

San Diego Repertory Theatre

The Curious REPort

an inside look at

STEAL HEAVEN

Steal Heaven

By Herbert Siguenza

Directed by Todd Salovey

January 3 – 25, 2015

in the Lyceum Space

**A RADICALLY
DIFFERENT COMEDY
CELEBRATING THE
SPIRIT OF
REVOLUTION**

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This In Depth Guide was prepared by Literary Manager, Danielle Ward
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Cover Art by Mollie Luria-Roberson

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WE ARE **EXCITED** ABOUT

We are always excited to share a **world premiere** with our audiences, but it is even more special when you get to attend to the birth of a new play and witness every single step along the development process. Helping a seed of an idea form into a fully-realized play is one of the most exciting things about working in the theatre. And once we have established a collaborative team that works well together, we are eager to find another project to develop together...making the magic happen once more.

After the success of *A Weekend with Pablo Picasso*, writer/actor Herbert Siguenza and director Todd Salovey turned to each other and said...what's next? Then Todd mentioned Abbie Hoffman. "From what I remember of Abbie Hoffman he was kind of the clown prince of the Left," said Siguenza. "I didn't take him seriously. Nobody did really. But the more I read about him, the more I found out about his life, the more respect I gained and the more in awe I was of his politics and his philosophy which was using humor, theatrics and politics. Kind of like what I've been doing all along anyway." Herb discovered an exciting connection between Abbie's politics and zany tactics and his own political ideals and comedic talents. Based on his satirical work with the Chicano-American performance troupe Culture Clash, this seemed an ideal topic for another solo writing and acting adventure.



The development process then started in much the same way as *A Weekend with Pablo Picasso* did. Herb scoured through books by and interviews with Abbie Hoffman to create a rough draft of a script made entirely of Abbie's words.



You know about Abbie Hoffman, right? He was the political and social activist who co-founded the Youth International Party ("Yippies") on New Year's Eve in 1968.

From there, the frame of Abbie talking to us from heaven helped shape the story and open the parameters for an "anything can happen" feel. But it quickly became clear that Abbie needed someone else (other than the audience) to talk to. He needed a fellow radical to teach and put through the paces.

Siguenza asked, "What if the icon of youthful rebellion served as the patron saint of radicals, offering a boot-camp for activists with the chutzpha required to go back to Earth to

From there, as often happens during the creative process, the story itself started to take over. The main character shifted over to Trish—a young veteran-turned activist—and with it the focus from the protests of the 60s to the revolution of the future.



The mission of **San Diego Repertory Theatre** is to produce **intimate, exotic, provocative** theatre. We promote a more inclusive community through vivid works that nourish progressive political and social values and celebrate the multiple voices of our region. San Diego Repertory Theatre **feeds the curious soul.**



Trish quickly became a force that challenged everything that Abbie has been preaching. By equalizing the playing ground between Abbie and Trish, it opened the door for Abbie to learn, grow, and change with his star pupil. It also became necessary for Abbie to bring in some reinforcements, Therefore, Siguenza added a third actor—one who could take on any and all other roles of including: Albert Einstein, Ronald Regan, John Lennon, Timothy Leary, Bhagwan Shree Rajnessh, Steve Jobs, and God.

Some of you may have seen an early public reading of *Steal Heaven* in the 2013 Jewish Arts Festival. But this play is vastly different than the version seen in JFest. With each subsequent draft, Siguenza has embraced more of his Culture Clash roots, and by extension, has infused more of the wild and crazy spirit of Abbie Hoffman into the piece.

We are also excited to include some of the other *A Weekend With Picasso* collaborators—with whom we have shared a long history of successful productions—including set designer Guilio Perrone and projection designer Victoria Petrovich. Together they will turn a black-box theatre into a stylized corner of heaven and transport us through time: past, present, and future.

Herbert Siguenza will once again embody the role of Abbie Hoffman. But this time he will be joined by Summer Spiro (who recently played Sharon in our production of *Detroit*) as a powerfully honest Trish and the multi-talented Mark Pinter (who was Russ in our production of *Clybourne Park*) playing a variable assortment of odd characters.

This play—with its roots firmly planted in the spirit of the 60s—is a call to action for us today. In *Steal Heaven*, Siguenza boldly asks: “Is activism is dead in America?” It is a big question, one that the REP takes to heart. As we step into 2015...we are excited to offer such a fun, fantastical exploration of how to take on the challenges of the 21st century, especially since it leaves us to ruminate on the role of forgiveness and the power of love as we move forward.



We look forward to laughing with you in the dark and talking with you in the light.

INTERESTING TIDBITS

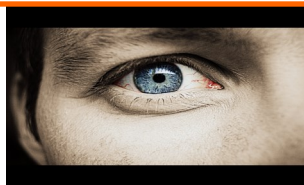
Even after over 240 years, *Time* still considers the Boston Tea Party American's most influential protest.

http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2096654_2096653,00.html



A taser not only incapacitates a person, but can actually cause serious health issues, including cardiac arrest. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/01/health/-chest-can-kill-a-study-warns.html?_r=0

White house speech writers are diversely talented writers responsible for everything from speeches in foreign policy and the State of the Union to jokes for the Correspondent's dinner. Many have gone on to become successful novelists, journalists, and screenwriters.



Life review, or having one's life flash before their eyes, is becoming more common and medicine becomes better at reviving those close to death.

