed. But for me the chicken stew tasted "fowl." I knew I'd never look at chicken stew again without feeling guilty.

The new boy was sitting on my left, and Katie was on my right. "You're new here," I commented, trying to make conversation.

"Yes, I am. My father just bought a farm in the area. I've been going to school back east."

I didn't notice that my friends had become very quiet.

"Are you going to be a member of our gang?" I asked him.

"I don't think so; at least I won't be joining tonight. My father wants me home right after we eat. He's hopping mad about a chicken-stealing fox that took his prized leghorn hen last night. I got to come because Katie had

already invited me earlier."

"That's too bad. Foxes can do a lot of damage. Maybe you can come another time," I said.

"Are there any gang requirements?" he asked.

I started to explain when a searing pain shot up my leg. I turned toward Katie, and she gave her head a slight shake.

"I made up my mind right then that I was going to quit the chicken stew gang. I'd never steal again."

"Those can wait," said Katie.

He got up from the table and walked toward the door.

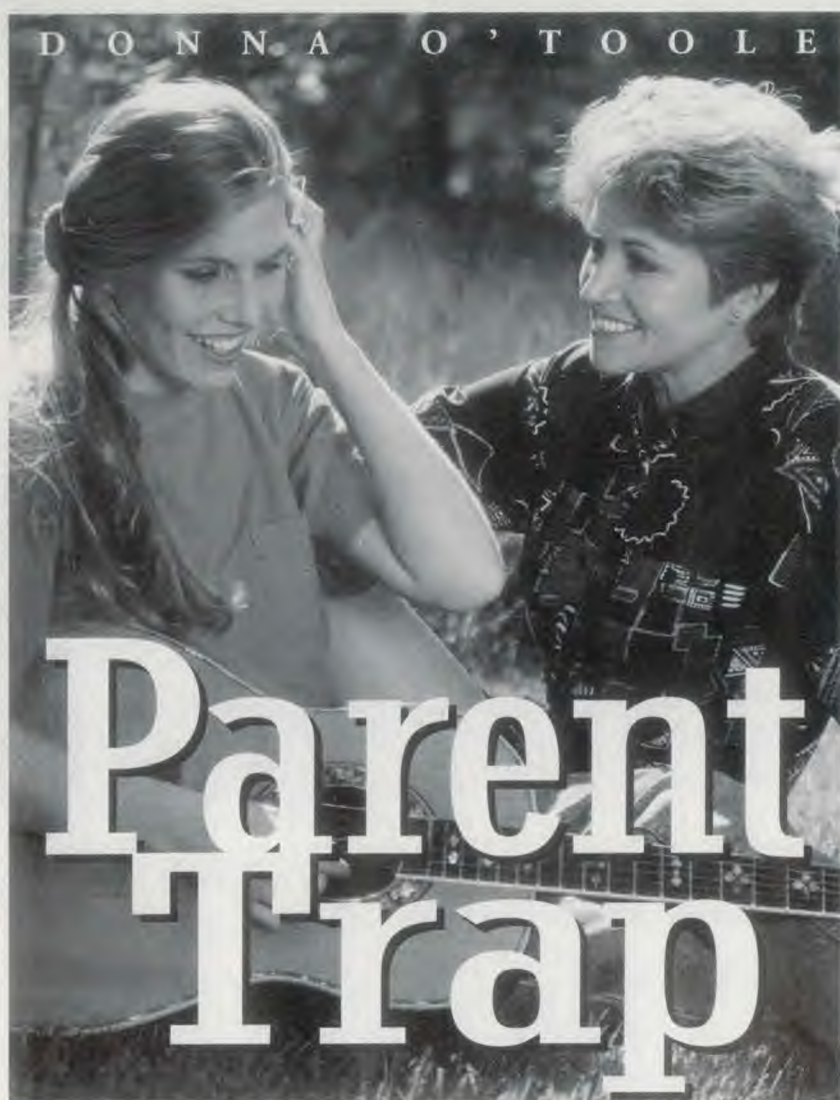
"Hope you don't get lost going home. 'Bye!" I watched as he rode his bike down the driveway. What would he think of me if he knew I was a thief? He'd avoid me like poison for sure. I made up my mind right then that I was going to quit the chicken stew gang. I'd never steal again.

He was out of sight now, but I could still hear the sound of his bike. I liked him, and yet I didn't even know his name.

"Katie! Why did you kick me?" I asked.

"You still don't know?" she asked in disbelief. "You've never met David before, have you? Dorothy, the hen in your chicken stew tonight was the prized black leghorn from his father's farm. That was David Cuthler!" ■

D O N N A O ' T O O L E



"I'm allowed to take them to the mall, but I can't hang around with them."

