

Pseudofolliculitis City

Pseudofolliculitis Barbae (PB): Also referred to as “razor bumps,” PB is a skin condition occurring in African-American and Irish men, and other people who grow curly, pubiclike hair on their faces. The condition is a consequence of extremely curved hair follicles growing backwards into the skin, producing inflammations, discolorations, and pusy formations. If PB is not properly negotiated, keloidal scarring can result. Keloidal scars are hard, unpleasant-looking bumps on the neck and beard region.

There are a number of procedures by which PBP (Pseudofolliculitis Barbae People) can negotiate and allay their condition. Some of these procedures include washing the face with Neutrogenie soap four times a day, shaving only once every three days, using an electric instead of a straight razor, taking two Tetracyclone pills a day, applying Tendu-Wop Skin Solution, and prepping the skin of the face with a hot washcloth and Benzabbling cream before each shave.

Some PBP bleed profusely when they shave with a straight razor. In many cases, each swipe of the razor produces a thick stripe of blood beads. The threshold of pain involved in this process is not great. It is perfectly bearable for those who do not suffer from hematophobia.

There are only two 100% effective cures for PB. One is to grow a beard. The other is to ignore it—to pretend that your face is affliction-free. This latter cure is of course more difficult to accomplish than the former as it requires an immensity of mindpower, not to mention that it is absurd. Nevertheless, there are documented cases in which ignoring PB has proven to be a viable cure. I happen to know a man personally who conquered PB by ignoring it.

His name is Dr. Dorian “Bling-Bling” Thunderlove a.k.a. Stanley “Third World” Ashenbach. That he lives in Pseudofolliculitis City is pure coincidence.

Pseudofolliculitis City (PC): Also referred to as “Supercalifragilistic City,” PC is a metropolitan landscape of both dystopian and utopian proportions. The landscape is a consequence of centuries of industrial, technological, digital, and ultimately anal intrigue on the part of its inhabitants. If PC is not properly negotiated, psychedelic scarring can result. Psychedelic scars form on the frontal lobe of the brain and resemble the fossils of extinct insects. They have the capacity to cause a number of mental and emotional traumas, including schizophrenia, paranoia, agoraphobia, acrophobia, mulletphobia, obsessive compulsive disorder, delusions of grandeur, lack of social etiquette, lack of religious conviction, Tourette’s syndrome, sadomasochism, sandwich fetishes, hat fetishes, handlebar mustache fetishes, and unmotivated hatred. The only physical effect of psychedelic scarring is pseudofolliculitis barbae. But such cases have been rare—for the most part, PB is a genetic affliction—and the fact that PB has manifested itself in PC as a result of failing to negotiate PC is, like the residency of good old “Bling-Bling/Third World,” pure coincidence.

D. Harlan Wilson

At no time should PC be mistaken as an acronym for the word Politically Correct. PC is not Politically Correct. Nor, for that matter, is it Politically Incorrect. The follicles of this place do not recognize this terminology—they don't even know what it means. They simply go about their questionable business and don't think twice about it.

There are over ten trillion follicles occupying PC at any given time. These follicles are typically referred to as PCP (Pseudofolliculitis City People). Their number is growing rapidly as far more PCP continue to be born than die in a given day. It is estimated that, by the year 12,010 ATF (According to The Founder), the population will have exceeded fifty trillion follicles. Sociologists have determined that this escalation will generate an upsurge of misogyny, alcoholism, serial killing, cereal eaters, aspiring haberdashers, waking nightmares, solipsism, megalomania, flying saucer sightings, Doo Wop zombies, Frankensteinian monsters, pheromone emissions, prosthetic genitals, haunted space-scrapers, and plaquedemics, among other things. But there is no fear that civilization will crumble like an old graham cracker somebody has stomped on with construction boots. PCP must exist in an orderly, functional society if they're going to antagonize one another in an orderly, functional manner. No matter how bushy and profuse the body of PC's follicles becomes, a meltdown will never result, because if civilization melts down, people will no longer be able to annoy, and to cheat, and to plot against, and to demolish, and to goose their fellow man with dignity, cache, and honor.

