

# Paul Krassner

**'The counterculture was a continuous process, from the Bohemians to the Beat Generation to the hippies to the Yippies to the freaks. It's just different names, always developing and shedding layers of innocence.'**

BY DAVID KUPFER

**P**aul Krassner, who coined the term Yippie, co-founded the Yippies with Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin in 1967 as a way of injecting humor into the youth movement and overcoming the police pressure of that time. Using humor as a way to force people to acknowledge and in some way deal with the truth, Krassner has been in the forefront of irreverence and political satire since the late 1950s. His publication, *The Realist*, has been, in the words of fellow traveler Wavy Gravy, the official organ of the underground counterculture for more than thirty years. As a publisher, editor, comedian, and social activist, Krassner has tackled many issues, while skirting the law as well as good taste.

*The Realist* was the forerunner of the underground press of the 1960s. Krassner was ahead of the pack, breaking stories and addressing issues that were taboo for the Establishment. He pushed at the margin. Ed Sanders, co-founder of the Fugs, says Krassner "interlaced current events with culture and politics in a manner not previously done. Paul reminded us that without laughter and good times, why have a revolution? He was always on the side of personal freedom and personal destiny. Paul dared to be a part of the history of his era."

Krassner's autobiography, *Confessions of a Raving, Unconfined Nut: Misadventures in the Counterculture*, was published by Simon & Schuster in September.

**Q:** What role has *The Realist* played in helping to "out" opposition to the status quo?

**Paul Krassner:** It was both a chronicler of the counterculture and an influence on it. But underneath that, it had this sense of irreverence. It made people laugh. Humor is a way of holding up a mirror to the society—and society was boring. It was not adventurous. And there was a large difference between what people experienced and the way it was reported in the press, which was one of the things that nurtured the rise of the alternative press, that difference.

**Q:** Why were you considered a threat to the system?

**Krassner:** Well, a threat is like obscenity or humor: It's always in the eye of the beholder. I guess, judging by my FBI files, that anything that was opposed to the status quo was considered a threat to the system, and *The Realist* was a vehicle for voices opposing the status quo. So it's a control thing. *The Realist* essentially represented anti-control, anti-authority. They just don't like anybody to rock the boat.

**Q:** In terms of your childhood or your upbringing, where was your desire to oppose the status quo born?

**Krassner:** When I was a kid, the first movie I saw was *Intermezzo*. I told my violin teacher that I wanted to learn the theme song from *Intermezzo*, and he said, "That's not right for you." It was like a declaration of war, and I could just see how people liked to control what other people did, decide for them what was appropriate.

*The Realist* was a voice of individuality—especially when it started in the late 1950s, coming out of the McCarthy Era and the Silent Generation. The most common response was, "It's a breath of fresh air and it makes me realize that I'm not insane," or "I am insane but at least there's company." Now these people knew *they* weren't the only ones.

**Q:** What's the state of irreverence today in America?

**Krassner:** It's an industry. You can probably buy stock in it. Often it's irreverence for its own sake, which I guess is OK. It's not for anybody—not for me—to say what somebody else's limits should be. But I'd rather have too much irreverence than not enough. So I think it's healthy. There's still a lot of reverence for clichés, unfortunately, and people—what was the statistic I read—22 per cent of the American population believe that the Holocaust was a hoax. I hear something like that, and that kind of irreverence scares me, irreverence toward the truth and toward history. But that's the risk of freedom: irreverence toward historical tragic truth.

**Q:** You've been able to inject a lot of humor into our political system.

**Krassner:** I just look at the political system and then report on it. The humor's already there. Sometimes it's just pointing out things. I've used humor to make a point, to say the truth, doing it in my own poetic way.

For example, during the time that the Reagan Administration had its anti-cocaine public-relations campaign going on, planes were landing and delivering arms to the contras in Honduras and Nicaragua and Panama, and those planes were coming back filled to the brim with cocaine—to airports in Louisiana and Florida and Arkansas. So I could state those facts to an audi-

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ence, and then just come up with a punch line, which, in this case, was—since [CIA Director] William Casey was concerned about the planes being seen on the radar screen when they came back into this country—the punch line was, while Nancy Reagan is saying, “Just Say No,” the CIA is saying “Just Fly Low.” The laughter would turn to applause at that line because it was a way of appreciating the fact that was being stated.