Coming from the sixties and seventies, I'm very relaxed about hairstyles. I still like long hair, so as my offspring tells the beautician to shave his head, I sit silently in a comatose state. I can't be like my parents, so I won't offer my opinion. In my heart, though, I would love to tell my son that he has trophy ears and might look better with . . . but I can't. I want him to make his own choices. But not really. I want control. H'mmm. Could I perhaps be slipping into my parents' footsteps?

Guess that teens have been trying to eliminate their parents' opinions since the beginning of time. My dad had the gall to attend my rowdy softball games. I thought he was spying on me. But then I couldn't be sure, as he looked so proud!

I had my own taste of rejection when my teens told me never to pick them up from school in the station wagon. I am allowed to take them to the mall, but I can't hang around with them. *Hey, wait a minute, I think, I'm your cool mom who even dresses like you (. . . in my mind)!*

In retrospect, I realize that I had superior parents. In fact, I wish that they were my kids' parents. They didn't smoke, party, or divorce. Mom was always home. She was always threatening, "Wait till your father comes home . . ." To this day I wonder about Dad's threat, "You're about ready for a trip to the toolshed!" We didn't have a toolshed. Guess that was another generation back. ■

When I'm a parent, I'll be different.

As a teen in the 1960s I did know a few things, such as that I was definitely smarter than my parents; I would never repeat their parenting mistakes; and someday I would be a "cool" parent.

From my perspective as a teen, everything was cut and dried. Trust me, I was mature.

Now flash ahead to the 1990s. I am a parent of teenagers. I want my kids to be everything, but I don't want to be a heavy-duty mom. I want to encourage freethinking, openness, and nonstructure for my kids. But

did I mention that profanity, drugs, and teen sex would *not* be OK?

Things have really become complex since the sixties and seventies. To start with, let's talk about computers. What is a "bulletin board"? I suspect it is taboo because it holds such fun and entertainment for teens. The Silent Sam computer at my favorite outlet is a challenge to me. You see, I'm not computer savvy—you might say I'm not even computer friendly. Somehow, though, I sense danger when I enter the computer room and the kids turn off the monitor.

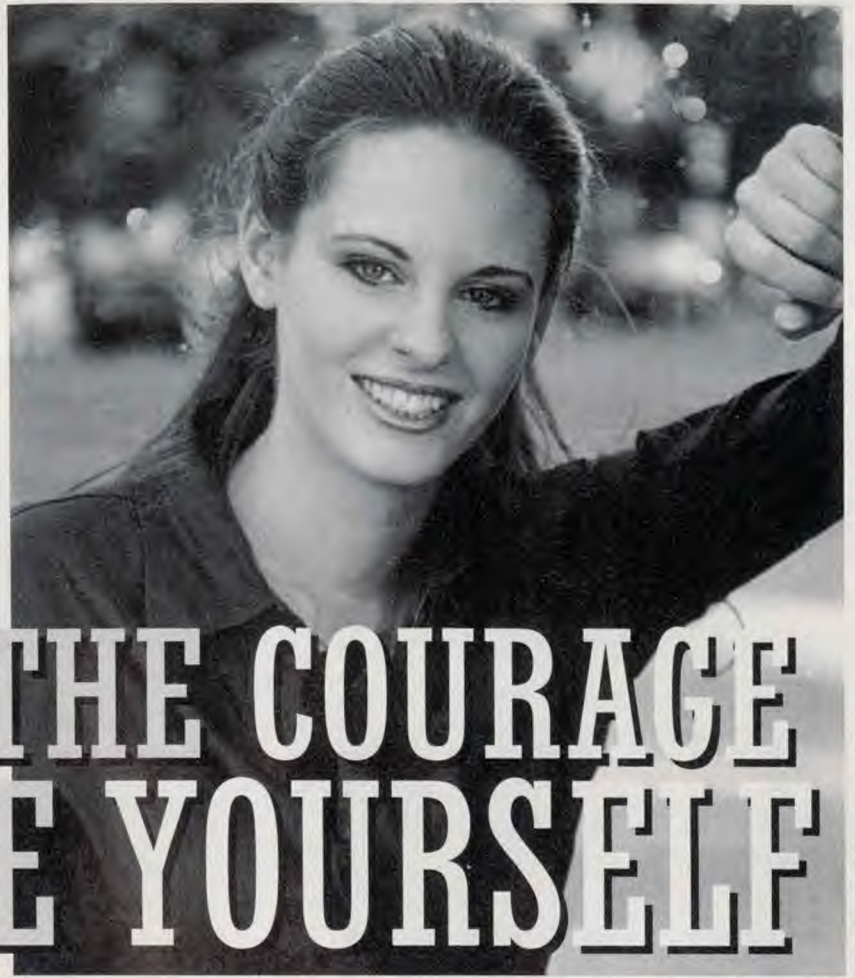


PHOTO: ED GUTHERO

FIND THE COURAGE TO BE YOURSELF

If Johnny jumped off a cliff, would you follow?

