

The Weekly Log, 5/1/09

by Joe Mulder

I have no ideas this week. Really. None. I have no thoughts about anything. I don't feel ways about stuff. Obama's first 100 days? Nothing. Air Force One flying around lower Manhattan? Everything that needs to be said has been said. The NBA playoffs? Not really watching. The NFL draft? Don't really care. Joe Biden telling people they're all going to die from Swine Flu on "The Today Show?" Pretty much par for the Joe Biden course (free advice to anybody who makes t-shirts: put out one with Joe Biden's grinning head, and underneath that, just have the phrase, "What the Vice President *meant* to say was...". You can have that idea. I'm giving it to you).

So what to do?

Well, Facebook has something new that allows you to put up your own personal "Top Five" lists on an almost endless possibility of topics, and I've become borderline obsessed with doing that. So just when I was thinking I wouldn't be putting up any new content this week for my loyal reader(s?), I realized: hey, why don't I just go through the Top Five lists I've done so far? I can crap out a nice long stream-of-consciousness column on those lists, and still get at least a few hours' sleep. So, here we go, from the first one I did, to the most recent.

"I've Been Told I Look Like"

Gladys Knight, Yao Ming, M. Night Shyamalan, Mary Lou Retton and Johnny Depp

I feel like I started awfully strong.

This was the first one of these I saw; an old college acquaintance put this up; she's blonde with long hair, and all her "I've Been Told I Look Like" people were blonde with long hair. Straightforward enough; but I haven't been told I look like anybody since I was told my multiple people back in eighth grade that I looked like Neil Patrick Harris (and i kind of did, although we look nothing alike now), so I figured I'd go the other way with it.

And, not to brag, but, my first thought was Aretha Franklin, and then I said to myself, "no, Joe, you can do better than that." So Gladys Knight it was. And which human being on the planet looks the least like both Gladys Knight and myself? Yao Ming. That one was easy. If you were to triangulate myself and Gladys Knight, you'd end up right at Yao Ming. M. Night Shyamalan pretty much picked *himself* for the list, and I was happy to come up with Mary Lou Retton even if it meant having two famous athletes on the list. Then of course you've got to finish it off with a world-renowned superhunk, and I really think Johnny Depp was the appropriate one. Maybe because of all the superhunks he's the slightest and most womanly, while I tend

to be big and occasionally just a tad puffy (although I shouldn't complain; plenty of people are puffier), so the conceit of the joke is maintained, *plus* you've got the layer of self-delusion wherein I'm comparing myself to a superhunk.

So we can all agree that the Top Five Facebook think was off to a flying start....

"Biggest Celebrity Crushes"

Christina Hendricks, Penelope Cruz, Michelle Trachtenberg, Katherine McPhee and Aisha Tyler.

If Christina Hendricks isn't #1 on your list, I simply don't trust you. That's first of all. Second of all, my wife did this list before I did, so I'm allowed to.

Penelope Cruz should be hard to argue with; my feelings for her have been well-documented ever since I famously "reached" to take her with the #1 pick in the First Annual PoopReading.com [Oscar Draft](#).

Michelle Trachtenberg is 18, so I don't want to hear it. As a matter of fact, not only is she 18, she's 23!

Katherine McPhee looks like my wife (according to no less an authority than my mother-in-law), so no wonder I have the hots for her.

And I must admit: if Aisha Tyler didn't deserve a spot on the list on her own merits – although does she ever – I'd have put her on the list anyway, just to have some diversity. I'm nothing if not inclusive.

"Best 'Simpsons' Episodes"

"The Last Temptation of Homer," "Cape Feare," "Secrets of a Successful Marriage," "Colonel Homer" and "Marge Be Not Proud."

I hadn't planned on wading into such treacherous waters, but I saw this category sitting there, ready to be tackled, and I couldn't stop myself. A week-and-a-half later, though, I can't say I'd change anything. Sure, "Last Exit to Springfield" and "A Streetcar Named Marge" probably deserve to be on the list, but it's a Top Five list, not an All The Great Episodes, No Matter How Many list. So tough decisions had to be made.

"The Last Temptation of Homer" is the best "Simpsons" episode in its own right, but even if it wasn't it would deserve the top spot simply for the [following exchange](#):

HOMER: Moe, I need your advice.