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/cusp/201312/bright-light-tunnel-life-review>

Joe Rogan and Graham Hancock believe psychedelics could bring about world peace.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4f-GvR72RE>



Canadian dentist Michael Zuk purchased John Lennon's molar at an auction in 2011 and is moving ahead on plans to clone the Beatle and raise him as a son starting in 2040 to commemorate Lennon's 100th birthday. <http://www.themarysue.com/john-lennon-clone/>

Fuck has been part of the English language since the 15th century.

<http://solongasitswords.wordpress.com/2014/02/12/on-the-origin-of-fuck/>

@#%\$&!

PROVOCATIVE FACT 1:

10 Women Activists to Celebrate

Below are ten examples of the countless women who have changed the world through their courageous activism and revolutionary spirit.



Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) A male schoolteacher once told young Susan B. Anthony that she didn't need to learn long division because "a girl needs to know how to read the Bible and count her egg money, nothing more." She never forgot the slight. As a school headmistress she began campaigning for equal pay for female teachers. She was also a champion of women's rights and founder of the National Women's Suffrage Association.

Harriet Tubman (1822-1913) "The was one of two things I had a right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other." Choosing liberty, Tubman, who was born a slave in 1820, fled Maryland and followed the North Star to the free state of Pennsylvania. She would help to rescue more than 300 slaves on the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, she was the first woman to lead a military expedition, liberating more than 700 slaves in South Carolina. Tubman ended her life of activism fighting for women's suffrage in New York



Emma Goldman (1869-1940) was a crusader for anarchism, feminism, and the labor movement. She was also an essayist and is best known as the first editor of *Mother Earth*, a magazine providing a forum for feminist and anarchist writers.

Corazon Aquino (1933-2009) After her husband's brutal assassination by the political force in the Philippines, this inexperienced homemaker and mother of 5, took the reins of one of the world's most volatile nations. She held the title of President of the Philippines for 6 years, despite many attempts to de-throne her



Angela Davis (1944-) At 26 she was already a scholar, political activist and a Most Wanted Fugitive of the FBI. She emerged as a prominent counterculture activist and radical in the 1960's. Her roots as a leading during the political turmoil of the '60's stretch back to her childhood in segregated Birmingham, AL.



Aung San Suu Kyi (1945-) the daughter of an assassinated independence hero, Aung is now known as “the Lady” to millions of Burmese citizens who consider her more of a goddess than a rebel. She has been the foremost leader in the effort to democratize the Southeast Asian nation as well as a courageous advocate for human rights and peaceful revolution.

Elizabeth Warren (1949-) Senator Elizabeth Warren, a former Harvard professor turned Wall Street scourge, is one of a clutch of unlikely radicals giving hope to those disenchanted with mainstream Democrats. In 2009 and 2010, she was named one of *TIME Magazine*’s 100 Most Influential People in the World. In April 2014, her book *A Fighting Chance* was published. The book’s title refers to a time she says is now gone, when even families of modest means who worked hard and played by the rules had at a fair shot at the American dream. Many are pushing for Warren to run for president in 2016. She is known for her blistering populist assault on corporations, Republicans, banks, lobbyists and trade deals.



Leymah Gbowee (1972-) In 2002 she organized a peaceful movement in Liberia which succeeded in bringing an end to a Civil War which had killed more than 250,000 people in 14 years. She gathered women from many different backgrounds to pray and sing in public, demanding peace. Picketing, fasting and threatening a ‘sex strike,’ the women risked their lives to demand that the President end the vi-

cious conflict.

Malala Yousafzai (1997-) is a Pakistani school pupil and spokesperson for women's right to education. In retaliation for her high profile campaign for education and criticism of the Taliban, she was shot in the head at close range by a Taliban gunman. She survived the gunshot wound and has become a leading spokesperson for human rights, education and women's rights. She has received numerous peace awards, and was the youngest person ever nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize.



Tawakul Karman (1979 -) is a Yemeni journalist, politician and senior member of the Al-Islah political party, and human rights activist. She leads the group “Women Journalists Without Chains” which have been doing peaceful protesting on the Yemen capital every Tuesday since 2007 to get the President, Ali Abdullah Saleh to resign over the poor working conditions for the masses. 40% of the 23 million citizens live on \$2 a day or less.

2: Is Free Thinking a Mental Illness?

By Andrew at OffTheGridNews, October 8, 2010



Is nonconformity and freethinking a mental illness? According to the newest edition of the DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders), it certainly is. The manual identifies a new mental illness called “oppositional defiant disorder” or ODD. Defined as an “ongoing pattern of disobedient, hostile and defiant behavior,” symptoms include questioning authority, negativity, defiance, argumentativeness, and being easily annoyed.

The DSM-IV is the manual used by psychiatrists to diagnose mental illnesses and, with each new edition, there are scores of new mental illnesses. Are we becoming sicker? Is it getting harder to be mentally healthy? Authors of the DSM-IV say that it’s because they’re better able to identify these illnesses today. Critics charge that it’s because they have too much time on their hands.

New mental illnesses identified by the DSM-IV include arrogance, narcissism, above-average creativity, cynicism, and antisocial behavior. In the past, these were called “personality traits,” but now they’re diseases. And there are treatments available.