Being a teen isn't easy. You can feel pressured by your parents, teachers, other teens, and even your friends. Your parents expect you to be like them. Your teachers expect you to conform and not cause trouble. Other teens expect you to do the things they do.

BY PENNY LOCKWOOD EHRENKRANZ

Your friends want you to be like them. It's scary to say no and to stand up for what you believe, not what you think your friends want you to believe. You don't want to be different, so you try to blend in. Unfortunately, sometimes that means that you make the wrong choices.

Have you ever been shopping with your friends, seen something you liked, but none of you has enough money? The right thing would be to leave and come back after you've earned what you need. But what if your friend whispers, "Hey, nobody's looking. Come on, you can put that in your pocket. I'll keep an eye out for security. It'll be fun."

Sixteen-year-old Dana, from Salem, Oregon, says, "Know what you believe in before you go out with your friends, then it will be easier to say no if such a situation comes up. Don't worry about your friends thinking badly of you for saying no. People will respect you for standing up for your beliefs."

Sure your friend might think you're a wimp, but if you get caught, you're both in trouble.

Tamra Parker, a juvenile probation officer who worked for six years at MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility, has worked with a number of repeat offenders. She offers this advice: "You've got to know who your friends are. You've got to know whom you're hanging out with. You've got to trust your friends. If your friend picks you up in a car and it turns out to be stolen, you're just as guilty as the kid who stole the car. The law says whether you drive, operate, or ride in . . ." The same goes for stealing from a store. If you're caught, you'll both be charged with theft, even if you're just the "lookout," and, depending

TAMRA TELLS KIDS TO SAY:

"That's not what I'm about and then walk away. Be strong enough in yourself to follow through and walk away."

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on the cost of the item, it could be a felony charge.

Lacey, a 16-year-old from Warren, Oregon, says, "If I know I'm going to be in a situation where I'll be pressured to do something, I just don't go there." Her friend Kassi says, "If I'm pressured, I just say no. I don't really care what these people think of me." That's what's important. In order to resist negative peer pressure, you've

Standing up for what you believe is one of life's greatest challenges. If you're willing to stand out from the crowd and be an individual, you're a step ahead of the rest.

— — — — —

got to be an individual. Find ways to feel good about yourself so it's not so scary to face ridicule and rejection.

Teacher Anna Becker shares her school's model for successful problem solving. The steps of problem solving include these choices: "Tell them to stop, talk, and then listen; make a plan; walk away." What you don't want to do is pretend that peer pressure doesn't exist. Plan for it and practice ways to say no.

Eirynne, from Apple Valley, California, uses these comebacks when she feels pressured by her classmates to try things she knows aren't good: "I can't do it; I'm allergic." "I'll get into fights and in trouble." "That's for dweebs." "I like life."

Tamra, who now works as a juvenile court counselor, tells the kids on her caseload to just say "That's not what I'm about" and then walk away. Be strong enough in yourself to follow through and walk away. Walk away. Sounds easy, doesn't it? But it's not. You have to decide if you want to be responsible for making your own decisions, or if you want someone else to make them for you.

If you think highly of yourself and have good self-esteem, it's easier to make the right choices. If you're willing to stand out from the crowd and be an individual, you're a step ahead of the rest. Do you have courage and self-confidence? These are traits necessary to be a unique person.

Sixteen-year-old Kristen, from Scappoose High School, says, "I trust my friends not to pressure me. If they did pressure me, they wouldn't be my real friends." Lonna agrees, "I just do what I believe in, and if they don't agree with me, oh, well."

Sometimes it's harder when you're a guy. You feel as if you've

got a reputation to live up to. No one wants to be the only one who doesn't go along with the rest of the guys. Standing up for what you believe in is one of life's greatest challenges.

Sixteen-year-old Chris doesn't let the other guys get to him. "I just say 'Forget it' and leave." It's just not worth it.

Adam takes a different approach: "I usually just make fun of the person."

