

## MORNING BECOMES ELECTRIC

For those who haven't figured it out yet, this column mostly deals with things to do on weekends. And there's no doubt that many of you dutifully go out and knock yourselves loose doing all these strenuous and dubious activities. But really, when you get right down to it, what is the greatest benefit of a weekend? You got it: Sleeping In. Rolling over and pounding the other ear instead of getting with some cockamamie program. Snoozing away secure in the hope that the six o'clock alarm will never ring. Knowing you don't have to shave when you do get up. Sleeping, that's living. And, it would seem, so little to ask of life; merely to sleep, perchance dream a little. But there are those that actually interfere with the simple and unalienable pleasures of sleeping in.

What sort of fiendish scum would do this--wake you before you are ready to go-go? Set pitfalls in the path of the beautiful dreamer? Let's examine several of these foul forces, devious devices, and eye-opening conspiracies--preparatory to calling for their speedy and brutal annihilation.

Let's make it clear that we're not talking here about merely waking up in rude circumstances. That can be easily arranged. The easier you are, the more likely you are to wake up rude and rueful. I'm reminded of a story of a guy who was jumped by a huge bear (this was in Alaska, where such encounters are more frequent than around here). He was able to pull out a handgun, which he emptied into the charging bruin, which fell on top of him and died. He was knocked out by all this, of course, but later revived to find himself buried under a half ton of bear meat. How's that for a way to come to consciousness?

I'm sure you've had similar experiences yourself. Like pretending to be asleep until someone gets up and leaves, for instance. Bedfellows make strange politics. And early mornings are bad times for sobering sights. The ultimate, of course, is the dreaded coyote-ugly bedmate; someone sleeping on your arm so ugly that you'd chew off the arm rather than risk waking them. But enough of these analogies to wildlife. We're after culprits, here...outside agitators with no percentage at all in the knitting up of your raveled sleeves. Disrupters, preemptors, agents provocateur of insomnia--Dreambusters.

Take the simple alarm clock. Take it and bash it up against the wall. Good

show. These ugly little devices, handy enough for ticking away the moments that make up a gray day, have forgotten their place in the scheme of things. They are trying not merely to tell time, but to make time, to arrange time, and with alarming frequency to seize the time. Are you, a human being and the crown of creation, to be ordered about by a tiny (albeit noisy) pack of gears or quartz? I would certainly hope not. There are plenty of ways to put an uppity clock in its place. Most can be learned at any sufficiently hard-nosed martial arts dojo, many can be purchased over the counter along with the requisite ammunition. Or you can be creative: feed the clock to an alligator, stick it in a Polynesian dancer's navel, put it in a Russian Easter egg, run a few mice up it and see who salutes. Just don't take any crap off it. Let it know that you will view any outbreaks of wakefulness with alarm.

The simple doorbell, while not as intrinsically treacherous as the phone or clock, can be coaxed into the ploy, made an unwitting instrument of the CALSDL (Cabal Against Letting Sleeping Dogs Lie). I'm sure you've experienced the following example of such behavior. You slowly claw your way into some form of consciousness, seeing without really comprehending that your clock said 5:25 right before you obliterated it to bits. You're not really integrated enough to grasp that it's Saturday morning, your stomach and mind are flitting queasily away from memories of Friday night--just three hours ago. You dribble half your furniture over to the door and open without thinking (And why not, you've been doing everything else so far without doing what anyone would call thinking). There stand two drab women and three snot-nosed brats, chattering into your reamed ears that they are Jehovah's Witnesses. Eyewitnesses at that. Not an innocent bystander in the bunch. They hold a newspaper up to your parboiled eyes and what is splashed across the frontpage in red, 24 point type? "AWAKE!" Talk about fast-breaking news, huh? Their other paper is called "Watchtower" by the way...the same one Jimi Hendrix warned you against all along. These people are a menace. Best way to defend against them is sleep nude and always answer the door naked. This can occasionally produce side benefits. Another little household hint is to keep a stock of Hare Krishna, Mormon, and Satanist pamphlets by the door to pass out to such disruptors. But hey, we're talking a sorry state of affairs, here. We're talking rude awakenings.

Your television set, which you generally regard as a pal--a bit pushy, perhaps, but essentially an entertaining, jolly good fellow--can get wicked on you. For instance, you nod off during Horrible Horror Theater and the National Anthem. You are blowing yourself some sweet Z's when a piercing tone brings you springing alertly to your lips. Just in time to hear them say they are

leaving the air. But not to worry, they'll be back at 5:30 tomorrow morning. With a test pattern. Thus giving a rude awakening to some other fool.

Telephones are the worst yet. They can turn on you with no warning, jangling your entire nervous system just to sell you phone service. People call you up to tell you you're the wrong number and don't even tell you what the right number is. They enlist you in a sad and wide-eyed lottery of the lost. You can't be too careful with phones; they're like having a little doorway into your world where any deranged somnophobe can pop by and weird out right into your ear. They are surrealistic by their very nature, as we can illustrate with this telling anecdote. Your waterbed, specially ordered a month ago, finally splashes down in town. Therefore setting up a routine fiasco in which you grovel up from sleep to mug the phone in time to hear, "Hello, this is Dreamland."

Hello, this is Dreamland. The study of rude awakenings approaches the understanding of dreams. Since we are Americans, this treats of--need I say it--the American Dream. The American Dream is, in many ways, merely to be allowed to continue dreaming. But the slumber party is being crashed. If this seems frivolous, let's not forget that the two-day weekend was first dreamed up right here in America. Earlier and elsewhere people slaved 6 days then went to church all Sunday. Sleeping in may indeed BE the American Dream. And as the rude awakenings remind us, it is not a right but a privilege to be defended as zealously as any other perc. What other use is being part of a privileged class, eh?

As an American you have a right to the American Dream, so guard it carefully or you might just wake up one fine day and find yourself wide awake. Don't laugh, sleeping in is very political. Every four years we have some yo-yo coming on with the latest variation of "Wake Up, America!" Sometimes he offers the smell of coffee, other times nothing but the bleak shores of consciousness, as though it was all a good thing, and somehow better for you than snoring off. Forget these terrorists. The first sign of a fascist is a desire to raise your consciousness. Let's keep our heads, everyone--consciousness sucks. No cause for snooze alarm. Do not go gentle, fight against the dying of the night. Extremism in the defense of 40 more winks is no vice. Guns don't kill people, but dropping by before noon on Saturday certainly should. Tune out, turn in, drop off. Dare to dream. Only trouble is--gee whiz, you'd be dreaming your life away. And the only way to deal with trouble like that is to sleep on it.