All of this is a symptom of our over-diagnosing and overmedicating culture. In the last 50 years, the DSM-IV has gone from 130 to 357 mental illnesses. A majority of these illnesses afflict children. Although the manual is an important diagnostic tool for the psychiatric industry, it has also been responsible for social changes. The rise in ADD, bipolar disorder, and depression in children has been largely because of the manual’s identifying certain behaviors as symptoms. A Washington Post article observed that, if Mozart were born today, he would be diagnosed with ADD and “medicated into barren normality.”

According to the DSM-IV, the diagnosis guidelines for identifying oppositional defiant disorder are for children, but adults can just as easily suffer from the disease. This should give any freethinking American reason for worry. The Soviet Union used new “mental illnesses” for political repression. People who didn’t accept the beliefs of the Communist Party developed a new type of schizophrenia. They suffered from the delusion of believing communism was wrong. They were isolated, forcefully medicated, and put through repressive “therapy” to bring them back to sanity.

When the last edition of the DSM-IV was published, identifying the symptoms of various mental illnesses in children, there was a jump in the diagnosis and medication of children. Some states have laws that allow protective agencies to forcibly medicate, and even make it a punishable crime to withhold medication. This paints a chilling picture for those of us who are nonconformists.

Although the authors of the manual claim no ulterior motives but simply better diagnostic practices, the labeling of freethinking and nonconformity as mental illnesses has a lot of potential for abuse. It can easily become a weapon in the arsenal of a repressive state.



3: Does Marching On Washington Really Matter?

By Rick Hampson, (experts from article in USA Today, August 20th 2013)

The 1963 march set the standard, but the impact and value today seem to have waned.



Janice Spurgin, a rancher from Nebraska, joined hundreds of thousands of abortion opponents this January in the March for Life to the Supreme Court. She found it "an amazing pilgrimage experience," remarkable for a passion exemplified by a Franciscan who walked barefoot. When she flew home, she found nothing about the march in her local newspaper. She was not surprised. "In Washington, I think people look out the window and think, 'Not another march!'"

March fatigue: so many of them, for so many causes, to so little apparent effect. Is marching on Washington, one of the signal rituals of American popular democracy, out of step? Everyone knows about the civil rights march 50 years ago this month where Martin Luther King gave his "I Have a Dream" speech. But who remembers Washington marches for colon cancer screening (2006) or public broadcasting (2012), or against Scientology (2008), genetically engineered food (2011) or African warlord Joseph Kony (2012)?

The Million Man March of 1995 begat the Million Mom, Million Family, Million Worker, Millions More and Million Puppet marches, none of which came close to drawing a million marchers. David Garrow, a King biographer, says the 1963 Washington march "has been debased by repetition." It has descended to parody. Jon Stewart's 2010 "Rally to Restore Sanity" satirized Glenn Beck's "Restoring Honor" rally earlier that year, and Stephen Colbert's "March to Keep Fear Alive" was a dig at his colleague Stewart's plea for reason. (They later combined forces.)

As a political historian at George Washington University, Eric Arnesen is predisposed to follow demonstrations in the capital. But, he says, "There are marches I hear about only because of traffic reports. There's so many they don't carry the weight the one in 1963 did."

Marching on Washington hasn't brought gun control or changed immigration policy or moved the abortion debate out of the trench it's been stuck in for decades. It did not end the war in Iraq; President George W. Bush said being influenced by street protests would be like making policy "based upon a focus group."

So why march on Washington? Lucy Barber, a historian who's studied the subject, says that while marches never change federal policy immediately and rarely grab national attention, they energize and unify the marchers themselves. They're more about rallying the faithful than converting the skeptical. Washington still gets to people," Barber says. Which might explain why the march is sort of like the restaurant in the Yogi Berra joke — so crowded nobody goes there any more.

4: 8 Reasons Young Americans Don't Fight Back: How the US Crushed Youth Resistance

By Bruce E. Levine (excerpts from alternet.org July 31st, 2011)

1. Student-Loan Debt. Large debt—and the fear it creates—is a pacifying force. During the time in one's life when it should be easiest to resist authority because one does not yet have family responsibilities, many young people worry about the cost of bucking authority, losing their job, and being unable to pay an ever-increasing debt. In a vicious cycle, student debt has a subduing effect on activism, and political passivity makes it more likely that students will accept such debt as a natural part of life.



2. Psychopathologizing and Medicating Noncompliance.

Heavily tranquilizing antipsychotic drugs (e.g. Zyprexa and Risperdal) are now the highest grossing class of medication in the United States (\$16 billion in 2010); a major reason for this, according to the Journal of the American Medical Association in 2010, is that many children receiving antipsychotic drugs have nonpsychotic diagnoses such as ODD or some other disruptive disorder (this especially true of Medicaid-covered pediatric patients).

3. Schools That Educate for Compliance and Not for Democracy.

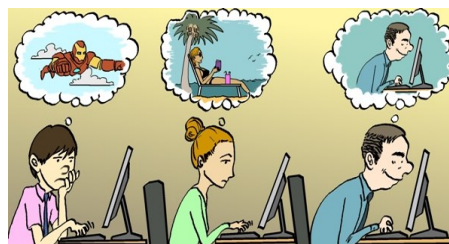
The nature of most classrooms, regardless of the subject matter, socializes students to be passive and directed by others, to follow orders, to take seriously the rewards and punishments of authorities, to pretend to care about things they don't care about, and that they are impotent to affect their situation. A teacher can lecture about democracy, but schools are essentially undemocratic places, and so democracy is not what is instilled in students.