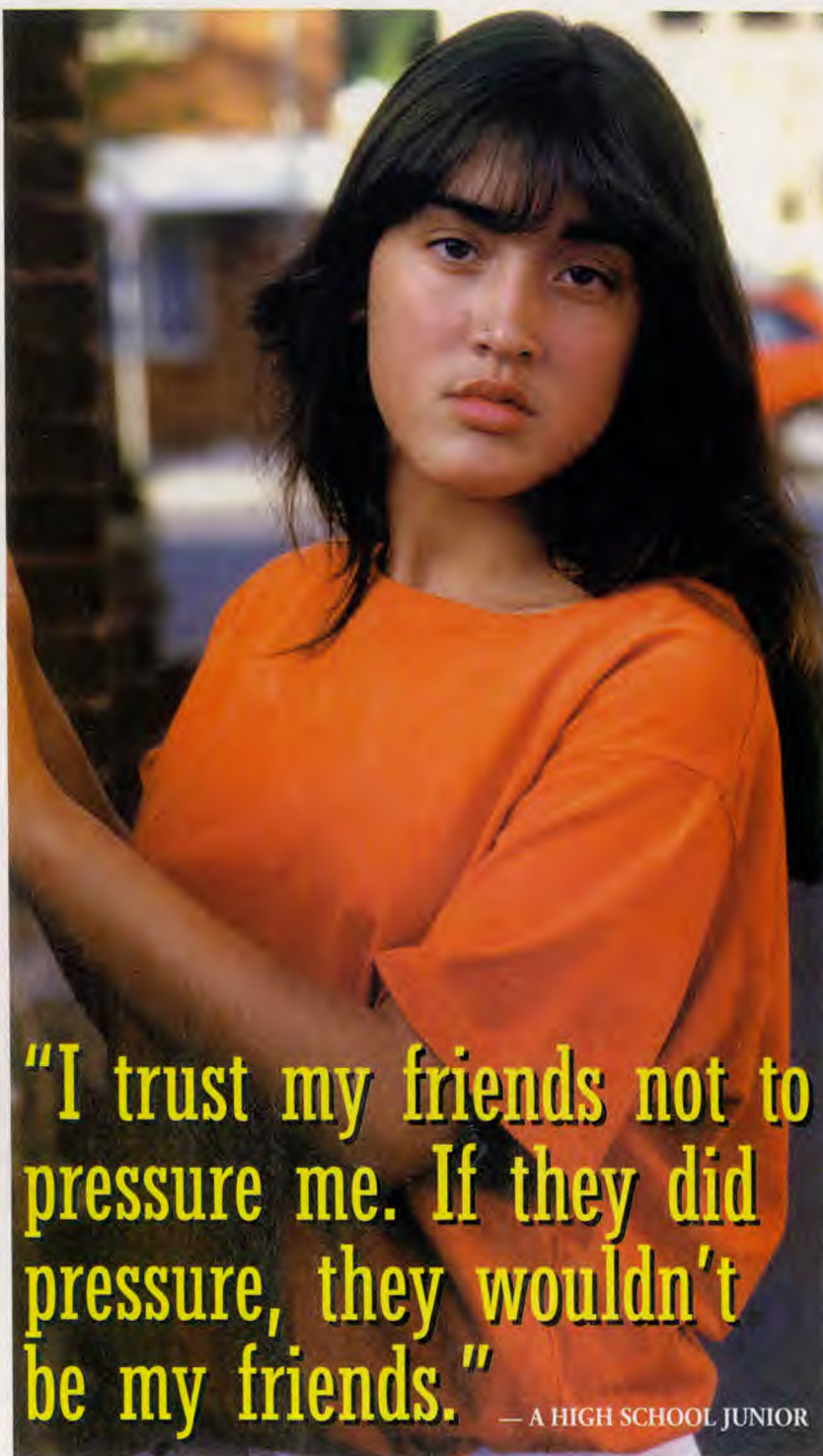
What can you do? "Just change the subject," says Joy.

Trina says, "I usually get one of my friends to come over and rescue me, and say we have to go to the bathroom or something." Use whatever words are necessary to "just say no."

Look for ways to have fun that don't include drinking, doing drugs, or getting into trouble with the law. Get involved with sports, youth clubs, or start a new hobby. If you go shopping, make sure you have enough money to buy the things you want.

Find a volunteer project that allows you to feel good about yourself, such as being a candy striper at a local hospital, training a guide dog for a blind person, mentoring younger students, or getting involved with Habitat for Humanity.

Leila, from Beaverton, Oregon, began volunteering with the Students Today Aren't Ready for Sex (STARS) program last year. This is a program in which high school students work with middle school students. Leila says, "As an abstinence-based program, the benefits are even greater. . . . Learning tools to avoid pressure situations, and understanding the consequences of early sexual involvement are activities whose relevance transcends grade level, and when high school students educate the younger students in these areas,