I wouldn’t get any pleasure out of wearing a T-shirt about El Salvador saying “I told you so” now because, if they had listened to what people were saying then, it would have prevented countless deaths and horror. Sometimes humor is just a way of calling attention to the contradictions or the hypocrisy that’s going on officially.

**Q:** And that’s something you derived a lot of pleasure out of exposing?

**Krassner:** Yeah. Truth has it’s own high. Since life ultimately is a mystery, you can never get to the inconceivable truth about our existence, but at least you can work on these small ones, like the Iran-contra scandal and El Salvador and all the others.

**Q:** How do you see yourself linking satire and history?

**Krassner:** I guess I’m continuing in the tradition of Lenny Bruce, Mort Sahl, Dorothy Parker, Dick Gregory, Mark Twain, Jonathan Swift, and Benjamin Franklin. There’s this guy named Jimmy Tingle now who’s doing what Mort Sahl was doing then. And it’s the only thing I know how to do. I don’t even have the skills to get a job as an unskilled worker.

**Q:** Do you think it sometimes seems that Jews have cornered the humor market?

**Krassner:** I think that humor transcends Judaism. I think everyone suffers. I don’t think Jews have a corner on the market. What was the Passover joke I heard? Oh, Stevie Wonder went to a seder and somebody passed him a matzoh and he ran his fingers over it and asked, “Who writes this shit?”

You’ll appreciate that joke if you’re Jewish, African-American, blind, none of the above, or all of the above, which I guess would be Sammy Davis Jr.—but he was only half blind, right? So maybe that Muslim leader, then. . . .

**Q:** What’s his name?

**Krassner:** I can’t pronounce it. I’m ashamed of myself. But I’d know his fez anywhere. Where’s the rim shot when you need it?

**Q:** You think there’s an equivalent to the Algonquin Round Table today?

**Krassner:** If you mean Dorothy Parker, George Kaufman, Robert Benchley, and those guys sitting around a table being intellectual and chatty, I think there are equivalents. I’m not quite

sure what they are. Those are just famous names. I know the *Utne Reader* has sponsored and encouraged salons where that kind of thing goes on at different informal levels.

I didn't know that I was part of a tradition when I started. I just had to do it. It was just my nature. And then you realize you can't be the only Martian on your block or there'd be no hope.

**Q:** It must give you a good buzz to realize the kind of impact you've had.

**Krassner:** It is nice. It is fun. Doesn't pay the rent, but it is fun. A lot of people started reading *The Realist* early. I had a radio show when I was living in San Francisco, and I was hired by a guy who read *The Realist* when he was ten years old. His father was a union organizer. I met Matt Groening, who created *The Simpsons*, and he told me he was reading *The Realist* back in 1966 when he was only eleven years old and it warped his mind forever. So that's a pleasure, that he went on to warp other minds. But that's what I mean by continuing the tradition.

The first interview I did was with Alan Watts. And there were people who didn't have an outlet really, so some of their first articles appeared in *The Realist*—Robert Anton Wilson, Avery Corman, Marcia Seligson and for artists too, like Richard Guindon, who became syndicated. Or Art Spiegelman, who created *Raw* magazine and then the *Maus* books. He did one of his first cartoons for *The Realist* in 1967, and I just reprinted it in the latest *Realist*, because it's just as applicable today. It's one soldier sitting in another's lap, kissing—two male soldiers—and a sign says, MAKE LOVE NOT WAR.

**Q:** What are your thoughts about how the counterculture has become the culture?

**Krassner:** The counterculture was a continuous process, from the Bohemians to the Beat Generation to the hippies to the Yuppies to the freaks. It's just different names, always developing and shedding layers of innocence. It is present now in a lot of different forms, from the 'zines to the Rave parties to the second-generation psychedelic manufacturers. It comes in waves.

Just as the counterculture of the sixties exploded out of the repression and blandness of the Eisenhower/Nixon years, so is the counterculture of the nineties exploding out of the repression and blandness of the Reagan/Bush years. There is that parallel, but it's totally different. The technology's different, the awareness is different, the problems are magnified. In the sixties, I was an underground abortion referral service. It was illegal then. Now, they're shooting doctors who provide abortions, so everything has escalated.

**Q:** What do you think about the tactics of the anti-abortion fanatics, using their children and harassment techniques? Don't you think that's a curious turn of events, when the radical Right is using some of the same techniques as the radical Left?

