

## Popsturbation: Discovering the Lighter Side of Black

Anthony G. Cassanova  
David D. Conklin  
MUSE Staff

Intelligent. Sardonic. Angry. Bitter. Absurd. Costard-filled. Lewis Black. Comedian Lewis Black appears on "The Daily Show" every Wednesday, and is this year's recipient of the American Comedy Awards' Viewer's Choice Award for Stand-up Comedy. Note: though we said "award" twice, it's only one award. He has also written over 40 plays. Lewis even appeared in one he co-wrote with Mark Linn Baker. He insists the show did not involve the dance of joy. Lewis recently agreed to run the Popsturbation gauntlet. He persevered a series of questions, made buffalo rides, and a "50 varieties of chewing gum" taste test. This week, we bring you these questions, his answers and the image in your head of Lewis Black riding a buffalo whilst nude.

**P:** You started out in theater. Which do you enjoy more — performing in plays or performing comedy?

**LB:** They're different and, if there are no psychotics in the play, and the director actually knows what he is doing, I enjoy them equally. They both give me a lot of satisfaction.

**P:** You've been in front of large audiences, faced down politicians, and had your mug nationally broadcast on Comedy Central. So tell us, what exactly is the smell of fear?

**LB:** (laughs) The smell of fear is indescribable, especially when you are starting to do [comedy] for a living. Well, not even for a living. Anybody who wants to be a stand-up has to understand it's beyond fear. You actually have to enjoy your own death. If you enjoy that and you enjoy watching, then you should probably become a comedian.

**P:** How about the taste of success?

**LB:** The taste of success is really good. You just shouldn't get involved with it the way you might with piastachio nuts.

**P:** Where do you get the inspiration for your material?

**LB:** The sad thing is there's not enough that is more obvious to me. There's a lot more out there. Whenever I watch other comics do something I think to myself, "Son of a bi—I how could I have missed that?" But usually, well, like today, I picked up The Boston Globe and looked at the front page. Today is the stem-cell thing. I haven't put it in the act yet, because they have a couple of days before anything is official. But immediately, there is all this hoo-ha and they fart around and come up with something that is right down the middle on stem cells. Then they look to see if they have the stem cells. And they don't. I mean, don't you do that first? That's the kind of stuff. Most of the time, it's right in front of me. And one of the reasons I think I'm lucky, is that it occurs to most people. It's so staggeringly obvious. It's the kind of stuff that in high school you wouldn't have allowed to occur for more than thirty seconds. For example, if George W. Bush were a high school class president or even just acting like this in high school, they'd beat the sh—out of him. I mean, seriously, it's staggering.

**P:** It seems that in the manner in which you approach things, there is an element of rage, but you can also look at it and laugh. And you are obviously a man known for your rage. But what



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Comedian Lewis Black is an avid fan of sex and golf.

makes you happy, excluding chairs of small furry woodland creatures?

**LB:** Sex works. That's usually at the top of my list. A good meal. And really enough, golf. And how pathetic is that?

**P:** Do you consider what you do in golf a sport, or a waste of time?

**LB:** I consider it to be from someone who fears to use drugs anymore.

**P:** Would you ever take up bowling instead of golf?

**LB:** No, because bowling doesn't have the obsessive compulsive thing.

**P:** Well, there is the chain-smoking —

**LB:** That's true, now that's true. You see, the thing about bowling is you can just liquor up and smoke. The thing about golf is the mental aspect of obsessive compulsion and that really feeds into anyone who has enjoyed drugs in their lifetime.

**P:** What do you think about student publications that just print celebrity interviews to lure foolish readers into thinking that the same level of quality will be present in every issue thereafter?

**LB:** I think it's a good idea. Anything that sells. It depends on the celebrity. Some celebrities really don't deserve celebrity.

**P:** Would you be willing to endorse our column, Popsturbation?

**LB:** (laughs) Sure, I'd endorse. Just from the title alone. I think it's an important part of the American cultural history. And the fact that it's in the student newspaper is sad. It's representative of the state of American affairs.

doesn't itch. Anything that's smooth to the touch works. But I'm not going to be wandering around in women's panties. OK?

**P:** OK, and speaking of people we don't want to see in panties ... Miss Cleo is bringing tarot readings back to the fore of psychic predictions. If we were to hand you some tarot cards with the following images on them, what could you tell us about the future? The first card is — John Stamos.

**LB:** (sneeze) It never ends.

**P:** George W. Bush teaching children ...

**LB:** Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Just wrong. It means the universe may end at any second.

**P:** Ted McGinley

**LB:** Who's he?

**P:** Jefferson from "Married...With Children." He was on "The Love Boat," "Happy Days" ...

**LB:** —

**P:** You can just make something up.

**LB:** I don't even have a response. My brain does not even quiver.

**P:** You in a Valentine heart with Jon Stewart.

**LB:** Wow. That doesn't bode well for anyone. He would like to marry me, and I would like his career.

**P:** Here's the scenario: Thunder-dome. Craig Kilborne is armed with a flamethrower. Jon Stewart wields a medieval battle axe. You are Tina Turner. Whose hand dost thou raise in victory after the chase has ensued?

**LB:** Um ... uhh ... Stewart. Stewart would win because Kilborne would need a ... (what occurred here was nothing less than a phenomenal, 18-second long brain fart) ... teleprompter.

**P:** We've been talking for quite awhile, isn't it about time you plug something?

**LB:** My album, the *White Album*, is still available on ComedyCentral.com.

**P:** What has show business taught you that you didn't expect to learn?

**LB:** The craft is easy, the business is hard.

**P:** And the roughest lesson?

**LB:** If someone is a position of power vis a vis yourself and they say something profoundly stupid, and you know it's stupid, you ... A.: do not point it out to them. And B.: don't ever say "go f— yourself."

**P:** This is our parting question, so it's about parting gifts. If you had a choice between a Flowbee vacuum haircutting system and a Ronco electric food dehydrator, which would you take and why? Keep in mind, the parting gift is because you've already lost.

**LB:** The Flowbee has no interest to me. Food always interests me. Dehydrated, bloated, whatever, I always like food. And the fact that you can dehydrate anything intrigues me.

**P:** You talk a lot about drugs. We're not too sure about asking you this and how comfortable you might be with this question ...

**LB:** I don't give a s— ... I don't take Viagra.

**P:** No, nothing like that. It's the other end. Is it true that you were once addicted to the suppository form of Children's Tylenol?

**LB:** (laughs) No ... no that was never a problem.

**P:** Did you take it orally?

**LB:** Yeah, I took it orally. But anything you shove up your butt I have no real major interest in.

**P:** Fill in the blank. This nation is just too silly, I'm moving to ...

**LB:** Another reality.

**P:** Sometimes Dave does his Captain Marvelous costume and prances around our humble abode. He insists that this is normal. Your thoughts ...

**LB:** Anything that makes someone happy and doesn't interfere with the lives of others is fine by me. Whatever it takes, everyone's got a crush. And if he wants to call himself Captain Marvelous — as long as he's not yelling at people, "I am Captain Marvelous, go f— yourself," then that's fine.

**P:** You're a hero to the common man. Well, maybe not a hero. But you must have an awe-inspiring costume or rubber muscle suit underneath your normal getup ...

**LB:** No, I wear silk boxers. Why? It