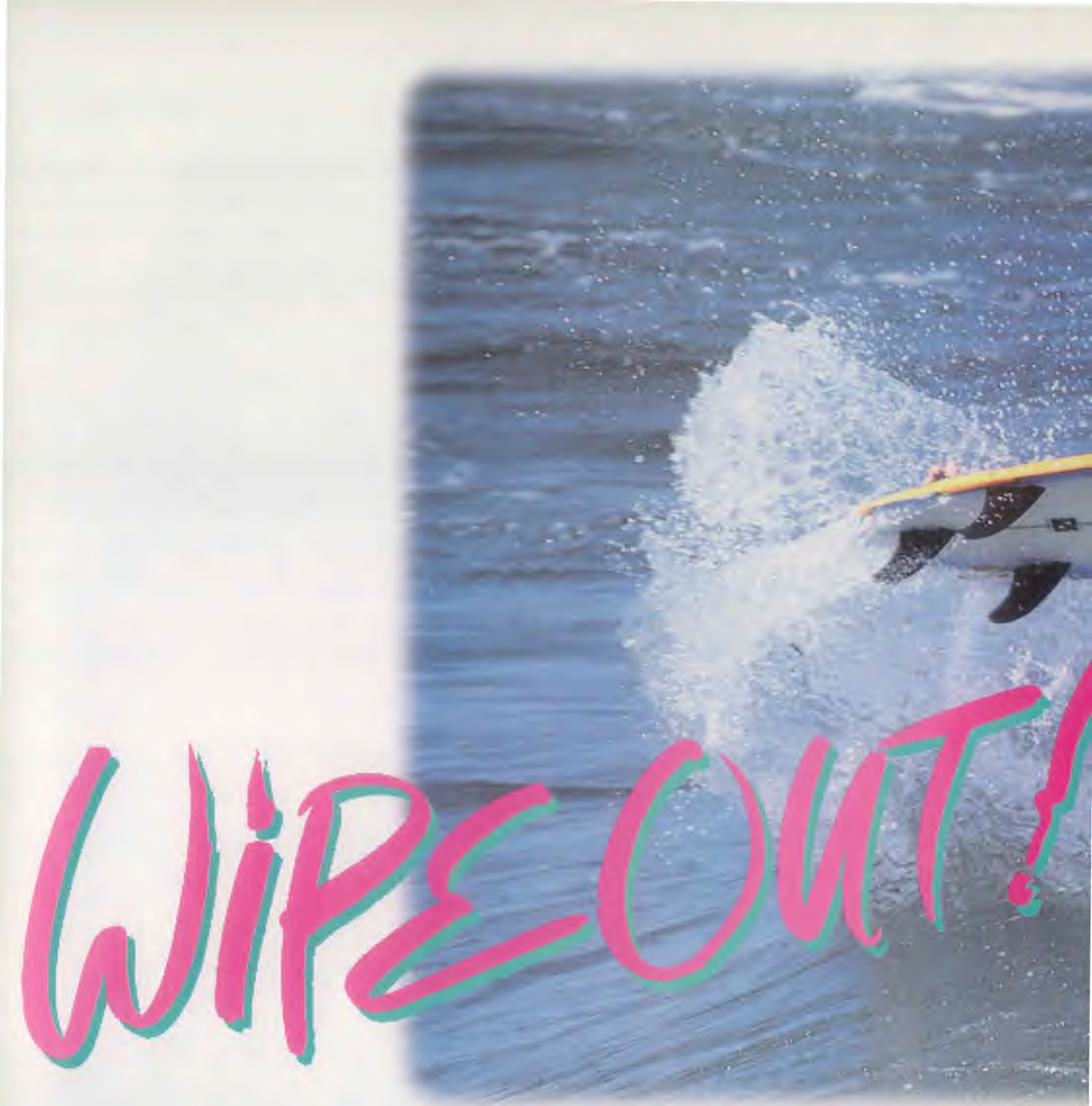
"I trust my friends not to pressure me. If they did pressure, they wouldn't be my friends." — A HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR

it reinforces the ideas in their own minds."

There will always be pressure to do what the group wants and to be like everyone else. If you can find the courage to be yourself and think for yourself, you'll also find the courage to say no. ▀

FOR MORE INFORMATION

1. *Teen Talk, Saying No to Peer Pressure*, by Linda S. Wildey, http://www.ama-assn.org/insight/h_focus/adl_hlth/teen/05teen4.htm
2. *Peer Pressure and Your Teen*, by Kathleen McCoy, Ph.D., <http://www.tnpc.com/parentalk/adolescence/teens3.html>



BY DOUG WAKEM

In 1966 Bruce Brown produced, photographed, edited, and narrated *The Endless Summer*, a movie about Mike and Robert, two surf bums, who search for the perfect wave. They do it by following summer around the globe. In other words, as the seasons changed and summer

ended in one place and began in another, they would move on to where summer began—all in order to surf year-round in their quest for the perfect wave.

Mike and Robert start out in California, then go to Dakar, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, and finally Hawaii. And, according

CALLIGRAPHY: ED GUTHRIE



IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT WAVE.

to the movie, these two surfers do indeed find the perfect wave in South Africa—a “stokin wave that just goes right on forever!”