**Krassner:** I don't know if we did those things. I don't know if we shot a warmonger. I've been in front of clinics, protecting buildings from these people, and they're fanatics. There is no arguing with them. Ours was just a different approach. We were trying to talk a soldier into leaving the service, but having a discussion, treating people as equals. I can understand that they have a strong religious opinion, but to try to inflict it on others—that's the line I draw. If they don't want to have abortions, let them raise kids all they want, but I'm pro-choice generally, whether it's drugs or abortion rights. I'm not a Libertarian, because then I'd have to read Ayn Rand.

**Q:** So then, how would you describe yourself?

**Krassner:** Inaccurately. I would describe myself as an investigative satirist, and a Zen Bastard, and WILL BE LAZY FOR FOOD. That's my sign. I didn't know if you meant how I would describe myself personally or professionally.

**Q:** Well, you gave me personally. That was good. Professionally, you've been an editor. . . .

**Krassner:** I have the luxury of being able to do it personally first because my work comes out of that. I'm fortunate enough not to be working for somebody else, presenting their warped vision instead of my own warped vision.

**Q:** Your life has been pretty well integrated into your work.

**Krassner:** Yeah, it's all one uncomputed metaphor.

**Q:** Well, that's what the Native Americans say—there's no separation.

**Krassner:** The only thing I remember from my entire education is an anthropologist who defined happiness as having as little separation between work and play as possible. The separation only came later on. The pygmies—the purest primitive culture on the planet—their whole life is a celebration. They smoke pot and then they dance and then they move somewhere else and do it again.

**Q:** Do you consider yourself anti-establishment?

**Krassner:** I don't look in the mirror every day and say, "Let's see what we can do to destroy the Establishment today," because it's not that pigeon-holed. After all, my book was published by Simon & Schuster, which is owned by Paramount. That's the Establishment. So if I'm anti-establishment, then the fact that they're publishing my book is an act of subversion on my part. Or an act of subversion on their part. Am I selling out or are they buying in?

**Q:** There still is an anarchist movement in this country.

**Krassner:** Oh yeah, sure. They even have anarchist conventions. It seems like an oxymoron. Anarchism is a philosophy. I wait for the green light, so I don't know if that makes me a total anarchist. I guess that's . . .

**Q:** A little more reasonable?

**Krassner:** Of course, I'm smoking a joint while I wait for the green light . . .

**Q:** How did you come to meet *Mad* magazine founder William Gaines and work for *Mad*?

**Krassner:** Well, I was working for Lyle Stuart. He published *The Independent*, an anticensorship paper, a forerunner to the underground and the alternative press. There's always been a tradition, all the way back to the revolutionary days. Stuart subscribed to *Mad* and Bill Gaines was already a subscriber to *The Independent*, so they met, became friends, and Stuart became Gaines's general manager. I was working for Stuart as his managing editor and we moved our offices into the *Mad* building, and it was a thrill because there was nothing like it at the time. You met a kid, and if he read *Boy's Life* you could tell he was one kind of kid; if he read *Mad* you could tell he was another kind of kid. And so when I started *The Realist*, it was because I had been doing free-lance stuff for *Mad*, but it was for teenagers. There was nothing in the country, really, at that time, the late 1950s, for adults in terms of social and political satire.

**Q:** So you derived some inspiration for *The Realist* from *Mad* magazine.

**Krassner:** Well, I even used some of their forms. "A Child's Primer" was one of their forms, and in the first issue of *The Realist* in 1958, I had "A Child's Primer on Telethons," just talking about the contradictions. But I was also frustrated by *Mad* because they wouldn't take things I would submit only because they were too adult, not because they weren't funny or meaningful. So, I was inspired and frustrated by *Mad*. This was before *National Lampoon*, or *Spy*, or *Doonesbury*, or *Laugh-In*, or *Saturday Night Live*. There was no competition.

**Q:** Was Gaines a political person?

**Krassner:** He was political in the sense of being an individualist, and practicing freedom of the press, and sticking to his principles.

**Q:** Can conspiracy theories be taken so far that they abnormally take over people's existences?

**Krassner:** I've met a lot of conspiracy researchers whose whole identity was tied up in it, so you begin to have a vested interest in finding conspiracies. It affects the way you perceive things.