4. “No Child Left Behind” and “Race to the Top.” The corporatocracy has figured out a way to make our already authoritarian schools even more authoritarian. These policies are essentially standardized-testing tyranny that creates fear, which is antithetical to education for a democratic society. Fear forces students and teachers to constantly focus on the demands of test creators; it crushes curiosity, critical thinking, questioning authority, and challenging and resisting illegitimate authority.



5. Shaming Young People Who Take Education—But Not Their Schooling—Seriously.

Mark Twain famously said, “I never let my schooling get in the way of my education.” Today, Americans who lack college degrees are increasingly shamed as “losers”; however, Gore Vidal and George Carlin, two of America’s most astute and articulate critics of the corporatocracy, never went to college, and Carlin dropped out of school in the ninth grade.



6. The Normalization of Surveillance. The fear of being surveilled makes a population easier to control. Young Americans have become increasingly acquiescent to corporatocracy surveillance because, beginning at a young age, surveillance is routine in their lives. Increasingly, I talk with young people who lack the confidence that they can even pull off a party when their parents are out of town, and so how much confidence are they going to have about pulling off a democratic movement below the radar of authorities?

7. Television. American children average eight hours a day on TV, video games, movies, the



Internet, cell phones, iPods, and other technologies (not including school-related use). Many progressives are concerned about the concentrated control of content by the corporate media, but the mere act of watching TV—regardless of the programming—is the primary pacifying agent (private-enterprise prisons have recognized that providing inmates with cable television can be a more economical method to keep them quiet and subdued than it would be to hire more guards).

Television is a dream come true for an authoritarian society: those with the most money own most of what people see; fear-based television programming makes people more afraid and distrustful of one another, which is good for the ruling elite who depend on a “divide and conquer” strategy; TV isolates people so they are not joining together to create resistance to authorities; and regardless of the programming, TV viewers’ brainwaves slow down, transforming them closer to a hypnotic state that makes it difficult to think critically.

8. Fundamentalist Religion and Fundamentalist Consumerism. All varieties of fundamentalism narrow one’s focus and inhibit critical thinking. Fundamentalist consumerism destroys self-reliance, creating people who feel completely dependent on others and who are thus more likely to turn over decision-making power to authorities, the precise mind-set that the ruling elite loves to see. A fundamentalist consumer culture legitimizes advertising, propaganda, and all kinds of manipulations, including lies; and when a society gives legitimacy to lies and manipulateness, it destroys the capacity of people to trust one another and form democratic movements. Fundamentalist consumerism also promotes self-absorption, which makes it difficult for the solidarity necessary for democratic movements. The food-industrial complex has helped create an



5: It's Not the Size That Counts

(It's The Media)

By Angie Welling (Deseret News, November 13, 2007)

A protest need not be a huge affair to have an impact on a company's bottom line, according to a new study co-authored by a Brigham Young University professor. In fact, the analysis of nearly 30 years of protests found that what matters most is not the number of sign-waving participants but the amount of media coverage the event received. Of the 342 protests covered by the New York Times between 1962 and 1990, stock prices of the targeted companies fell one-tenth of a percent for every paragraph printed about the event, the analysis concluded.

"We find that the size of the protest actually doesn't matter at all," said lead author Brayden King, an assistant professor of sociology at BYU. "You can have a very small protest with a lot of media coverage and do more damage to the company's image than a large protest with a lot of participants."

The study, which will soon be published in the academic journal *Administrative Science Quarterly*, found that protests caused an average decline in stock prices between 0.4 and 1%. The drops usually took place on the day of the protest or the day after, and prices tended to return to expected levels about five days after the event.

"It's a fairly quick decline, but even that kind of a quick decline can lead to a noticeable loss of investment capital," said King, whose co-author was Sarah Soule, Cornell University.

The dip in stock prices can happen for a number of reasons, including fears that the media coverage will hurt the targeted company's brand image or reputation.

"Fundamentally, investors react negatively to some sort of announcement or event because there is a fear or perception that there will be a decline in the net present value in the company," he said.

Sometimes, however, the impact is more long-lasting. A very public 1992 protest after Cracker Barrel instituted a formal policy against hiring homosexual employees resulted in a 26 % drop in stock prices against the restaurant chain, the study notes.

"One message that comes from this is the guy on the street can exert some power and influence on big corporations," King said. "The key thing here is finding an ally in the media."



6: How Technology Is Changing Protests

By Alex Hudson and Peter Price (Excerpts from *BBC News*, April 12, 2011)

While much was made of social media's role in the Middle East uprisings, new technology that moves beyond simply social media is now threatening to change protests forever.

now using technology to their advantage. Working from a London location, groups of students are passing up their chance to march in order to create and run smartphone apps and manage social media to help fight the cause.

Flash protests: "It does feel a bit as if the tools traditionally only available to the state for things like surveillance, evidence gathering, coordination and dissemination are being democratized," said the writer and broadcaster Ben Goldacre after the first wave of student protests last year. And while protest groups agree that new technology is important, nothing can replace good, old-fashioned hard work. "It's a mix of old technology and new technology," says Stacy Stevens, of UK Uncut "There isn't anything particularly hi-tech about taking books into banks [and other occupation protests] but we now have communication tools at our disposal to get the message out there. "We use blogs, Twitter, Facebook and e-mail but these technologies mean nothing without a great deal of creativity and spirit behind them." The web seems to have become vital to both protesters and the police. Even the UK government's Human Rights Joint Committee called on the "appropriate use of social media" from both sides to facilitate peaceful protest.

