

ark Breslin on What He Does:

"I am a conceptualizer, a dreamer, a schemer and I have people who are really good at middle management and administrative tasks, things I just don't do very well. That frees me up to come up with new things."

Breslin has always had a no censorship policy for his comedians. He explains that, "If the audience boos them off the stage than the comedian gets the message." On the other hand, Yuk Yuk's had 30 per cent of the audience walk out in the first year finding the material too offensive.

Mark Breslin on Controversial Humour:

"We can be splitting hairs here. What is a racial joke and what is a racist joke is really open to interpretation. What is a sexual joke and what is a sexist joke is again a very difficult thing."

"You have to take into account the ironic distance of the character. If the person's character on stage is not to be taken seriously, if he is a cartoon, then he can say things that a person who is trying to say 'believe me' cannot."

Mark Breslin on His Own Rules:

"Only kick a group when they're up. Once a group enters middle class they are then grist for the mill. I would say that it's ok to make fun of a group's sociological nuance as long as there's no implicit value judgements in those observations. I think it's ok to make fun of a group's proclivity as long as you don't somehow suggest that they're bad people because of it or that they should be denied rights because of it."

Mark Breslin on The World:

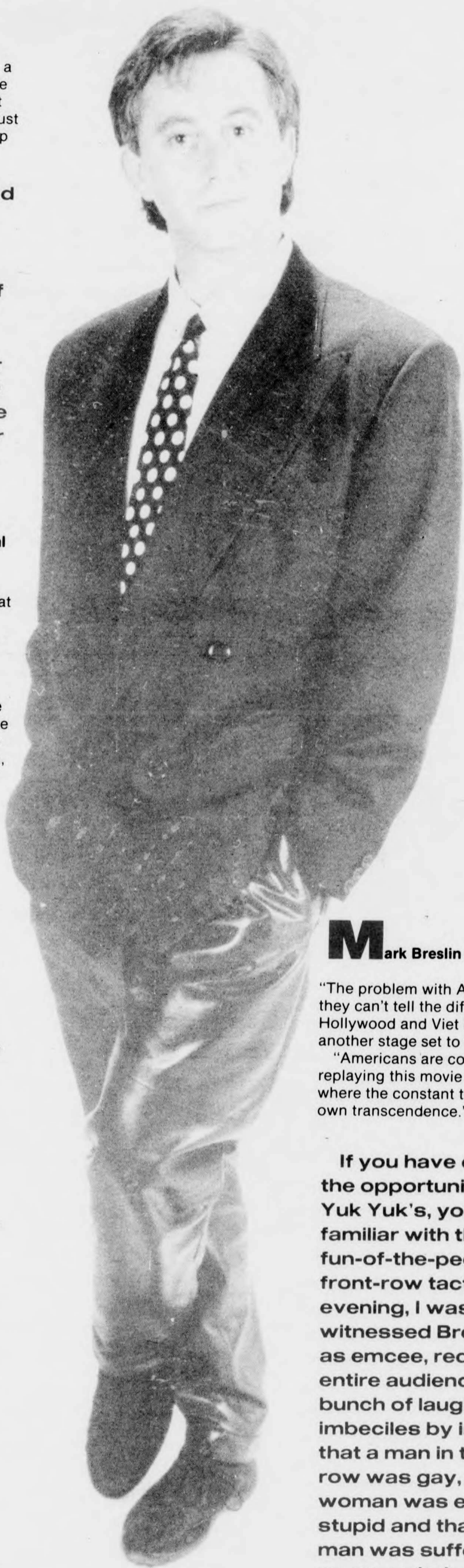
"The world is losing its sense of place and what's real is on the box. Television has eliminated distinctions in cultures. What was considered regional culture no longer exists . . ."

"There are 400 of these (comedy) clubs all over North America, you go to any one of them and close your eyes and open them really quickly and I defy you to know where you are. For 10 years (the audience) has been watching television and seen people like David Letterman, Johnny Carson, they've watched Saturday Night Live and that has appropriated their consciousness."

"We're moving towards a new medievalism in which major corporations will take the place of the church and eclipse countries as we know them . . ."

"You're in McDonalds, are you in Toronto? No, you're in the state, the principality, of McDonalds . . ."

"The world has become a big shop and show business is its commercial."



Mark Breslin on Americans:

"The problem with Americans is that they can't tell the difference between Hollywood and Viet Nam. It all just another stage set to them . . ."

"Americans are constantly trying replaying this movie in their head where the constant theme is their own transcendence."

If you have ever had the opportunity to go to Yuk Yuk's, you will be familiar with the make-fun-of-the-people-in-the-front-row tactic. On the evening, I was there I witnessed Breslin, acting as emcee, reduce the entire audience to a bunch of laughing imbeciles by implying that a man in the front row was gay, that a woman was exceedingly stupid and that another man was suffering from an overwhelming desire to 'cut the cheese.' (In all fairness he didn't use that term, it's mine).

ark Breslin on Making Fun People in the Front Row:

"First of all, it breaks one of the rules of show business (which is) that the person on stage is suppose to be glad to be there, and glad that the people are there to see him . . ."

"One of the things that people are most uncomfortable with, is the notion of their own status and, what a comic can do by making fun of their own status, is release that fear."

From the act: Commenting on a woman's glasses, "Very nice glasses Laurie, why you would choose to look like a lesbian accountant I don't know." The crowd goes wild.

"You know," adds Breslin, "when I get on stage I never look at someone who is shabbily dressed and make fun of them, I make fun of someone who is very well dressed...."

From the act: "That sir, is the fuckin' ugliest jacket I've ever scene in the world." And the crowd goes wild.

"Some people are very offended by this kind of comedy."

Mark Breslin on Comedy, Freedom and Monopoly Metaphors.

"Yuk Yuk's is a place where nothing is sacred. I wouldn't live according to the dictates of the philosophies that I seem to be expressing in my act, but there's a place for it. There's (a place) like the free parking on the monopoly board. There's got to be a place where you can let your hair down. It's about freedom."

"At some root point, I feel that being on stage doing standup comedy is, if nothing else, a celebration of freedom. And a triumph of language over experience . . ."

"Most of the people I know, when they are on stage, are rewriting their personal histories in such a way that if they are not winning in the anecdote, then it is told in such a (clever way) that they might as well be."

Breslin on Not Having an Office:

"For me I don't believe in it. That would just chain me to a desk. I am not a desk person, to have an office would just bog me down with details that I don't really want to take care of."

Whether Breslin wants to take care of details or not doesn't seem to be the issue. The question is, between dreaming, scheming, conceptualizing and the obvious amount of time the man spends on philosophical and sociological ruminations and dissertations, it is a wonder how he gets any work done at all.