Of course, not everyone who's into surfing travels around the world in search of the perfect wave; nor does every surfer need an “endless summer.” Most surfers, in fact, don't have to search for the perfect wave in order to have a great time enjoying surfing,

one of the most awesome sports known to humankind.

Surfing? you ask. Please! Didn't that go out with the Monkees and Annette Funicello? Surfing? Wasn't that something our moms and dads did in the 1960s as they drove around in those silly old cars called woodies, listened to music from groups such as the Chantels, the Kinks, and the Animals, and protested the Vietnam War?

Well, there's no doubt that surfing isn't as much a part of today's popular culture as it was 30 years ago, yet it's still a great sport, one enjoyed by thousands and thousands of fans around the world—or at least the part of the world that borders oceans with big waves and decent climates (the last we heard, surfing still hadn't caught on in Switzerland or Greenland).

PHOTOS: KOZAI PHOTOGRAPHY



Surfing, like any other skill worth having, takes a lot of practice and patience.

You'd be well advised to start out with someone with experience. There are obvious safety reasons (surfing with someone else cuts your chance in half of being eaten by a shark.)



And no wonder. Anyone who has ever experienced the thrill and high-speed adrenaline rush of riding a wave on a surfboard knows just what a cool, awesome sport surfing can be.

Now, we know that not everyone can surf. There are a few limitations: the major one

being that you need water, and not just any body of water but a body of water situated on the globe in such a way that makes decent-sized waves. Once you have that, and one other major necessity, a surfboard (along with a few minor things like wax, sunscreen, and a leash), you have



all you really need to get into one truly beautiful sport.

You might think that surfing looks easy. You know, just paddle out a few hundred feet or so, turn around, wait for a long, clean, beautiful 12-foot wave to come rolling in, then catch it, and ride it in under the curl of the wave until you reach the shore like some kind of water deity or something. Nothing to it!

Don't be fooled. Surfing, like any other skill worth having, takes a lot of practice and a lot of patience until you get good. Also be prepared to eat plenty of sand, to guzzle gallons of salt water, and to be humiliated, embarrassed, and generally ticked off before you get the hang of it. But once you do, once you learn the basics, master the ins and outs, understand what you can and cannot do—surfing will be, as it is for many, one of the greatest ways you can find to spend your spare time (we don't recommend trying to make a career or a life out of it, though some do).

Like any sport, you'd be well advised to start out with someone with experience. Though you can get private lessons (some surf shops offer them), most people learn by surfing with a friend who knows more than they do. There are obvious safety reasons (surfing with someone else cuts your chances of being eaten in half by a shark). A partner can give you good moral support (often needed after getting dumped on your head on the beach a few times), can keep you pumped up when you get frustrated and discouraged (after trying 30 times to stand up on the board and never doing it), teach you how to paddle out, how to "duck dive," how to line up, how to choose your wave, how to catch it, and how to ride it in. A partner can also teach you a few

Anyone who has ever experienced the thrill and high-speed adrenaline rush of riding a wave on a surfboard knows just what a cool, awesome sport surfing can be.

of the basic water etiquette rules, such as "dropping in," which is taking off on a wave in front of someone who is already up and riding. Not a very good idea at all, unless you want the experience of getting a surfboard rammed down your throat.

The great news about surfing is that unlike other sports that can be hard on the wallet, surfing—as long as you live near the waves—can be a pretty inexpensive sport. Although some people spend megabucks on customized boards, a long surfboard manufactured today usually costs between \$350 and \$500. That's not pennies, I know, but that's the only real investment (unless of course you crash the board into something and shatter it and have to buy another one).

No one really knows for sure when surfing began. The earliest folks riding waves were probably Polynesians who immigrated to Hawaii about A.D. 400. Believe it or not, three Hawaiian princes, studying in the United States, introduced surfing to Americans in Santa Cruz, California, not

in the 1960s but in 1865. That's right—if you think surfing began with the Beach Boys and *Surfin' U.S.A.* in the 1960s, you're just 100 years off the mark. Yup, folks, we were "hanging ten" and "wiping out" along sunny California beaches during the Civil War.

Surfing, of course, has greatly changed over the years. The first boards were made of solid wood, weighed more than 100 pounds, and in some cases were about 16 feet long! (Wonder what the surfers looked like in those funny bathing suits they wore back then.)

Over the years, as technology changed, the boards started getting shorter and lighter and made out of other materials, such as polyurethane foam core and fiberglass shells. Today the most popular-sized boards are six to eight feet long and very light (about 15 pounds). Some of the baby boomers, perhaps nostalgic for the 1960s, when longer boards were in, are buying surfing boards that are more than nine and a half feet long.