MOE: Yeah?

HOMER: See, I got this friend named... Joey Joe Joe...

Junior... Shabadoo?

A guy sitting at the end of the bar looks up from his drink.

MOE: That's the worst name I ever heard.

The guy at the end of the bar starts crying and runs out the door.

BARNEY: Hey! Joey Joe Joe!

HOMER: Aw, what the hell, it's me!

I've long considered this moment not only the best piece of comedy that's ever been written, but quite possibly the absolute pinnacle of human evolution; after we, as a species, reached the point where we could conceive of the "Joey Joe Joe" gag, I think it's all downhill from here. I'm not saying we'll all be dead by August, mind you; we took 100,000 years to get to "Joey Joe Joe," and I'm sure we've got 100,000 left in us. But that will be recognized as the turning point.

"Cape Feare" is almost its own special case; the entire episode is essentially a parody of the Martin Scorsese remake of *Cape Fear*, and sees Sideshow Bob paroled from prison and stalking the Simpsons, intent on killing Bart. It's so full of quotable lines that a person might as well just memorize the entire episode. I only rank it below "The Last Temptation of Homer" because it is not really representative of a "Simpsons" episode, per se. Still, its case for the top spot would be a relatively easy one to make.

"Secrets of a Successful Marriage" has been a favorite of mine since the day I saw it; a no-doubt Top Fiver the second the credits started rolling.

"Colonel Homer" snuck up on me one day when some friends and I (including, but not limited to, PoopReading.com contributors Brandon Kruse and Jameson Simmons) got together after having made lists of our favorite episodes, totaled up the points, and watched the ten (I think) best over the course of a day. We all knew the episode pretty well (we all knew all of them pretty well), but for some reason the roll call of the cast of the "Hee-Haw" parody show "Ya-Hoo" took us completely by surprise. "Starring, in alphabetical order: Yodelin' Zeke!" Right there, we were goners; we must all have either forgotten that joke, or not realized just how funny it was. Anyway, once the announcer got to "Big Shirtless Rod," I don't think any of us could breathe.

"Marge Be Not Proud," in which Bart gets busted for shoplifting a video game, may well be both the most realistic and second-most touching episode "The Simpsons" ever did (the most touching, clearly, being "And Maggie Makes Three," the episode featuring Homer's de-motivational workplace plaque, "Don't Forget: You're Here Forever,"

strategically covered with pictures of Maggie to make it read, "Do It For Her." Great... now I'm crying).

Top 5 "Saturday Night Live" Hosts Ever

Alec Baldwin, Steve Martin, Christopher Walken, Tom Hanks and John Goodman.

I actually created this one myself! I was going to add a proviso stipulating that in order to qualify a host must have hosted at least twice, but that would have gotten a little wordy. Anyway, it was tough to leave off people like Kevin Spacey, Jeff Goldblum, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Kelsey Grammer and The Rock, all of whom did stellar work in their day, but I think my Top Five pretty much speaks for itself. I'm not sure who could possibly come off my list to make room for anyone else.

"Best TV Shows"

"30 Rock," "Dexter," "24," "The Office," "Chuck."

I went with TV shows that are (or were, at the time; we still don't know the fate of "Chuck," though it doesn't look good) currently on the air, obviously.

"Chuck" took "How I Met Your Mother's" spot, is what I remarked at the time. And, yes, I forgot about "House." Inexcusable. But such is the danger of these lists. The danger and, dare I say, the *thrill!*

"All-Time Favorite Pro Wrestlers"

Mick Foley, Hulk Hogan, Jeff Hardy, John Cena, The Rock.

I won't bore the non-wrestling fans with this one, except to say that Mick Foley is a great story; a dumpy guy with a bad physique who dreamed of being a big-time pro wrestler, and by God didn't give up until he had become one. You put Mick Foley in a room with just about anybody, and you ask someone "Which of these people do you think is a former three-time WWF champion?," and I guarantee you almost nobody is ever going to guess that it's Mick Foley. And yet, three-time WWF champion he is.

We should all go after what we want with such passion and fortitude.

"Favorite Beers"

Pilsner Urquell, Stella Artois, Alfa Edel Pils, Birra Moretti and Oranjeboom.