**Q:** What's the best conspiracy theory you've heard lately?

**Krassner:** That the CIA was ultimately behind the bombing of the World Trade Center because they coddled this blind guy—you know why it's hard to remember his name is because

Howard Stern calls him Blind Azzabat, and that name stuck in my mind. That's the function of humor—it can alter your reality sometimes.

**Q:** So you do think that humor has a unique ability to help alter people's perspective of reality?

**Krassner:** Yeah, 'cause when people laugh their defenses are down, and sometimes they're stuck with a new perception that they might have resisted if it had come to them in a lecture. When you let your guard down, when you laugh, you realize that you laughed because that's a new way of perceiving something.

For example, I saw Dennis Miller describe the new Attorney General, Janet Reno, as looking like John Lithgow when he played a transvestite in *The World According to Garp*. Now, it's very difficult for me to look at her and not think of that movie. So that's what it can do. It can change your perception in that sense.

**Q:** What did your folks think when you went to work for Larry Flynt as editor of *Hustler* magazine?

**Krassner:** My father wouldn't buy it, especially when I was editor, which was just for six months. Even when I published a full-page nude frontal shot of myself, my father refused to buy the issue at the store. And my daughter was a little upset. My ex-wife and my daughter were living in Los Angeles then, and my ex-wife said, "Well, it's nobody's business." And my daughter was saying, "C'mon everyone, see the picture of my dad, see the picture of my dad!" They weren't too happy about it.

At a party some woman said, "Oh, you've got a cute dong!" I felt I knew how women felt being a sex object. It was an interesting experience. I hadn't planned to do it. They had interviewed me for *Hustler* and they wanted the photo session to accompany it. So the photographer asked me—it was one of those interesting moments of truth. Larry Flynt had been born again, and in his rapture hired me to change the magazine. It was so absurd that I couldn't refuse. If the magazine was going to have pictures of nudes, I decided to keep my cowboy hat on. I had to call my mother and tell her that I had posed in the magazine. And I said, "The only thing I had on was my cowboy hat." And she said, "Well, at least you had that on!" By that time I had done so many things to embarrass my parents, that it was already beyond the last straw.

**Q:** Why do you think our Government has been so fixated on opposing marijuana use?

**Krassner:** In two words: insane priorities. If I were to do this in the form of "A Child's Primer": See the tobacco subsidy the Government is giving. See that Bill Clinton wants to have a sin tax on cigarettes. Just follow the path of the money. That means a thousand people a day are subsidizing their own deaths. So that's cigarettes. Now, the most harm I ever saw marijuana do was a guy raided the neighbor's refrigerator. So the priorities are insane.

**Q:** What does the war on drugs represent to you, in terms of the Establishment's effort to repress people and prevent the natural development of society?

**Krassner:** It is used as an excuse to violate privacy and obtain property and to maintain jobs, the jobs of the people in the Drug Enforcement Administration and the narcotics squads. They depend on this false distinction between legal drugs and illegal drugs so they can continue their careers. And a lot of people had their lives ruined by laws that were neither logical nor humane.

Clinton is supposed to be the angel on horseback, but he's still keeping a part of the budget for the war on drugs. I think Alexander Cockburn wrote that switching a President is like changing around the deck chairs on the *Titanic*.

**Q:** Does his posture surprise you?

**Krassner:** If you believe as I do that there's an invisible government, then to a certain extent, these are just rubber stamps for that invisible government, although that doesn't mean they're powerless. Clinton can affect the future a lot. He may

end up appointing two, three, four Supreme Court justices. Politics is just a missing link between the status quo and the force of evolution. If it's a choice between Bush and Quayle, and Clinton and Gore, I'd certainly rather have the latter pair there now. It was a tremendous feeling of relief after that election.

But, it's still that he's concerned about re-election. But Clinton has a quality of humanism about him, and Hillary and Gore. I have more of a sense of hope with them than I did before, even though they tried to avoid the wimp factor by the action in Waco. There's a lot of forces that they're dealing with. It was a sign of hope for me that Clinton got elected. Not only was World War II over, but in a sense the Vietnam war was over. And the fact that we have a President and Vice President, one who never inhaled and one who never exhaled, it's a balanced ticket.

**Q:** How was the word Yuppies coined? How'd they come into being?

**Krassner:** Yuppie was just a name I invented for a phenomenon that already existed, which was the cross-pollination of the hippie dropouts and the New Left political activists. They realized more and more that they were on the same side. The political activists realized that smoking marijuana in the park was a political act, and the hippies realized that opposing the war in Vietnam was consistent with their value system. There was a linear connection between putting kids in prison here for smoking flowers and dropping napalm on them on the other side of the world. It was just the extension of dehumanization.

