

Vanity Fair—September 1994

Proust Questionnaire

Gonzo journalism's granddad (and sole survivor), Hunter S. This month he casts a bleary eye on V.F.'s Proust Questionnaire.

Vanity Fair: Which historical figure do you most identify with?

HST: Marquis de Sade.

Vanity Fair: Which living person do you most admire?

HST: Richard Nixon—despite rumors of his death.

Vanity Fair: What is the trait you most deplore in others?

HST: Greed and dumbness.

Vanity Fair: What is your greatest extravagance?

HST: The money I spend on the physical love of animals.

Vanity Fair: What is your favorite journey?

HST: Racing the stoplights on Park Avenue in a fast car at four o'clock in the morning.

Vanity Fair: What do you consider the most overrated virtue?

HST: Moderation.

Vanity Fair: On what occasion do you lie?

HST: To the police.

Vanity Fair: What is your greatest regret?

HST: The destruction by greedheads of the once honorable Woody Creek Tavern.

Vanity Fair: If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?

HST: To get rid of my evil son.

Vanity Fair: If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?

HST: I have no choice (and neither do you). I have been here many times for many reasons and I will be here after you leave. I am Lono.

Vanity Fair: Where would you like to live?

HST: In the Place of Refuge on the south Kona coast.

Vanity Fair: What is your most marked characteristic?

HST: A tortured, honky-tonk smile.

Vanity Fair: Who is your favorite hero of fiction?

HST: Dracula.

Vanity Fair: Who are your heroes in real life?

HST: Hal Haddon [lawyer, Gary Hart's campaign manager], Morris Dees [civil rights activist], Nina Hartley [porn star], Jacques Cousteau [undersea explorer].

Vanity Fair: How would you like to die?

HST: Explode.

Vanity Fair: What is your motto?

HST: "Res Ipsa Loquitur."

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NuCity Goes Gonzo

BY ALMA GARCIA AND NORMA JEAN THOMPSON

**He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being
a man.**

—HST

Here Today, Gonzo Tomorrow.

**It's all true: Dr. Hunter S. Thompson is an electric charge of almost superhuman
wattage, and energizes as many people around him as he drains.**

**Naturally, he's also as human as the next person—only perhaps just a whole
lot more brutal, kind, macho and in need of nurturing than the average person,
all at once.**

**It's difficult to capture him, in more ways than one. Our taped interview
with him yielded hours of unintelligible mumblings, as well as impenetrable
static, the roar of car engines, and a background soundtrack of television and
loud music—much of it orchestrated by Thompson himself, depending on
his interest in having certain information recorded, it seemed.**

**In any case, we were able to salvage a few of the Doctor's thoughts, some
of them even pertaining to the subjects in which he is considered to be an expert.**

**Dr. Hunter S. Thompson's fans may have to struggle to reconcile his
myth to his manhood, but it's good to know that in this world of compromised
lives, a life of Gonzohood can be lived with complete integrity.**

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. HUNTER S. THOMPSON

On President Clinton

Norma Jean Thompson: Do you ever speak with Bill Clinton? Does he know what you're saying about him?

HST: Oh, yeah. I got into the Clinton thing with the idea that we could influence people. Yeah, the rock and roll president. He stands for everything I hate; violating the Fourth Amendment, search and seizure. I've said worse things about Clinton than I'm saying now. I think the worse thing I've ever said about him is that he has the redneck taste of a man who would go on a double date with the Rev. Jimmy Swaggart.* That's a nasty thing to say. I've also said he has the morals of a lizard. He's a hiccup of history.

NJT: You really don't like him. Do you feel a responsibility to the people who take your opinions seriously? Doesn't it just help people rally around the right when you put him down?

HST: That's no reason why I should spend another four years getting tangled up by a treacherous asshole like Clinton. There are limits. He's further to the right than George Bush.

On General Politics

Alma Garcia: You said in Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail that tradition liberalism is dying or dead. Is Clinton exemplifying that?

HST: They should have done some ethnic cleansing of the liberals a long time ago.

AG: What are the top three things that should be on the presidential agenda?

HST: Resignation.

AG: Aside from resignation, is there anything in particular you think should be at the top of the presidential agenda?

HST: It doesn't matter right now, because (Clinton) won't fight for it. If people rallied behind him and decided to get something done, some agenda he endorsed, he would abandon it. It's a no-win situation, a serious character flaw.

AG: Who are the politicians you like?

HST: Not many. I'd like Gore in the House. Clinton you really can't turn your back on. If the Gores stayed in the cabin (on Thompson's property), they'd fit it. I wouldn't have to worry about them stealing anything. Now if the Clintons stayed there.

AG: Who are the other bad politicians?

HST: Well, it's a crooked class.

AG: Who are the worst ones?

HST: Fewer and fewer good people are getting into politics.

On the End of the World

NJT: You said that by the year 2000, the world would be unrecognizable as we now know it. Does that include an abolishment of government as we know it? Do you really have an apocalyptic vision of the year 2000?

HST: That's pretty clear. That has been my dictum.

AG: An actual physical apocalypse?

NJT: Like in the Book of Revelation?

HST: No, it won't come like that. But it'll seem to, for a lot of people.

AG: How do you think it will manifest itself?

HST: Oh, many ways. I can't qualify my statement. It stands by itself.

NJT: Is it an economic or a moral thing? I want to know if you really believe that five years from now it's going to be so radically different that it'll be like 50 years have passed.

HST: Yeah.

AG: And are the ways just too numerous to go into?

HST: Yeah. I'd have to make a list.

AG: What's at the top of the list?

HST: Let's go on to something else. If it's going to snow tomorrow, I don't think I want to sit around and list the 57 reasons why or maybe . . .

AG: Will people recognize it for what it is?

On Death

NJT: Are you afraid of death?

HST: No . . . No. There is no death.