Right now, on the corner of Hamsalad Street and Blip Boulevard, a stranger has just goosed another stranger. The gooser is wearing a stovepipe hat, a black suit coat with tails, and striped skintight pants. The goosed is wearing a bowler, a collarless maitre d' jacket, and

flowform slacks. When the goosed is goosed, he glances over his shoulder and politely says to the gooser, “Thank you, sir. May I have another?” The gooser nods, gives him another. The goosed nods...and backhands the gooser across the face. Now it is the gooser’s turn to say, “Thank you, sir. May I have another?” The goosed nods, gives him another. The gooser nods...and then the two strangers depart and go their separate ways, never to see one another again, as if the incident had never taken place. This is a noble display of assholery. And it’s not the only kind. The private and public socioeconomic matrices of PC harbor a wide variety of noble displays of assholery. They are, in fact, virtual *cirque de soleils* of noble displays of assholery.

EXHIBIT B: An organ grinder’s monkey has a dream that it is the organ grinder. The experience induces a mild attack of schizophrenia. Half of the time it lacks the capacity to perceive the boundary that separates reality from fantasy. As a result, the animal often resorts to talking to itself, shitting itself, lacerating itself, eating dirt, emitting pig squeals of varying timbres, speaking with a human voice, mistaking its fingers for miniature versions of Gary Busey, and ripping the jugular veins out of random passersby. This latter affectation is especially problematic. The organ grinder must always explain to the police how his monkey had a bad dream that turned him into a virtual monster, and the police must always explain the same thing to the victim’s family members, apologizing for the inconvenience and assuring them that it’s a hard knock world...

EXHIBIT C: A hermit who specializes in making tall gourmet sandwiches with his feet and thinks this makes him a unique individual is deluding himself—PC is totally constituted by follicles that make sandwiches with their feet. There is not one piece of documented

D. Harlan Wilson

evidence in the archives of the PC Library of Congress stipulating that anybody has ever made a sandwich of any kind in the history of this city with anything but their feet. Were the hermit privy to such knowledge, it would devastate him; the very thought that he might be an everyman in this manner would provoke him to become a self-mutilator. But he is not privy to this knowledge. He does have chronic BO, however, and no matter how many times a day he showers and applies state-of-the-art deodorant to his armpits, he cannot rid himself of the affliction. As a result, he contemplates becoming a self-mutilator on a daily basis, scratching his chin with his index finger as he gazes out the one window in his residence at the sprawl of commerce that flows back and forth on the street in slow motion a mile and a half beneath the tip of his nose...

The aforementioned hermit lives in a $\frac{1}{4}$ -bedroom apartment beneath a $\frac{3}{4}$ -bedroom apartment occupied by one Mr. Krapps, a businessman of some import, but not too much import. Too much import, after all, can lead to too much ego. There is already an excess of ego in PC. So much of an excess that an immigration restriction has been placed on it. "Any attempt to smuggle, harbor, and entertain an excess of ego into this zone of existence," the restriction states, "will result in severe penalties." What exactly constitutes "an excess of ego" is subject to debate, of course, as well as what constitutes "severe penalties." It is the business of the various lapdogs and minions of The Law to determine who is guilty in this capacity and the degree to which the guilty parties should be punished for their insurrection; and in order to make assumptions about and pass judgements on so-called guilty parties, these lapdogs and minions must ironically exercise a certain amount of ego themselves. But such is the nature of The

System, and follicles like Mr. Krapps and the hermit who lives beneath him are obliged to disavow this cruel irony in the interest of maintaining a tolerable peace of mind.

Mr. Krapps' therapist is Dr. Dorian "Bling-Bling" Thunderlove a.k.a. Stanley "Third World" Ashenbach. His alias has no inherent use-value. He owns it simply because, in his words, "The more identities one constructs for oneself, the more one ceases to be One Self. And to be One Self is a dangerous thing in this schizopolis." The "Third World" that splits the alias in half is not a reference to countries that lack financial, political, social and cultural stability. It is a reference to his favorite brand of cigarettes, Third World Hellfires, which he smokes with the frequency and enthusiasm that newborn infants exercise on their mother's nipples. The "Bling-Bling" that splits his real name in half, on the other hand, is a reference to just that: Dr. Thunderlove's got the Bling-Bling as much as if not more so than the illustrious pop dragqueen diva QP (Quarter Past) Nuthin' himself.

Additionally, Dr. Thunderlove is the protagonist of this text, although he rarely makes an appearance in it. The out-of-towner might think that this precludes him from being a protagonist, the nature of protagonism being recurrent, tenacious Presence. But in spirit the doctor pervades this text, and as a result he manifests himself as the protagonist by means of his recurrent, tenacious Essence. "I aspire to redefine the nature of protagonism," he once told The Author of *Pseudo-City*. The Author's response was, "Can I bum a Hellfire?" (NOTE: Both The Author and Dr. Thunderlove are PBP. The Author's PB, however, is more pronounced: he bleeds when he shaves whereas the doctor merely gets a rash.)