Liveblogging: Where updates are published online throughout the day - was once the preserve of the major media organizations, but now union representatives, smaller organizations and even individual students are all sharing their experiences while they are there and in real-time.



"The link between *liveblogging* and social media is very strong," says Matt Wells, blogs and communities editor of the Guardian. "We rely very heavily on the contributions from the participants in the event. Eyewitness testimony in the form of pictures, text or tweets is absolutely key because you can't have all your journalists at the right place at the right time.

"The one thing that we do is sift through the vast amounts of information there is and providing an accurate narrative of what's going on, which is what's lacking from Twitter and other social media."

7: Can You Ever Forgive Yourself?

12 Ways to stop beating yourself up— no matter what you've done

By Ellen Michaud (Exerpts from *Prevention.com*)

From his cramped office on the Stanford campus, Dr. Luskin has spent 6 years studying how people move toward forgiving themselves and others, and it's clearly a process that pulls at his heart as much as it teases his mind.



"Forgiveness is a tool with which we face what we've done in the past, acknowledge our mistakes, and move on," he says slowly. "It does not mean that you condone or excuse what happened. It does not mean that you forget.

"Remember the saying, 'For everything there is a season'?" he asks. "Well, there's a season for our suffering and regret. We have to have that. But the season ends; the world moves on. And we need to move on with it." Here are 12 ways to do it:

1. Categorize the offense "Most of us find it hard to forgive ourselves when we've done one of four things," says Dr. Luskin.

"Categorizing the offense begins the forgiveness process,"

emphasizes the psychologist. "It allows you to break down what you did, look at it, get a little distance, and begin healing."

2. Know how you

feel "Articulate the specific wrong you committed and the

harm it caused," says Dr. Luskin. "Tell a couple of trusted people about what you did to get support, care, and advice," he adds. Sharing reminds us that everyone makes mistakes. "We commonly think we're alone and unique in our suffering, but this only makes healing more difficult," adds Dr. Luskin. Confessing what you've done also prevents you from slipping into denial, suppression, repression, and forgetting.

- You fail at some major life task such as making your marriage work.
- Your actions have hurt someone else.
- You've hurt yourself by the way you've led your life: drinking or doing something else that's self-destructive.
- You didn't do something you thought you should, such as intervene in a family dispute or put money away so your kid can go to college.

3. Understand what you want You don't necessarily want to reconcile with the person you hurt, you just want to get rid of the shame, release the blame, and feel calm and whole at your center.

4. Recognize unrealistic expectations Most of us have a set of unconscious rules hovering in the back of our minds of how we expect ourselves to behave. But those rules, many of which we've absorbed in childhood rather than actually thought about, aren't always realistic.

5. Identify the hurt Realize that the hurt feelings, guilty thoughts, and tummy-tightening stress you feel whenever you think of your offense is what's actually making you feel bad—not what you did 2 minutes or 10 years ago, says Dr. Luskin. It's your reaction to it today that's causing a problem. It's a habit that has to go.

6. Hit the stop button Replaying what you did over and over again in your head isn't going to help you or the person you hurt. It just makes you feel bad. So every time you catch yourself ruminating on your sins, stop, and refocus your attention on something more positive.

7. Sorry! When you can't forgive yourself because of something you've done to someone else, sometimes all it takes is a sincere apology to make things right. Apologies are most effective if made in person, of course. But if that's not possible, consider wrapping your apology in a little humor.



8. Practice PERT PERT stands for Positive Emotion Refocusing Technique. It's a 45-second strategy Dr. Luskin developed to use whenever you start beating yourself up over past sins. Simply close your eyes, draw in a long breath that gently pushes out your belly, then slowly exhale as you relax your belly. Draw a second breath, and exhale.

9. Make it right "Even if the person you hurt is dead or otherwise absent from your life, you can still make things up by providing a kindness to someone else, says Dr. Luskin. "Do good rather than feel bad," says Dr. Luskin. Not only will you forgive yourself, but doing so will turn your life around in ways that you can only imagine.

10. Lose the Wicked Witch thing Once you've made amends, it's time to stop telling yourself the old story in which you're the Wicked Witch of the West.

11. Put things in perspective Once a day, think of all the kind and loving things you've done today alone. . Think about it for very long, and you'll realize that you've become one amazing person!

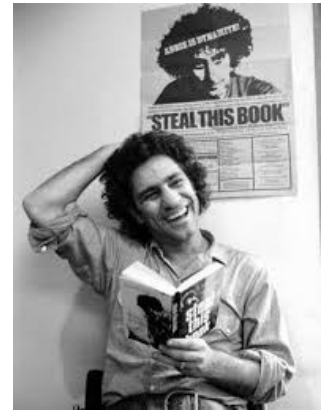
12. Give yourself a break! Feeling bad about things you've done in the past can create a pretty painful present. So while you're learning how to forgive yourself and move on, give your mind and body a break from all the shame and guilt by replacing them with gratitude, says Dr. Luskin. Here's how he suggests you do it:

8: The Role of Humor in Social Justice

Humor is a social corrective. From the 18th century and continuing to the late-night television satire of today, humor has been used to explore the political and social issues of the time. Humor can validate experience, help us to think more flexibly and reframe situations. Jon Stewart's "fake news" uses irony and sarcasm to blur the divide between "real" and "fake" news, while Stephen Colbert's concept of "truthiness," demonstrates the absurdity of a "truth," or that which masquerades as truth. These programs are popular because they intend to collapse the divisions between entertainment and edification.