For those who want to try getting their feet wet first, there are short bodyboards on which you just lie and ride the waves in. You never have to master the art of standing up. As anyone who has done it can testify, bodyboarding is great fun. Bodyboards were started when some surfer crashed his surfboard and didn't have the money to buy a new one. Using an old newspaper and leftover foam plank, he created the first bodyboard and started a new fad.

Meanwhile, in 1994 Bruce Brown made a new film. This one was called, you guessed it, *The Endless Summer II*, about two guys following the summer around the globe in order to find the perfect wave: Costa Rica, France, South Africa, Fiji, Tavura, Australia, Java . . . ■

JESSICA ANDREWS

(continued from page 17)

album, *Heart Shaped World*, was released, and since then she has been touring the country with such legends as Trisha Yearwood.

Jessica has always known what she had wanted: a successful career in the music business. "One constant in my life has always been music."

The other constant in Jessica's life is having been raised with strong morals and values. When asked about the subject of purity and peer pressure, this mature young woman was more than equipped with an answer.

"I don't want to sound preachy, but I don't think it's right to go out and just 'do it.' You lose a lot of self-respect when you do it when it's not real. I've been raised to wait until marriage. I'm still a virgin. I'm young enough that I haven't found the right person yet. You should stick to your morals and not follow what everybody else is doing."

"I would tell everybody it's important to stand up for what you believe in and not let people push you around and make you do what you don't want to do."

Jessica's early childhood definitely challenged her confidence. The younger of two daughters, Jessica was raised in Huntingdon, Tennessee, by Vicki, a former school bus driver, and father Jessie, a door-

factory worker. At age 6, Jessica was faced with a serious physical ailment. Her parents noticed a patch on her back and took her to the doctor. An MRI revealed a bone was growing through her spine. Left untreated, there was a possibility the bone would grow faster than Jessica's spinal cord; this would surely lead to paralysis. Jessica was

faced with the prospect of an extremely rare operation (only three others had been performed in the U.S.). Unaware of the seriousness of her problem at the time, her parents elected for her to have the surgery.

Thankfully, Jessica made it through surgery successfully. But her recovery took months of bed rest, followed by the need to wear a back brace 12 hours a day for 10 years to keep her spine from curving.

And through it all, Jessica gained strength and comfort in music.

"Thank God I made it through that surgery successfully. Otherwise I'd still be suffering from it."

A couple of years after that trauma Jessica was singing one day at home, and her sister heard her. Her sister and parents soon agreed they saw a future for her as a professional singer. Before long Jessica was singing everywhere including fairs, carnivals, and family gatherings. She entered several talent competitions. Word spread, and eventually producer Byron Gallimore, who also produced Faith Hill,



After her operation Jessica wore a back brace for 10 years —12 hours a day—to keep her spine from curving. Through it all she gained strength and comfort in music.

"Luck only goes a certain amount of the way; then you have to be determined."

was told by numerous people that he must make a trip to Nashville to hear this new talent. Byron was overwhelmed by Jessica's vocals—her tone, her control, and her range.

"The man who produces my records is from the same part of Tennessee I'm from," Jessica says. "He heard about me, and I came to Nashville to sing for him. After we worked together for about a year, we decided we were ready for a record label. He sent me to Dreamworks. Luck only goes a certain amount of the way; then you have to be determined."

Jessica signed with Dreamworks in 1997 and started her search for the right songs for her debut album.

Jessica says that she prefers to sing lyrics that are true to life.

"I have to sing meaningful songs—story songs that reflect something I or someone close to me has lived through," she says. "I need to relate to the emotions."

Jessica knows that although luck brought her the record deal, her talent and determination are what's going to keep her successful.

Jessica also knows that no one can be a success if they are on drugs.

"I'm going to be very strong on this. There couldn't possibly be any good that can come out of drugs. Whether or not you do it a little bit, say smoke a little marijuana every now and then, I think it can lead to more times you do drugs and bad things can happen. First of all, it's illegal, and I don't think any good can come out of that. I would say to everybody to stay away from them. I would never, ever do drugs."

Even though Jessica considers herself your "average" teen, she has chosen to face life's various challenges head-on. After her ordeal in her childhood and then her hard work to achieve a successful singing

career, Jessica sees nothing but good things to come.

"My career is probably the highest high of anything I'm going through in my life. It's something wonderful to experience every single day that I wake up and get to do something with music. I live for that every day. I have a wonderful job, and I look forward to doing everything—touring, making records, everything."

When asked about her plans for the next few years, it is not surprising what her answer is. "I just want to make music for the next 15 years. Maybe I'll get

"It's important to stand up for what you believe in and not let people push you around and make you do what you don't want to do." —Singer Jessica Andrews



off to the movies and more songwriting. It's what I want to do for a long, long time.