What can I say; I don't tend to like American beer. I tend to like, evidently, Czech beer, Belgian beer, Dutch beer, Italian beer and more Dutch beer, from the looks of it.

I should also note that Canada's La Fun du Monde is a

contender, but I've only had it twice. Give it time.

"Best Countries In the World"

United States, Australia, Canada, Belgium and France.

Only because those are exactly the five countries I've ever been in. I would never *actually* do a list like that; too divisive. The Facebook Top Five lists are supposed to bring us all together, not tear us all apart!

"Top Five Broadway Musicals"

"Wicked," "Avenue Q," "Les Miserables," "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Damn Yankees."

Not much outside-the-box thinking there, I know. But I've only seen so many Broadway musicals, and I'm not going to put something on the list that I haven't seen.

"Five Famous People I've Technically Talked To (I Hesitate To Say 'Met')"

Ray Romano, Paul Rudd, Sarah Silverman, Winona Ryder and Adam Carolla.

Ray Romano I saw when I was on the writing staff of a sitcom one of my college classes was producing. One of our instructors knew a guy who was producing the American Comedy Awards at the Shrine Auditorium across the street from the USC campus, so we went and had our writers' meeting over there one day so we could watch them do a run-through of some of the performances that were going to be on the awards telecast. Ray Romano was sitting at a table at some point, so I went up to him and told him how much I loved his show (which I did, and still do in reruns). He said thanks, but didn't seem too thrilled to talk to me. Oh, well.

Paul Rudd I saw at the Apple Store at The Grove shopping center in L.A.; my daughter had just learned to walk, and rather than take her to a park or somewhere she'd get dirty and grungy, I took her to The Grove to walk around. She walked into the Apple Store and made a beeline for the stairs, I carried her up, and who's sitting at the customer service area with his laptop but Paul Rudd? He looked at my daughter and said, "Hey, cutie!," then we made twenty seconds worth of bland small talk and I had to chase my daughter around some more. Nice fellow.

Sarah Silverman I saw outside the L.A. Improv, waiting for the valet to bring her car (as my wife – then girlfriend – and I were waiting for our car as well). She'd performed that night, and she'd been great as always. I'd had a thing for her since her "Saturday Night Live" days which, as we stood there outside the Improv, had come a good ten years earlier. So I'd been nursing a pretty intense love for her for quite a while. My lovely wife urged me to say something to her, and I still maintain that I would have eventually, that I was merely

biding my time instead of chickening out. In a very brilliant strategic move, one that she knew would leave me with no choice but to award her massive amounts of girlfriend points but would also make me look like a wuss in front of her "competition," my wife walked over to Sarah Silverman and said, "Excuse me, my boyfriend is a huge fan, he wanted to say hi." And say "hi" I did; I told her how much I loved her stuff, how she was basically "the Paul McCartney of comedy" to me. Which she is, to the extent that that makes any sense. Then, she said, "you've got quite a girlfriend there," and then, I swear to you this happened, Sarah Silverman grabbed my arm and said, "leave her!" We all knew she was kidding, of course, but a cold, clinical, dispassionate look at the words that were said reveals that Sarah Silverman did indeed once ask me to leave my girlfriend, now wife, for her. That *happened*. And no one can ever take that away from me.

Winona Ryder I saw at the movies years ago, and when she was walking up a long staircase after the movie she biffed it and almost wiped out. I laughed a little and said, "Are you okay?," and she said, "yeah, I'm fine, thanks." Not a great story, but she's an interesting name to have on the list.

Adam Carolla could be on here twice, actually; some friends and I went to see his movie *The Hammer* last year and then stayed after when he came for a meet-and-greet. But then I met him again through random happenstance; my wife knew a couple whose grandson went to a certain pre-school that was having a Halloween carnival/fundraiser, and they recommended we bring our daughter to hang out with their son. We did, and it turns out Adam Carolla's kids go to the same preschool, so he was there hawking auction items and baked goods while the kids played and ran around. Not only that, but ESPN.com's Bill Simmons, "The Sports Guy," was there as well with his wife and kid (I'd met him too, briefly, at "The Jimmy Kimmel Show" years before). At one point, the two of them were just off by themselves chatting, and as much as a person feels like a tool doing something like this, I went up and asked if I could get a picture with them. If it helps, it should be noted that I'm a massive, *massive* fan of both gentlemen. In any case, they were happy (or, at least, willing) to oblige, and now I've got a picture of me with Adam Carolla and Bill Simmons, which essentially makes me the absolute King of All Dorky White Guys Between Ages 15 and 40.