The Incongruity Theory describes humor as an enjoyable experience of a mismatch between what we expect and what we experience. Since American society was built on the ideals of democracy but is awash in the realities of social and political imperfections, comedy can bring awareness to these discrepancies in a way that we can hear. This makes humor a powerful communication tool and potential change agent and expands its value far beyond its common role as entertainment.

Humor is perhaps the only genre to have been popular with both our founding fathers and to remain popular today. In the great tradition of American humor, the title of "First American Humorist" rightfully belongs to Benjamin Franklin, a tradition born with the purpose of enacting social change.



Go fly a kite!

Franklin was the beginning of a long line of writers who created a uniquely American form of humor filled with clever wit, folksy wisdom, and a generous portion of irreverence. The tradition begun by Franklin was handed down to Mark Twain and, in modern times, to writers like Art Buchwald and Dave Barry. Humor is perhaps the only genre to have been popular with both our founding fathers and to remain popular today. As scholars of American Studies have noted, understanding the tradition of American humor allows us to understand the archetypal American figures of our collective consciousness.

What is considered humorous changes across historical periods and what this tells us about these periods. We will analyze the humorist, the intended audience, the form, and the content of the text to gain insight into the social climate of the age.



The Marx Brothers

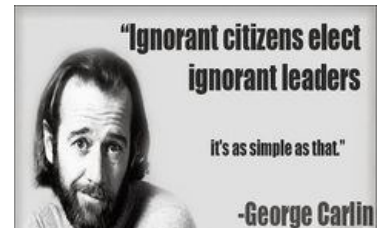
In the early 1900's there was no great masters of the farce than the Marx Brothers. The brothers used a variety of slapstick, deadpan, farce and even witticism to add a political and social bite to their material. *Duck Soup*, for example, is a major look on politics and war. The movie can be read as an indictment of the insanity of war and a critique of the relationship between wealth and political power. Groucho made many critical remarks

about politics and had friends which were regarded as communist by the US of the 1950s. This led to Groucho being investigated by the FBI. "Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly and applying the wrong remedies." —Groucho Marx

Political and satirical cartoons also became increasingly popular in the 19th century, a time when many Americans were illiterate, remains a popular form of activism today. The cartoons helped shape modern-day politics. The cartoonist Thomas Nast became famous in the second half of the nineteenth century for his political cartoons in *Harper's Weekly* magazine, in which he created the symbols of the elephant for Republicans and the donkey for Democrats.

"Get up, Stand-up"

Stand-up is a popular form for comedians to express their ideas and feeling using humor. Being a stand-up comedian requires that you look at the world and situations objectively, so naturally stand-up comedians and social issues go hand-in-hand.



George Carlin is a prime example of a stand-up using that medium to express his social views. As a lifelong stand-up comedian, Carlin had a lot of opportunities to speak his mind—and religion and politics were two of his favorite subjects. Carlin left a wealth of social, political, and religious commentary—and most of it was highly critical. He often spoke about his youth in Catholic school and, as a result of his particular school's relatively liberal approach to education, he says, he was given the intellectual freedom to eventually reject the faith. Carlin was not unique in that he saw through the thick layers of societal propaganda and rhetoric that are the source of many of the world's problems. In addition to Carlin we have comedians like; Richard Pryor, Lenny Bruce, Bill Maher, Lewis Black and Louis CK adding their views on social conditions as well.

Political satire

Political satire is another form of comedy that is thriving today, perhaps to an extent never before in human history, in film over the past fifty years, we have had *Dr. Strangelove*, Woody Allen's *Bananas*, *Wag the Dog*, and Michael Moore's various documentaries. On television we have shows like *The Daily Show*, and *Colbert Report* and cartoons including *The Simpsons* and *South Park*, all of which frequently utilize political satire. On the Internet, we have *The Onion* Web site, devoted to political and other forms of satire, and all kinds of amateur videos poking fun at presidential candidates on YouTube.



With a history consisting of; Benjamin Franklin, Mark Twain, Burt Williams, the Marx Brothers, Richard Pryor, Lenny Bruce and the television shows *I Love Lucy*, *Looney Toons*, *Saturday Night Live*, *Seinfeld*, *The Chapelle Show*, *The Office*, *Modern Family*, *The Daily Show*, and *The Colbert Report* all engage in the social debates concerning race relations, gender roles, and divisions in socio-economic class in America. So no matter what the social issues are in the world comedy will be there to poke fun on shared social norms and customs, national ethos, and our underlying mores.

9: Global 'March Against Monsanto' Rallies Activists

By Renee Lewis (Al Jazeera America, October 12, 2013)



Activists from around the globe participated in a global 'March Against Monsanto' Saturday, calling for the permanent boycott of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This was the second global, anti-Monsanto protest — the first took place on May 25 with over 2 million participants, organizers said.

Photos appear to show hundreds of marchers taking to the streets in cities around the world including Vienna, London, Chennai and Sydney. Rallies have kicked off in U.S. cities, including L.A. and Denver.

