

NAKED CAME POLONSKY:

The articulate father

By JOE POLONSKY

I have a friend with a most peculiar phobia. He is convinced that he was born out of wedlock.

Now that in itself is only a relatively minor problem in this two-parent, one-parent, no-parent, half-a-parent age where we have managed to progress to the point where a child is not necessarily the product of a torrid romance ending in a marriage with two people very much in love; but instead, thanks to the glory of science, can emerge fully human from the addition of one half a teaspoonful of semen, preferably from a man over 21 to one womb, also preferably over 22.

So it is not wedlock that throws my friend off. Rather he is haunted by the belief that his father is the Reverend Billy Graham. And as for his mother, I wouldn't dare say her name in public. He first began to suspect his parental genes at a rally he addressed at the 1968 revolution. He had stood bravely up there at the makeshift podium in the park, stirring the crowd to forgive their sins to Marx.

He told the assemblage how one day he had been screwing the bolts into the '67 Ford Galaxies when all of a sudden he got this funny feeling in his stomach. Then equally all of a sudden he became blinded with a blanket of white light covering over his eyes. And it was not just the fact that he happened to be standing amongst 43 welders.

It was an honest to God epiphany. From nowhere a little voice rose up inside his throat and said "I am alienated from my labor". By God, this work is no Goddamn fun. And furthermore all that religious stuff is just a capitalist front".

Well, the crowds in the park listening to his oration were mighty moved. As he recalled his calling to the fold, people began to proceed up to the stage. In unison, the crowds started weeping and shouting, "Will Karl Marx ever forgive us for our sins. Will he forgive us for taking so long to realize our true calling: class consciousness." Then, like a roar from the heavens, they shouted together joyously to the heavens, "Yes, WE ARE OPPRESSED."

It began to dawn on my friend that he had a reasonably powerful gift for oration and other axiomatic crowd-stirring abilities. But he still managed to suppress any outward manifestations of his growing belief that he was somehow tied up to Billy Graham: that other fine orator. (He totally suppressed even the slightest suggestion of being related to Oral Roberts).

Anyway a few years later, this same friend dropped by a Buddhist monk friend of his who also managed a Howard Johnson's on the side. The great thing about this monk-manager was that he could also read pasts in the chocolate sundaes. (Reading futures in tea leaves had gone out with Pearl Harbor). So as he sat there staring into the whipped cream, the cherry in particular, a name began to form a bit off to the right, near the almonds. And the name was Evan.

For the first time in his life, my friend now knew what his real name was. It is quite a shock to go about life believing one thing and one world to be the truth when in fact it is all but a fly in the ointment. And Evan was only beginning to come down again, when the sundae reader's eyes recommenced being lit up.

"I think the chosen profession of your dreams is about to emerge from the sauce, dear Evan. Yes, here it comes now. There's something very musical about it. Yes. You are going to be a cellist."

Evan began to shake, tremble and shiver. "I don't deserve it. I am a religious person. I don't deserve that pagan president's pagan preacher as my father. I am too religious a being".

The Buddhist monk-manager really did not have a clue about what Evan was screaming about, nonetheless he still tried to glow with charisma.

"Oh, glow on, you goody-goody".

"Don't you understand?" Evan shouted. "You told me my real name was Evan. Then you told me my real profession was to be a cellist. So put them together, EVANCELLIST... it's so obvious it hurts... evangelist."

The monk-manager still did not understand but figured what the hell, so continued on glowing.

All Evan did was cry. "I'm just too religious to have a man like Bill Graham as my father".

★ GOOD EATS ★

Capriccio

By HARRY STINSON

If you're looking for one of those noisy, Saturday night at the fights Italian places, then Capriccio is not the spot. Their forté is good food.

Located on College St. in the heart of Toronto's Little Italy, the second floor dining room is an unpretentious affair. It might or might not be busy, so it's best to reserve.

To really enjoy an Italian meal, you've got to try as many courses as possible. Start off with the appetizers, in particular the antipasto — an attractive platter of tomato wedges, peppers, cheese, shrimp, salami, ham, pickles, carrots, etc., or the special salad — a bowlful of strips of cheese, ham, salami, radish, celery and the like, topped with shrimp and a light dressing.

Then on to the soups. Minestrone is the Italian soup. Capriccio does quite a good job, presenting a hearty bowlful of the thick vegetable broth, which you should sprinkle generously with cheese. Stracciatella (cheese and egg) is somewhat more unusual and delicious.

A favorite trick with Italian food is to pad it with pasta — to their credit, Capriccio most certainly does not, even though their pasta is quite delectable. The green lasagna for instance is a scrumptiously moist creation, full of cheese, vegetable and tasty sauce.

Tagliatelle consists of three pasta rolls stuffed with meat and buried in tomato and meat sauce. Capriccio offers a wide range of veal dishes — the Scalloppina President, veal cooked in wine, ham and mushrooms is, they claim, an exclusive, as is their special Scalloppina Capriccio, to which cream is added. Or you can have it cooked in lemon (Al Limone), with parmesan or several other ways.

No matter how, it's bound to be good. The vegetables run along the line of egg-plant, green pepper, cauliflower and zucchini and a small tossed salad is served. If you really must, they do have steaks.

Please don't give up before dessert. Besides the reliable spumoni, Capriccio features a number of unusual and tempting finales, such as Tartufo (a mouth-watering sphere of ice cream, with a candied fruit centre and rolled in an exotic crunchy crust). The Cassata is a two-flavored wedge of ice cream with a cake core and the ultimate Zabaglione is a fluffy, hot custard festooned with ladyfingers and overpoweringly flavored with Marsala, on a bed of peach: The coffee is hot, excellent and in the case of the special Italian brand, a trifle on the bitter side.

Portions at Capriccio are reasonably generous, though not gigantic. The food is not especially spicy, but in every case delicious. No short-cuts with ingredients are evident here. Prices are moderate, although your entrée does not include the extras. The emphasis is on quality fare and Capriccio will not let you down here.

An Antipasto Platter: Choose from Italian salami, prosciutto, olives, celery, peppers (pickled or fried), capers, hard-cooked egg slices, boiled beans, pimiento, radishes, tuna, sardines, anchovies, shrimps, mussels, lettuce, endives, or tomatoes. Serve with olive oil and vinegar.

Stracciatella: Beat 2 egg whites until nearly stiff, fold in yolks, 3 tablespoons parmesan and 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg. Bring 6 cups chicken broth to a boil add egg mixture slowly (stirring constantly) and simmer 5 minutes over low heat (keep stirring, slaves). For 4.

Zabaglione: Beat 8 egg yolks, 2 whites and 1/2 cup sugar in the top of a double boiler till very thick and creamy. Add 1 cup Marsala wine, place over simmering, not boiling, water and heat until hot and thick. Beat constantly. Serve in stemmed glasses over a fruit or berry base and stabbed with ladyfingers or sponge cake.

COMIX!