**Q:** Do you think Yuppies are part of our society any more?

**Krassner:** Yes and no. That first generation of Yuppies was led by Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin and others. Abbie's dead and Jerry's an entrepreneur. But there's a second generation of Yuppies now run by Dana Beal, A. J. Weberman, Aaron Kay, and Ben Masel. They're based in New York and are still active. They started out as the Zippies in 1972 because they thought the leaders of the Yuppies were outdated and they were like the young Turks—is it politically correct to use young Turk as a reference?

**Q:** It's kind of jingoistic. . . .

**Krassner:** Well, not to the Armenians! So they were called the Zippies and then they started putting out a periodical called *The Yipster Times* and called themselves Yuppies. And they're still active. Mostly they've been consistent about opposing the war on drugs. So they're still around.

**Q:** Is there still a New Left?

**Krassner:** I guess it's a new New Left. The New Left originally was as opposed to the Old Left, which was like the Communist Party. The New Left was like Students for a Democratic Society. One of the buttons that Students for a Democratic Society had during the Vietnam war was, NOT WITH MY LIFE, YOU DON'T, which was really, again, getting control over their own destinies.

The Left now is in a state of reorganization because the Communist Party has kind of disintegrated. There's still a Revolutionary Communist Party; I guess they're Maoist. There are still young socialists. I don't have any ideology myself. Even though the FBI said I was part of the New Left, I didn't consider myself part of the New Left. But again, it was in the eye of the beholder.

There are still Marxists, even though Marxism has to evolve along with everything else—Karl Marx never knew about the psychedelic revolution or the computer revolution or the feminist revolution, so it was a limited theory. But I think the ideologies are changing. Some companies are becoming worker-owned, and they didn't have any ideology that it sprang out of, but it just happened—it was just a way of a company surviving, and also giving motivation to the people there. Such companies found it was better if the workers could participate in the production, in the research and development. It would just make the marketplace feel more like an extended family.

So I think it's all now in a state of accelerating evolution, and

the ideologies have to try to keep up with the technological and philosophical developments. When I was a kid there were three networks—ABC, NBC, and CBS, and PBS later on. Now there are going to be maybe 500 channels with nothing good on any of them.

**Q:** What was your introduction to acid?

**Krassner:** I had my first trip at Millbrook, the research institute run by Tim Leary and Richard Alpert, later Ram Dass. And it was a good trip, I must say. My guide said that I was indulging in cosmic laughter, but I also kept trying to think of the atrocities going on. My compassion was still there, but it was the oneness of tragedy and absurdity that I experienced.

Steve Allen said that satire is tragedy plus time. It's easier to make a joke about Lincoln's assassination than about Kennedy's. But then a punk rock band came along called the Dead Kennedys. That was more than a decade after the assassination of JFK, whereas it was only a few months after the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan there was a band called Jody Foster's Army. So irreverence is accelerating along with everything else.

**Q:** What role do you think acid has played in social change in our society?

**Krassner:** You put that in past tense, but they just have celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of LSD. And there's a whole new renaissance of interest in it in the schools. It's just served as a catalyst for people deprogramming themselves from the culture. It didn't have to be acid. Other people use Zen or meditation or even jogging. It felt good, music was all in colors. It made music a whole different experience, and lovemaking, and eating ice cream. I remember the first time I ate ice cream while tripping, I could taste it in my toes.

**Q:** Can you still?

**Krassner:** Well, the quality may not be as good. And I haven't taken acid for a while, so that's why I said it in the past tense. But I prefer ecstasy now.

**Q:** Any thoughts on what it continues to do?

**Krassner:** People have different motivations. Some use it at Rave parties. There's a whole spectrum from partying to a sort of spiritual experience. Everybody uses it for whatever their own purpose is. I don't put any higher value over—there's nothing wrong with just getting high for its own purpose. I don't think you necessarily have to see God every time.

**Q:** Do you think that intelligence agencies or the Government really appreciated acid's influence and its potential impact on society and that's why they chose to repress it?