Critics of Monsanto, a multi-national biotech corporation, say its seeds destroy the soil and are designed to make constant repurchase necessary because the seeds last only one generation. The seeds must also be used with a variety of the company's other products like fertilizers, fungicides and pesticides, which have been linked to mass bee deaths.

GMOs are labeled in 62 countries, but not the U.S. despite several attempts.

Monsanto, which touts itself as a "sustainable agriculture company" and is worth over \$55 billion, says it produces high-yield conventional and biotech seeds that enable more nutritious and durable crops and "safe and effective crop protection solutions." The U.S. government also says Monsanto's products are safe.

March Against Monsanto (MAM), however, says GMOs are not properly monitored to ensure public safety and that no long-term, independent studies were carried out on GMOs before they were introduced for human consumption.

"In the U.S., the revolving door between Monsanto employees, government positions and regulatory authorities has led to key Monsanto figures occupying positions of power at the FDA and EPA. Monsanto has spent hundreds of millions of dollars to obstruct all labeling attempts; they also suppress any research containing results not in their favor," MAM said in a press release.

GMOs have been banned to varying degrees in Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Madeira, New Zealand, Peru, Russia, France, Switzerland and Costa Rica.



GMOs are labeled in 62 countries, but not the U.S. despite several attempts. Last fall, Californian voters narrowly rejected an initiative to label GMOs, and a similar initiative is on the Nov. 5 Washington state ballot.

Prominent environmentalist Vandana Shiva has been outspoken against Monsanto, particularly in light of the corporation's link to hundreds of thousands of Indian farmer suicides. More than 250,000 farmers have committed suicide in India after Monsanto's Bt cotton seeds largely failed. Many farmers left in desperate poverty decided to drink Monsanto pesticide, ending their lives.

"The creation of seed monopolies, the destruction of alternatives, the collection of super profits in the form of royalties and the increasing vulnerability of monocultures has created a context for debt, suicides and agrarian distress," Shiva wrote.

Josh Castro, organizer for the Quito, Ecuador march said in a press release that he hopes to stop the "destructive practices of multinational corporations like Monsanto."

"Biotechnology is not the solution to world hunger ... Monsanto's harmful practices are causing soil infertility, mono-cropping, loss of biodiversity, habitat destruction and contributing to beehive collapse.



WHY DOES BIOTECH GIANT MONSANTO GET IMMUNITY FROM FEDERAL COURTS?

NATIONOFCHANGE.ORG/MONSANTO



10: Must Have Apps

for the Social Protester!

Activists in Nigeria have shown us how it's possible to use mobile technology to prevent electoral fraud, while activists in the Middle East, have been making use of various mobile applications to broadcast images, videos from the protests that have swept the region.

We all know Facebook and Twitter are must haves for any active Social protester these days, but what are some other options to make the most out of your protesting? While there is no hard and fast rule on which apps to use here is a list of the apps that will make the most out of your protest.



Seesmic – Report Live

Updating live on social media has proven to be one of the most significant landmarks of today's protests, with Facebook and Twitter being the most important channels. Seesmic is an app that gives you easy access to both these social networks on one platform. Its intuitive interface allows users to update quickly and effortlessly, which is exactly what you need when you post live from a sit-in.



Sit or Squat – Find a bathroom

Even the most devout protesters have to succumb to nature's call. Demonstrations and protesting activities can last hours (or even weeks!), and the occasional visit to the toilet is simply unavoidable. Sit or Squat is a genius app that gives you the hottest information on the nearest available toilet according to your location. A quick visit to the loo and you're back on the march! Not to mention, you can avoid using the toilet at certain commercial chains that sit well with your ideology.



Sukey

The creators of the Google Maps mashup used to track and avoid police and kitting (the illegal corralling by British police officers) during student protests in London have now released a suite of apps called Sukey that automates the process, simplifying the preservation of the fundamental right to protest while still opening a line for dialogue between protestors and the authorities (the app has a function that allows the police to message demonstrators and explain what they are trying to accomplish).



I'm Getting Arrested – Alert Your Loved Ones

In case things get heavy and you find yourself eye to eye with the law, this app has your back. If you actually get arrested during a protest, one click will send an alert to your friends, family or lawyer via SMS. It's a worst case scenario kind of thing but you never know.



Bambuser - Record and Share Video Clips

If you want to live stream video from your phone, Bambuser is a popular app already used by many Middle Eastern activists. The sheer power of Bambuser came to light when Egyptian activist Tarek Shalaby was arrested during a protest outside the Israeli embassy in Cairo. In the harrowing recording, which streamed live at the time of his arrest, you can clearly hear Egyptian security forces attacking protesters. In addition to live streaming video, you can automatically connect the service to your social networks, sending a notification to Facebook, Twitter and 10 other sites, that you're video is live.



Soundcloud - Record and Share Audio Clips

If you'd rather save on bandwidth and use an audio recording instead of a video recording, SoundCloud is one of the best options available. You can sync SoundCloud to your Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr accounts, so that your recordings are instantly shared with your followers, although unlike Bambuser, the recording is not live-streamed.



Locate or Wipe Your Phone

Activists in the Middle East face a serious risk of being arrested by governmental security forces. Their smartphones, while an essential weapon in protests, can easily become a weapon used against them when detained. One way in which activists can protect themselves, and their contacts' identities, is by wiping their phones and restoring them to factory settings. AndroidLost is available as a free download from the Android Market. iPhone users also have a quick and easy way of remotely wiping their phones using Apple's free Find My iPhone app.