"I also want to play an instrument, learn to speak a language, and finish school."

Jessica has been home-schooled by her mother, who helps her maintain her perspective.

Other interests in Jessica's life are golf and playing softball. And of course, music.

Jessica attributes her sound decisions to her parents. "I was raised with strong morals, and it's made all the difference."

When asked what advice she would give to other teens looking to their future, Jessica answers, "Work hard, keep your head on straight, and just have fun. If you're not enjoying what you're doing, you shouldn't be doing it." ■

JUST BETWEEN US

Listen

Not much surprises me anymore, especially when it comes to the ways that people can find to hurt themselves. But some new reports on teens and drinking landed on my desk, and . . . well, you be the judge:

- Recent research shows that every day in the United States more than 11,000 people under age 20 try their first drink of alcohol.
- Every year students in junior and senior high school drink about 1.1 billion cans of beer.
- Eight young people die in alcohol-related automobile crashes every day.
- About 10 million current drinkers are under age 21.
- Of course, you know that a person can die from drinking too much alcohol. But 2.6 million teenagers don't know that.
- During each hour of a typical weekend an average of one teenager dies in a car crash. Nearly half of those crashes involve alcohol.
- More than 40 percent of twelfth graders report having ridden in a car with a driver who has been drinking alcohol.

At times it must seem as if everyone around you drinks. The pressure to join in must be intense. For many teenagers, giving in to that pressure is easier than taking a stand. With each drink your individuality gets lost somewhere between your mouth, heart, bloodstream, and brain. And so, ironically, one of the first times in your life you get to make a decision to be your own person, too many teens decide to fit in with the crowd.

Hey, drinking won't make you cool. It doesn't turn you into a superstud or supermodel. And drinking doesn't solve your problems. On the contrary, millions of teens find that alcohol ends up causing more problems than it solves.

Even though it's been more years than I'd care to count, I do remember how hard it is to be a teenager. Lots of times life feels like a pressure cooker. Taking control of your life seems like the toughest thing you'll ever do. But control is the first thing you lose when you drink.

You face so many choices every day. Don't let that first sip of beer fool you into thinking you're cool. Be your own person. After all, you don't need alcohol to be amazing!



L A R R Y B E C K E R

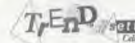
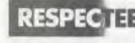
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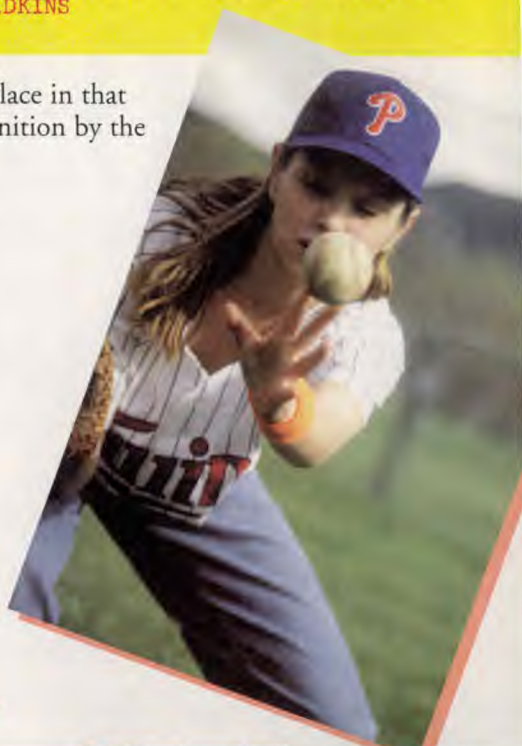


In sports there are many slang terms used to describe plays that take place in that sport. How many of them do you know? Put the letter of each sport definition by the term used.

- A. The fourth hitter in baseball.
- B. A player that keeps the puck out of the net in hockey.
- C. A score made in football.
- D. A zero point made in tennis.
- E. Knocking down 10 pins with the first two balls in bowling.
- F. Making one stroke less than par in golf.
- G. Jamming a shot into the basket in basketball.
- H. A diving position with head back, back arched, and arms extended.
- I. Slamming the ball onto the floor on the opposite side of the net.
- J. What a soccer player does after the ball crosses over the sideline.

- 1. ____ touchdown
- 2. ____ spike
- 3. ____ birdie
- 4. ____ throw-in
- 5. ____ slam dunk
- 6. ____ layout
- 7. ____ cleanup
- 8. ____ love
- 9. ____ spare
- 10. ____ goalie

ANSWERS: 1. C 2. I
3. F 4. J 5. G 6. H 7. A
8. D 9. E 10. B



"There couldn't possibly be any good that can come out of drugs. . . . I would say to everybody to stay away from them. I would never, ever do drugs."

— Country singer Jessica Andrews



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