Dr. Thunderlove lives in an expensive, chic-looking penthouse on

D. Harlan Wilson

the top floor of the Beerbelly Tower, which rises out of the middle of Hangtime Square. He requires most of his patients to move into the labyrinth of Beerbelly apartments beneath him, but sometimes he makes exceptions, as in the case of Mr. Krapps, who claims that he is allergic to buildings whose names begins with the letter “B.” Dr. Thunderlove respects such neuroses and, being a fair man, always exempts patients that provide him with this kind of creative baloney. Except for the aforementioned, there are really not very many follicles living in PC that are worthy of attentiveness. In the grand scheme of things, they are minor details.

This is a chronicle of minor details.

PC is a subjective experience. No two follicles witness its spectacle in exactly the same way. Any attempt to perceive this place from an objective standpoint typically results in a monstrous case of diarrhea followed by an ultraviolent explosion of the eyeballs.

PC is available for purchase at most out-of-the-way convenience stores. You can usually find it hanging next to the beef jerky, which it is often confused with, both because it resembles a stick of dried-up excrement and because it has that dried-up meaty taste. Tear open the wrapper, chew it, swallow it, and in minutes your POV will be transported to an Otherworld where things aren’t what they seem and yet seem what they are. But this mode of entry is restricted to tourists. The follicles of PC—they don’t need jerky-in-disguise to get in here. They’re born here, and they die here.

The Founder of PC was once asked if he could sum up the *Dasein* of the city in one phrase. The Founder nodded, calmly, darkly. He fingered the rim of his top hat, twirled one of the handlebars of his mustache, stroked the length of his hulking chin...

Pseud-City

“Pseudofolliculitis City is the Chef Boyardee of Life!” he intoned, his hands proudly clenching the lapels of his skintight three-piece suit.

“Chef Boyardee!” cried the masses in dumbfounded harmony. “Who the fuck is that?”

The Founder slowly lifted up his arm. At the end of it was a shaking, white-knuckled fist. An index finger uncurled from the fist and pointed at the beating heart of the schizopolis...

...trap doors disguised as manholes swing open and suck passersby into alien dimensions...alternate realities fade in and out of consciousness...the Age of Immanence comes home to roost, is obliterated, comes home to roost again...gangbangers do gangsta shit and are awarded Nobel Piece-of-Ass prizes...riots and orgies break out like zits on a doomed-to-be-crater-faced teenager...a thousand sophisticated *La belle dame sans merci* grip parasols in one hand, tomahawks in the other...dandies and flâneurs leap into teeming mosh pits and are passed from Interzone to Interzone in fasttime...swooping mutant pigeons snort like bulls as they tear their human prey to shreds and viscera...pastiche of Chinatowns overlapping and cut-and-pasted together and stacked one atop the other like totem poles...orange swaths of cloud tear across the sky in fasttime all the time in the shape of shape-shifting jack-o-lanterns...zoot suits singe the streets like road runners...mad hatters bounce by on pogo sticks...sprawling electric technologies explode out of bodies and heads...sound of a happy cash register...sound of an angry driveby...sound of a background score to a blockbuster B-movie...sound of an electric violin, a maniac fortune teller, a screaming cow, a blathering Jesus freak, ten thousand road ragers, a hundred million air ragers, thunderhumming machinery, a legion of pencil-pushers blowing their noses into crinkled up pieces of

D. Harlan Wilson

construction paper, horny rednecks, rampant haberdashers, exploding piñatas, exploding pickle jars, exploding party favors, exploding pinheads...CAMERA ZOOMS IN from LONG-RANGE TELESCOPIC SHOT on the dire topography of PC to EXTREME CLOSE-UP of a thing-doer's guilty-looking bald spot...CAMERA PULLS OUT, SWINGS to one side...portrait of an in-action kung fu fight that stretches vertically and horizontally across the entirety of Little Hong Kong...CAMERA SWINGS to the other side...dark flashes of staticky figures wearing papier mâché skinsuits...sitcoms leap out of TVs sitting in store windows and attack indiscriminate streetwalkers, rendering themselves sitcons (situational confrontations)...overweight strippers with identity crises sit on café patios stuffing their screwed-up faces with key lime pie...rollercoasters full of shrieking, bearded grandmothers thread through the schizoscape of PC in an endless spider web of adrenaline...a hundred thousand gigantic vid-billboards on which Big Brother dressed up like Neil Diamond (dressed up like Elvis) sings the refrain of "Solitary Man" with a drunken out-of-tune slur while at the same time a thousand Venus fly traps perched on window sills snap out the beat to Queen's "We Will Rock You"...a battalion of movie stars bends over and moons a battalion of papanazzis, bombarding them with a fusillade of unspeakable brown-eyes...windows open, expose atrocities, close...men in capes materialize out of thin air and go unnoticed...town criers metamorphose into Incredible Hulks and reduce entire Interzones to rubble...a lost little boy has a waking nightmare in the middle of the street and cries out for his mother, his father, his imaginary friend...vain PBP bend their heads, shield their faces...monkeys give birth to full-grown politicians and vice versa vice versa vice versa vice vice vice vice...food fights

