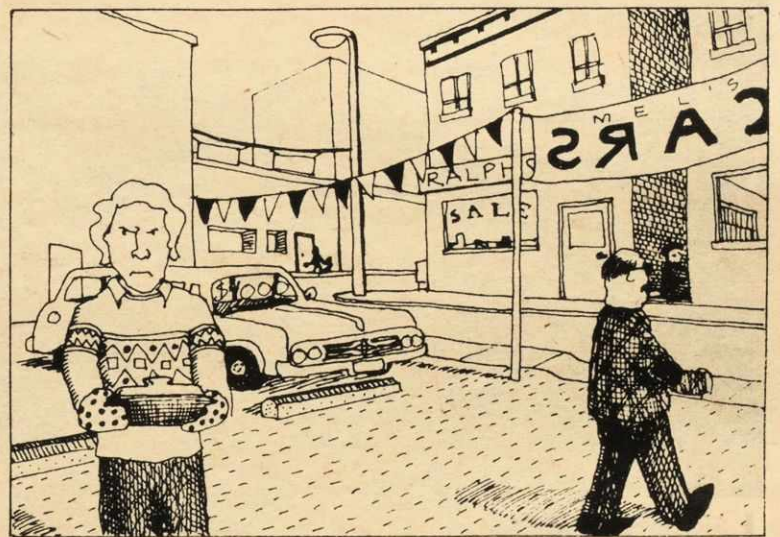
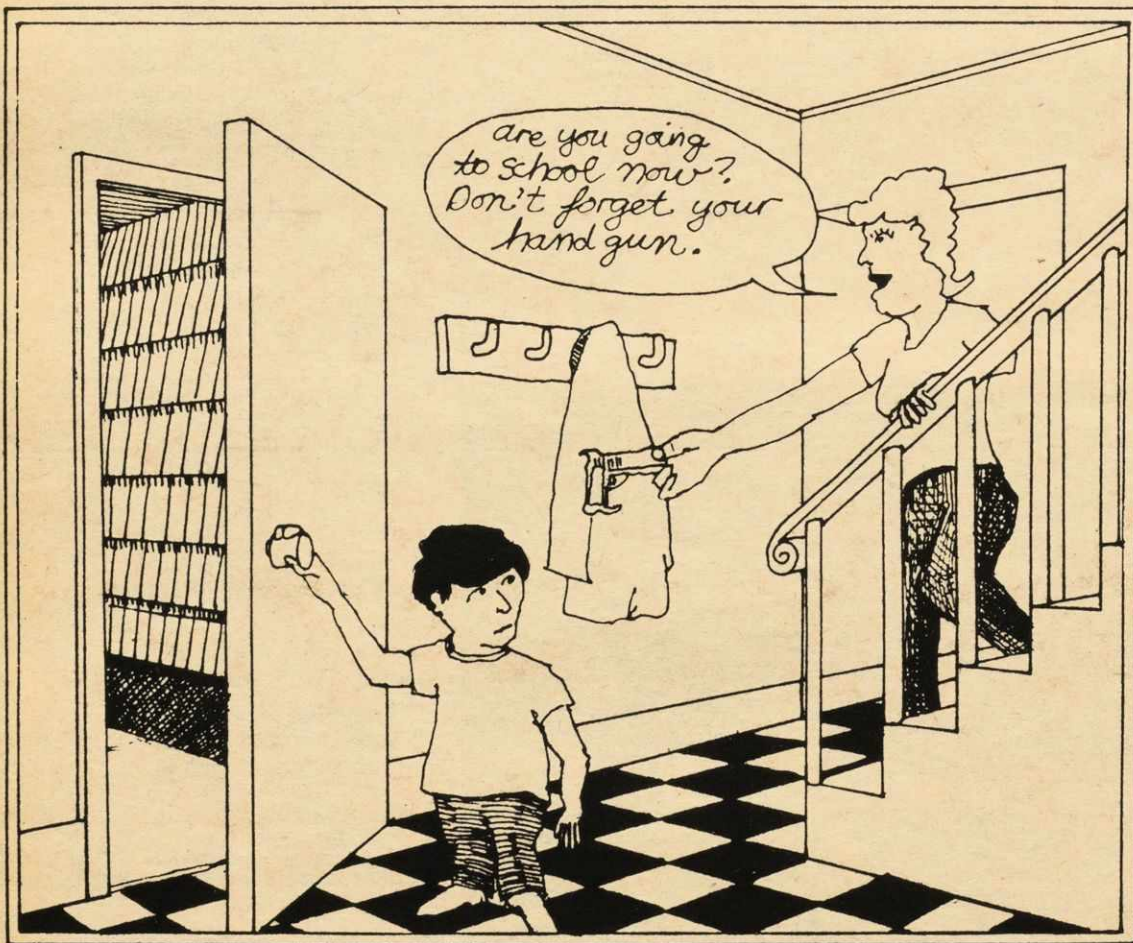


JULY 4, 1776



Kevin is vexed after he traded his car for a tuna casserole.



Always Wear Clean Underwear To A Dinner Party Lest Your Pants Split When You Stand Up For What You Do Or Don't Believe In

i rarely wear underwear and
i don't believe the sky is falling
but that's beside the point because
i don't want to hear it
i don't want you to explain
tell it to the ethiopeans
eating pebbles
in the dust
tell it to the mother
posing with her dead baby
for all the fat cats
in the safari jackets

go tell the ethiopeans
how your rights were violated
and how our government
has done you wrong
again
tell the boy with the bloated belly
about your painful struggles
for freedom and equality
explain to him what you mean
by discrimination
and maybe his worms
will catch your drift

tell the ethiopean
that has strolled
in from the countryside
about your modern-day despairs,
but look out,
his smirk may dent your horizon

give your opinions
to the ethiopeans
because i can't swallow them
and at the same time
wash this medium-rare meat
down my throat
with yet another glass
of your fine white wine

you see, i'm just happy to be here.

John Mallon