5 Crushes I Had Growing Up

Daphne Blake, Catherine Bach, Soleil Moon Frye, Paula Abdul, Sarah Silverman.

This was done in chronological order.

Daphne Blake is, of course, Daphne from "Scooby-Doo."

Catherine Bach is Daisy Duke, and she's pretty much the childhood crush to end all childhood crushes; everyone else

on this list is fighting over the silver medal. I mean, if I gave out medals for this. Which I have no intention of ever doing.

Soleil Moon Frye was Punky Brewster, and yes, she was eight years old when that show went on the air, but I was seven. So I have no problem with putting her on the list. Plus, have you seen what she looks like now? I really, *really* have no problem with putting her on the list.

Paula Abdul, well, the "Promise of a New Day" video really just hit that sweet spot right after puberty and right before the internet, and we needn't discuss that any further.

And Sarah Silverman, we've covered. She debuted on "Saturday Night Live" when I was a sophomore in high school, so I can count her as a crush I had "growing up."

Comedians

Patton Oswalt, Louis CK, Sarah Silverman, Paul F. Tompkins and Brian Regan.

I've seen Patton Oswalt live several times, and nobody is better. It's like watching Tiger Woods play golf or Mickey Mantle hit; I'll be telling my grandkids I saw Patton Oswalt perform live. And they'll be like, "Who? You smell weird."

Louis CK is great anyway, but his recent stuff might be even better if you've got little kids.

Sarah Silverman we've covered, but it's worth adding that she made two particular "Conan" appearances a few months apart back in the late '90s, I got them both on tape, and my friends and I studied them like the freaking Zapruder film. Never has anyone this side of Norm Macdonald been better on a talk show.

Of course, typing that just made me realize I forgot Norm Macdonald; crap. He's #1; move everybody down a spot. Sorry, Brian Regan. You're great; it's not that you're not great.

Paul F. Tompkins I saw along with PoopReading.com contributor Jameson Simmons at a small bi-weekly show an acquaintance of mine used to put on at a Borders bookstore; he did a routine about those springy snakes in a peanut brittle can, and I just lost it, and he kept going after me, drawing the routine out and, I'm pretty sure, trying to make me pee in my pants. I almost did.

Top Five People I Want To Punch In the Face"

Chris Brown, Jim Rome, Omarosa, A.J. Pierzynski and Danny Bonaduce.

I wasn't that enamored of this category, but everybody else on Facebook was doing it, so I gave it a shot.

I actually wanted to include Barack Obama, just because pretty much everyone else put George W. Bush on their list. It would have been hilarious. The internet would have exploded. My family would have had to go into witness protection. People literally wouldn't have been able to handle it.

But, I didn't. Because I don't want to punch Barack in the face. I don't really want to punch *anyone* in the face, and I know the list probably isn't to be taken seriously, but, still. That's so harsh, to say something like that.

Chris Brown does actually deserve it, so he was an easy one.

Jim Rome does a terrible radio show on which he knowingly, wittingly panders to stupid people by acting like an idiot, which he is not. He makes a great deal of money doing that, but I can't imagine at the end of the day he feels any better about his job than a highly paid prostitute feels about hers. Jim Rome knows exactly what he's doing, which is why he deserves a punch in the face.

Omarosa from "The Apprentice" is a no-brainer; she built her reputation by doing things like falsely accusing a fellow contestant, on national TV, of throwing around the word "nigger," which is simply inexcusable. Not quite Chris Brown inexcusable, but very, very inexcusable nonetheless.

A.J. Pierzynski is widely known to be a jerk, and he plays for the White Sox besides. It's just the perfect storm.

And I like Danny Bonaduce; I've been listening to him on the radio for years. But, as I pointed out on Facebook, there's nobody who it would be cooler to say you once punched in the face. And, I'm sure Danny Bonaduce himself would agree with that.

And there you have it; all my Top Fives so far. What's in store for the weeks to come? Stay tuned!

Or, actually, don't; not for that. I'll never a column about this stuff again, unless of course I get really desperate and hard-up for ideas.