break out in sixteen delis, twelve grocery stores, and 422 butcher shops simultaneously...a mime sweats bullets as he air guitars Van Halen's "Hot for Teacher" on the corner of 7th and 2nd...a mariachi sweats banjos as he air drums Rush's "Tom Sawyer" on the corner of 103rd and 165,025th...buildings come to life and begin to digest their wretched, jobless inhabitants...a half-eaten slice of rotten spam crawls up a brick wall...a SWM (Single White Mofo) has his nose stolen right off of his face, cocks his head, shrugs and bleats, "Whatsa wigga gonna do?"...fire hydrants urinate on dogs...gators poke their nozzles out of sewers and devour dogs...dogs impersonate stray cats and are taken in by lonely women with pasty skin, beehive hairdos, arthritic fingers, liver-spotted skin, fishnet stockings, shoes with broken heels...

It should be noted that the dominant mode of currency in PC is not dollars, but doll hairs. For whatever reason, The Founder deemed the doll hair a more compelling sign of wealth than the paper bill. Originally it was the human hair, but everybody kept shaving their heads and going on reckless shopping sprees during which they would amass as much Rogain as possible so as to grow more hair and use it to buy more Rogain. It was quickly decided that this currency was bad for businesses that didn't sell Rogain (although for a time almost every business had at least a bottle or two of Rogain for sale), so it was supplanted with doll hairs, which could be more effectively regulated. The value of a doll hair depends upon what kind of doll it comes from. The lowest value doll hair, for instance, comes from the plastic head of a Britney Spears fuck doll, whereas the highest value doll hair comes from the wooden head of a Howdy Doody ventriloquist doll.

PC is of course infested with gigantic concrete doll factories.

PC is referred to as "Supercalifragilistic City" by the city's most

widely read and purchased mediomag, *People!!!* None of the mediomag's editors or writers possess a knowledge of the etymology of the alias, but they do know that it is not a clipped, slightly altered version of Mary Poppins' sporty, feelgood word *supercalifrajalisticexpialidocious*. Rather, Supercalifragilistic is a portmanteau word encompassing the words supernumerary, caliginous, fragmented, ill-natured, and ballistic—all words, not coincidentally, that might be used to describe the character of The Founder of PC, who built this place with his bare hands out of nothing more than a pissoir.

In addition to *People!!!*, PC's foremost mediamags include *The Cowshit Journal*, *The Horseshit Herald*, *The Bullshit Telegram*, *The Elephantshit Quarterly*, *The Whaleshit News*, *The Dinosaurshit Review* and *The Rabbit Pellet Press*. Virtually all of the follicles of PC read these seminal publications regularly. They also use these publications as toilet paper, a commodity that is, for unknown reasons, rapidly nearing extinction.

Sometimes the near-extinct condition of toilet paper prompts PCP to entertain the notion of suicide.

Suicide is illegal in PC. Anyone who commits suicide is swiftly reincarnated, incarcerated, and tortured for the duration of their natural life. Consequently, very few PCP attempt to take their own lives, and those that do make sure to vaporize, incinerate, or otherwise annihilate themselves in such a way that not a trace of their bodies remains.

Yesterday a man killed himself by leaping into the towering graphite volcano that rises out of one of PC's countless Interzones. He waited in line for over fifty hours before the chance to accomplish the dirty deed presented itself.

Pseud-City

Today a man walked into a deli and robbed the place of all of its lunch meat. He also had to wait in line for over fifty hours before he had the chance to accomplish the dirty deed.

Tomorrow a man will cure his face of PB by ignoring the fact he is afflicted with PB. He will not wait in line to do this, nor will the deed he accomplishes be dirty. PB, after all, is pure and undesirable. It is one of life's many hard truths.