**Krassner:** The Central Intelligence Agency was experimenting with it first as a means of control, incapacitating people, or as a truth serum. They were experimenting with it, against people's will sometimes, or without their knowledge. But it backfired and became a sacrament of the counterculture. Instead of being programmed in the way the CIA would have liked, they would deprogram themselves from the CIA's and the status quo's value system. And in 1966 it was declared illegal. Two in the afternoon West Coast time, October 10, 1966. A day that will live in infamy.

**Q:** Would you elaborate your personal philosophy?

**Krassner:** I got my entire philosophy from the actor Lionel Barrymore. He said, "Happiness is not a station you'll arrive at. It's the train you're traveling on." I have discovered that doing things for other people is a form of happiness. I don't make any separation between selfishness and altruism. That's why I think Mother Theresa is a responsibility junkie. "Quick! I need a fix! Find me a victim!"

**Q:** How did you come to meet folk singer Phil Ochs?

**Krassner:** William Worthly was a journalist who had his passport taken away when he went to Cuba and I published an article about it in *The Realist*. Phil Ochs saw it and asked for permission to use it for a song he was writing, "The Ballad of William Worthly." And we became friends. When they had the Vietnam Day teach-in at Berkeley, I recommended that there

not just be speeches, that he be there to do his topical songs between the speeches. It was a real success. It was Phil who said a demonstration should turn you on, not turn you off. That was part of that hippie spirit, that demonstrating your alternative lifestyle was a positive way of protesting.

I've had three friends who committed suicide: Lenny Bruce, Phil Ochs, and Abbie Hoffman. The pain of living was too much for them. It always seemed to me like a waste, but that was their choice. It's the one decision that you make that you can't change your mind on after you do it.

**Q:** You can get tattoos removed.

**Krassner:** Yeah, you can get a temporary tattoo but you can't get a temporary suicide.

**Q:** You had a special relationship with Abbie Hoffman, didn't you?

**Krassner:** Yeah, I think my relationship with Abbie was cemented on an acid trip, when I told him that he was the first one who made me laugh since Lenny Bruce had died, and Abbie said, "Really? He was my god." If Abbie hadn't served as a political organizer, he could've followed in Lenny's tradition as a standup satirist. In any case, he used his wit and creative imagination to help build a movement.

**Q:** Why did you decide to write your autobiography at such a young age?

**Krassner:** Sixty is young? Amy Fisher is writing her autobiography. I thought she was a little young for that, but I guess she's led a full life.

**Q:** How was the writing process for you, summing up your life?

**Krassner:** The hardest work I've ever done, and the greatest joy. I thought about it for twenty years and spent five years writing it. And it was really a catharsis, a kind of letting go. Totally caring what people thought about me, at the same time totally not caring what they thought about me. It was a real challenge to try to intertwine my life with the history of the counterculture.

I think everybody should write an autobiography, not necessarily to be published but to see the patterns of life and to examine motivations. It was really an exercise in objectivity. Originally it was gonna be called an unauthorized autobiography because I wanted to write about myself as if I were researching someone else.

The fact that I've gotten to this point, compromising as little as possible in the process, I'm hoping will inspire other people to not compromise, to be whistleblowers.

**Q:** You still doing stand-up?

**Krassner:** Yeah. I recently performed at a NORML fundraiser, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws. And in May, I was part of Millennia Madness. Robert Anton Wilson, Leary, and I did this event at the Scottish Rite Temple in Los Angeles.

Lately, I've been doing stand-up, preparing *The Realist*, and working on a novel based on my association with Lenny Bruce, and also getting together a collection of investigative satire, pieces over the past twenty years, to be titled *I Snorted Cocaine with the Pope*, which was a piece I originally wrote for *National Lampoon* when I was doing a column for them. They were afraid of it, so I published it in *The Realist*.

**Q:** You still consider yourself part of the movement?

**Krassner:** Yeah, though I don't go running in the streets much anymore. But I've been to a lot of events at the Los Angeles Federal Building—an abortion-rights rally, an anticensorship rally, a pro-hemp rally. So those are the causes; they're all related. They're all just different aspects of freedom.

**Q:** Any final, lingering thoughts?

**Krassner:** Just keep the shower curtain inside the tub when you're taking a shower so it doesn't get the bathroom floor all wet. That's pretty much it. Have a sense of cause and effect. Know your endorser. Don't kiss your cat when it's spitting up a hairball. And don't swallow watermelon seeds or you'll get pregnant. ■