

Primary Source

Back-patting at the New York—media corral; more people who hate the Hamptons; more plastic-surgery debate; and a Kathie Lee defender.

AND OTHER NEW YORK READERS KNEW Joe Klein was Anonymous months ago when you published your article "Primary Culprit" [by Donald Foster, February 26]. And you didn't even need a handwriting analyst to prove it!

Doris M. Vergot
HARRISBURG, PENN.

IN HIS PIECE ON JOE KLEIN, INC., RICHARD Turner ["Media: Liar's Poker," July 29] notes, "It was incest time in the New York media hothouse again last week." Turner describes the dismay at *New York* over Klein's insistent denials of Vassar professor Donald Foster's conclusion that Klein wrote *Primary Colors*. But wasn't it more irritating that the *New York Times* never mentioned Foster's *New York* article, and instead suggested that things were in doubt until the *Washington Post* broke the story of the handwriting analysis? Foster's conclusion could hardly have been better documented, and it seems insulting for the *Times* to suggest that the subjectivities of handwriting analysis could cause Klein to confess.

Leland Wilkinson
EVANSTON, ILL.

I FOUND RICHARD TURNER'S DISCUSSION OF the moral and ethical questions regarding Joe Klein's authorship of *Primary Colors* interesting but rather beside the point. Several years ago, I was eating lunch at City Hall Park when who should I notice sitting beside me but the future Anonymous. At that time, he was still writing for *New York* and had recently appeared on a local Sunday news show. Surprised, I asked if he was Joe Klein. He smiled benignly and shook his head. I found that a bit odd, but his recent revelation has made the reason perfectly clear. The man suffers from an identity crisis, and therefore deserves our sympathy rather than our contempt.

Gary Weinman
MANHATTAN

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York Magazine, 755 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017-5998 or sent via e-mail to 76702.2510@compuserve.com. Please include a daytime phone number.

No Fun

WOW! A SCENE THAT MANAGES TO ENCAPSULATE all that is shallow, vile, vapid, superficial, boring, and pathetic ["Tales of the Hamptons," August 5]! I wish "the season" were all year round so those morons jabbering into their cell phones in their Mondials and Range Rovers would *stay out there*. Summer weekends in Manhattan are so blissful *without them*.

Richard Luckett
MANHATTAN

THERE ARE MANY OF US IN EAST HAMPTON who are not famous, do not drive Mercedeses (with blatant disregard of traffic regulations), and do not open our well-cared-for homes to a myriad of wandering houseguests. I can only assume that we are not good copy, since your article did not mention our existence.

Barbara Lambert
EAST HAMPTON, N.Y.

Star Quality

BARBARA LIPPERT'S ARTICLE ON KATHIE Lee Gifford, "How Does She Do It?" [July 22], makes light of her talent ("without benefit of any discernible skill . . ."). In fact, as anyone knows who has seen her at, for example, Rainbow & Stars, she has a career because she is a very talented singer with a commanding ability to charm and hold an audience.

Richard Malty Jr.
MANHATTAN

Truth, Beauty

DOES EVERY BREAST NEED TO BE A PERFECT C cup ["Bend Me, Shape Me," by Lily Burana, July 15]? Does every nose need to be aquiline? Is the goal of plastic surgery to clone the population into the small percentage of those who possess media-idealized beauty? Can it be that the 28-year-old female depicted in all her splendor believes that she requires all that work? Can it be that the majority of those plastic surgeons interviewed believe she needs all that work?

What happened to individuality of

looks? What happened to character? Are we to infer from this article that money was the motivator for the multiplicity of procedures? I am a board-certified plastic surgeon and the president of the New York Regional Society of Plastic Surgery. In my sixteen years of practice, I never encountered a patient who required such an extensive makeover, regardless of age.

I am angry to see my specialty brought to such a demeaning level. But I don't know whom to be angry at. Should I be angry at Lily Burana for entrapping these doctors? Should I be angry at those plastic surgeons for being so opportunistic? Or do I blame society for losing perspective on inner beauty and individuality? Plastic surgeons who care about the ethics of our specialty should speak up and try to portray an accurate and moral image of our life's work.

Frederick N. Lukash, M.D.
MANHATTAN

Just Say No

OVER THE YEARS, NEW YORK HAS GIVEN plenty of free publicity to Elaine's, but with James Kaplan's July 8 cover story, "Forever Elaine's," you really outdid yourselves. In the early eighties, I ventured into Elaine's one evening, and my meal there is memorable to this day—as unequivocally the most unpleasant restaurant experience I have had in New York. The food and service were both atrocious, and a little research reveals that my experience remains typical today: In the 1996 Zagat Restaurant Survey, containing ratings of more than 1,300 restaurants based on the opinions of ordinary New Yorkers, the combined food-plus-service score of Elaine's placed it ahead of only nine other places. In other words, Elaine's placed in the bottom one percent of all restaurants. Furthermore, of the nine restaurants ranked behind Elaine's, most are low-end chains or fast-food joints. The only thing more amazing to me than *New York's* fawning over Elaine's is that it can stay in business in a city with so many fine restaurants.

Daniel R. Jacobson
MANHATTAN