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ISSUE!



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people are talking about...

(Continued from page 349)

Newhouse Theater on October 25—and may just show that Beckett, deep as he is, is pretty damn funny about it. . . . Meanwhile, way Off-Broadway, Phantom perfume is competing with Elizabeth Taylor's Passion. What next? "Burn This" incense? . . .

The '60s live forever, especially on CDs, whose sales reflect the loyalty of older music fans to artists like the Beatles and Joni Mitchell. Rhino Records has been reissuing some interesting 'sixties esoterica (The Turtles, The Vogues), but some of the best disks available are the **Motown** CD anthologies of Marvin Gaye, Smokey Robinson, et al.—the guys who taught Terence Trent D'Arby everything he knows. . . . Will whoever said that bicycle shorts make good-looking party pants please stand up! . . . **Kid food is getting more and more like cat food. A mail-order company, My Own Meals, Inc., now offers cheap (\$2.39—\$2.99), convenient dinners—like My Favorite Pasta—that can be boiled in their pouches or microwaved. . . .**

The last word in Cajun food comes from 103 Second Avenue, a restaurant on Manhattan's Lower East Side that offers a "blackened hamburger"—just like Dad used to make when he barbecued. . . .

Gay activists were up in arms when New York City's gay newspaper *The Native* endorsed Michael Dukakis, primarily because he has supported a policy in Massachusetts that prevents homosexuals from becoming foster parents. Meanwhile, the big joke around town has been that if **Dukakis**, whose family is said to hail from the Greek Island of Lesbos, were elected, he'd be the first Lesbian President. Alas, a man. . . . Sometimes it seems that the people who benefit most from two decades of feminism are men, who not only never give up seats on buses but now seem to think they have license to trample you getting onto an elevator. . . .

Gurus It's bumper-to-bumper on *The Road Less Traveled*, M. Scott Peck, M.D.'s prescription for right living, which this month celebrates five years on *The New York Times's* best-seller list and over three million copies sold. Who could have predicted the runaway success of a book that emphasizes such un-American virtues as the ability to **delay gratification!** . . . Speaking of the road less traveled: These days politicians who want to enhance their image—to be seen as above reproach—acquire their moral credentials by not running for President. . . . Way off the beaten track is P.J. O'Rourke, the funniest travel writer in America, whose new collection, *Holidays in Hell*, contains such trenchant observations as this: "Commies love concrete, but they don't know how to make it. Concrete is a mixture of cement, gravel, and straw? No? Gravel, water, and wood pulp? Water, potatoes, and lard?" . . .

Fact Lust Our obsession with facts may have started with *College Bowl*, a popular TV show of the 'sixties that was recently brought back, but it has reached full flower of late. At the L.A. Library's main branch, for example, requests for information—like, what state is Kansas City in?—far outnumber books checked out. And one of the most avidly read magazine columns is the "Harper's Index," which pointed out that it would take one-ninth of the defense budget to bring all of the below-poverty level U.S. families up above poverty level for one year. Now, for the \$64,000 question: What exactly are we defending? The promise of **equal opportunity**—the ideal of the "American way of life"—has been broken by defense spending. . . . The next question: Name one activity that used to be performed in the privacy of one's home that isn't now done in the street? . . . The best T-shirt of the month: "Every day I wake up and I thank God for my unique ability to accessorize" . . . —TRACY YOUNG

("People" continued on page 352)

movies

Steel magnolia: Julia Roberts

Julia Roberts' resemblance to her brother Eric goes beyond the wide mouth and long, turned-up nose that she has been told make her look like "Eric Roberts with hair." She sometimes clips her words the way he does or finds herself "doing my lips" in a way that is "totally Eric." But her fire and her statuesque beauty have propelled her into a film career all her own.

Roberts (*right*), twenty, is still reeling from director Herb Ross's call asking her to play Sally Fields's daughter in the film version of *Steel Magnolias*, Robert Harling's play about the women in a Louisiana beauty parlor. Working with Shirley MacLaine, Olympia Dukakis, Dolly Parton, Daryl Hannah, and Fields, says Roberts, "I feel like I'm making the A-team."

Roberts' current film is *Mystic Pizza*, a girl-buddy story in which she plays an emotive Portuguese pizza waitress who falls in love with a rich boy (see page 349). While shooting her previous film, *Satisfaction*, she fell in love in earnest—with costar Liam Neeson, thirty-six (see page 352); the couple lives in Venice, California, a few blocks from the ocean. Roberts says she's been told that after *Magnolias* things won't be simple anymore. "As different as Liam and I are, we are kind of becoming unsimple together. I think we will keep each other humble, and that we will be complex and happy—and together." —SHERYL KORNMAN

PATRICK DEMARCHELIER Details, last pages