VPN Express – secure connection to the internet

iPhone and iPad users can use the free app VPN Express for a quick and easy way get a secure connection to the net. While the app is free, there is a limit on your data transfer, but in-app purchases of extra data are relatively cheap. Android users have the much more complex option of using Tor, one of the best options for encrypting Internet traffic and protecting your identity.

11: 15 Ways to Politically and Socially Activate Your Life

An excerpt from “The Activists Handbook - 1000 ways to Politically and Socially Activate Your Life” found on [wordpress.com](#)



1. Be mindful of the fact that the news channels synthesize events in ways which make the individual feel as if activism is hopeless.
2. Try to make friends that are politically involved, instead of maintaining the same old friends.
3. Go to a protest, do not let the stigma propagated by the mass media keep you away from protests.
4. Write an letter to anyone who abuses their power, boss, CEO, professor, manager etc.
5. Organize meetings where you can discuss political matters with others of shared interests.
6. Talking to people is the most effective way of short-circuiting the mass media's control over people's minds.
7. Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer! Volunteering teaches oneself
8. Do not get ahead of yourself with thoughts of changing the world, change your life first and the lives of those around you.
9. Change the way you think, do not think in terms of me me me and stuff stuff stuff, but in terms of we, us, all, the world, humanity.
10. Find public spaces and use them to meet with others, to organize book readings and intimate speeches.
11. When your friends tell racist jokes, stop them in their tracks and explain to them how there is nothing funny about racism.
12. Every morning, ask yourself the question of how you as an individual can contribute to the alleviation of human suffering.
13. Learn to approach people in public, to talk to them, to ask them questions, to examine their lives through your perspective.
14. Your free time is not the time to vegetate and consume capitalist media, it's the time to reevaluate your life and society.
15. Fight your urge to accept the truths that are fed to the masses, question everything you hear, analyze everything you see.

CAUSE AND EFFECT TIMELINE

1791-1794—Whiskey Rebellion

Protesters used violence and intimidation to prevent federal officials from collecting tax on Spirits. Resistance came to a climax in July 1794, when 500 armed men attacked the fortified home of tax inspector General John Neville.

1936—The National Labor Relations Act

Gives most American workers the right to join unions and bargain collectively.

11/30/1939—Abbie Hoffman is born

1963—The Great March on Washington

As one of the largest political rallies for human rights in U.S. history, 250,000 people gathered to call for the civil and economic rights for African Americans. But it is best remembered for Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech.

1968—Chicago Seven

At the 1968 Democratic Convention, Abbie Hoffman was one of many protesters arrested on charges of inciting riot, conspiracy, and other counter-culture protest charges.



1890—The National American Woman Suffrage Association

What later becomes the largest and most important suffrage organization is formed.

1917-1919—The Silent Sentinels



A group of women in favor of women's suffrage protest in front of the White House

from January 10, 1917 until June 1919. More than a thousand different women picketed every day and night except Sunday, and many were arrested during the vigil.

December 31, 1967—Yippies

Abbie Hoffman co-founded a group of libertarian socialist members called The Youth International Party, or "Yippies"



1969—Stonewall Riots

Early morning of June 28 in New York City, the riots erupted. Gay Pride events are held throughout the world toward the end of June to mark the Stonewall Riots.



cont...

1969—Vietnam War Protest



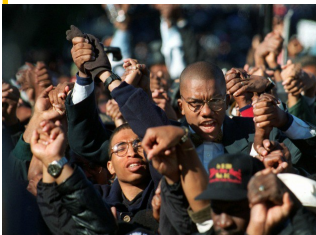
500,000 marched on Washington to protest the Vietnam War. It remains the largest political rally in the nation's history.

4/12/1989—Abbie Hoffman died

Sadly, he took his own life.

1995—Million Man March

On October 16th, there was a march on



Washington's National mall to "convey to the world a vastly different picture of the Black male."

2000—Millennium March

In April, a march was conducted on Washington. It was deemed the largest gay

2004—March for Women's Lives

On April 25th, an estimated 1.15 million people gathered. It is considered the largest march in U.S. history.



2014—Net Neutrality Slow Down

On September 10th, companies such as Netflix and Reddit staged a symbolic "slowdown" of their sites to protest the FCC's net neutrality proposal

August 15-18, 1979—Woodstock

The famous Music Festival in Bethel New York that acted

as a nexus for the counter-culture movements. 32 acts were performed outdoors with



an audience of 400,000 young people

1997—Million Woman March

On October 25th, Philadelphia was home of a protest to help promote change.

2003—World-Wide Iraq War Protest

On February 15th, tens of millions of people



across the world came together to say "no to the war in Iraq."

2011—Occupy Movement

This worldwide protest movement against social and economic inequality peaked on October 15th with simultaneous world-wide protests.



2017—The Lone Protester...

According to the Steal Heaven script, Trish protests alone outside the White House.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. One central issue of this piece is related to forgiveness. How did you connect to this issue on a personal level?
2. What if you were given a second chance at life, what changes would you make and why?
3. What issue would you fight to your death for?
4. Do you think the politics of the 60's are still relevant in the 21st Century?
5. What specific values would you say are missing in order for our society to change?

* Fill in the blank: **I PROTEST BY**_____.

