

Trouble
English Edition #1, June 2005

David Robbins

**THE ICE CREAM SOCIAL
SUNDANCE CHANNEL MINI-PILOT SCRIPT**

**Previously unpublished text
Original text in English**

In the summer of 2003 the Sundance Channel announced a "TV Lab" competition--proposals for new television series. Four projects were selected from the nearly four thousand submitted. *The Ice Cream Social*, David Robbins' update of the classic variety-show format, was one of them. In October 2003, a "mini-pilot" was produced in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MUSIC UP ON SOUNDTRACK: AMERICAN ANALOG SET (INSTRUMENTAL VERSION OF "PUNK AS FUCK")

BUTTERSCOTCH AND PISTACHIO DELIVER THE CEREMONIAL FLAG CAKE (A TRADITIONAL AMERICAN FLAG DESIGN RENDERED IN PINK, BROWN, AND WHITE FROSTING) TO THE GIANT SPOON-SHAPED BAR. THEY SET IT ON THE BAR AND THE OTHER SOCIALISTS AND GUESTS GATHER ROUND.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICEOVER

From America's Dairyland, it's the Ice Cream Social--
Cold--licking sweet--always melting--sticky enough!
Tonight, Scoop, Parfait, and the rest of the Socialists
welcome--

*TWO MEN STAND AT THE SPOON BAR PLAYING POKER. A SOCIALIST SETS A
PIECE OF CAKE DOWN ON THE BAR AS SHE PASSES BY.*

ANNOUNCER'S VOICEOVER

--James McManus, author of *Positively Fifth Street*.

ANOTHER MAN IS HANDED A PLATE OF CAKE BY ONE OF THE SOCIALISTS.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICEOVER
Stand-up poet Matt Cook--

*A ROCK BAND PERFORMS ON A STAGE THAT'S TRIMMED WITH PINK, BROWN,
AND WHITE CAMPAIGN BUNTING.*

ANNOUNCER'S VOICEOVER
--and musical group The Ingredients.
It's the good old days, back in a brand new way!

*DISSOLVE TO CLOSE-UP OF AMERICAN FLAG CAKE (PINK/BROWN/WHITE)
HAND-DELIVERED TO THE SPOON BAR BY A SMALL GROUP OF SOCIALISTS.*

*CLOSE-UPS OF KNIFE CUTTING CAKE AND SLICES OF CAKE PLACED ON
PLATES; IMAGES SYNCHED TO THE BEAT OF THE MUSIC SOUNDTRACK.*

*CUT TO TWO, SUPERIMPOSED SEQUENCES OF PARTYGOERS CHATTING AND
EATING CAKE. ON THE SOUNDTRACK, DIALOGUE FRAGMENTS PLAY AS
VOICEOVERS.*

LICORICE
So no one really knows where ice cream came from or who
invented it. Isn't that divine?

PAUL FINGER
Are those real sparkles?

PISTACHIO
I mean what most modern people really want is contact
with the idea of community.

CUT TO TWO SHOT OF JAMES MCMANUS AND PARFAIT.

JIM McMANUS
Are You a socialist or a socialite?

PARFAIT
(shrugs)
It depends. It changes.

JIM McMANUS
Depends on what?

PARFAIT

On whichever we need more of.

CUT TO MATT COOK STANDING WITH BOBBY, ANOTHER GUEST.

MATT COOK

In the future, instead of having a statue of a general or somebody on a horse, they'll have statues of really important people driving their cars!

CU OF A GOOFY GLASSES-WEARING GUY SLOPPILY EATING ICE CREAM CONE.

CU OF A DREAMY GIRL MUSING SILENTLY AS A TEXT REPRESENTING HER THOUGHTS PASSES BY AT TOP OF SCREEN:

Is there a place for the public intellectual in today's America?

SWISH PAN TO PISTACHIO AND LITTLE GIRL SEATED AT THE AGE OF THE STAGE:

PISTACHIO

But plastic has its own integrity, turns out.

LITTLE GIRL

Uh huh.

PISTACHIO

That's what's caught everyone so off guard.

IRIS OUT TO REVEAL WIDE SHOT OF BANJO PLAYER ON STAGE, RINGED BY SEATED GUESTS CHATTING AND EATING CAKE. BANJO MUSIC CONTINUES THROUGHOUT THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE:

PAUL FINGER AND JAMES MCMANUS STAND AT SPOON BAR, PLAYING POKER.

JAMES MCMANUS

You owe me another three thousand dollars.

PAUL

Oh Jim....

SLOW TILT ON SEATED WOMAN READING FROM A BOOK: "THE ICE CREAM SOCIAL BY DAVID ROBBINS" THE WOMAN MELTS INTO

PAUL FINGER AND JIM MCMANUS, STILL STANDING AT THE SPOON BAR DISCUSSING POKER.

FINGER

My game of cards is like Crazy Eights or Go Fish!

MCMANUS

Poker is a really beautiful game. It's the American card game. We've been playing it in this country since before the Civil War, before baseball. Poker moved up the Mississippi River, moved west with the gold rush-- and hundreds of millions of dollars change hands every day in poker games.

CUT TO: PAN OF LITTLE WHITE DOG HEADING FOR BOWL OF ICE CREAM PLACED AT BASE OF THE SPOON BAR.

CUT TO: FINGER/MCMANUS EXCHANGE ABOUT PROFESSIONAL POKER.

MCMANUS

It was a nine hundred thousand dollar pot against T.J. Cloutier. And I knew how he played this particular hand because I'd been studyin his book all week. So I called his bluff. I had ace king, he had ace nine, neither of us had a pair, and I won a nine hundred thousand dollar pot.

FINGER

God!

CUT TO: LITTLE WHITE DOG FINISHING ICE CREAM AND TROTTING OFF.

CUT TO: GUESTS PRACTICING A DANCE WITH ONE OF THE SOCIALISTS.

CUT TO: FINGER/MCMANUS EXCHANGE ABOUT VEGAS.

MCMANUS

Every time an airplane takes off from O'hare for Las Vegas and I'm not on it, a little piece of my heart dies. Little piece....

CUT TO CU: APPLICATION OF TRI-COLOR BINDI DOT ON A GUEST'S FOREHEAD

SPLIT SCREEN TRANSITION TO: SUGAR STANDING AT REFRIGERATOR WITH TWINS.

SUGAR

Now please welcome a man who has something to say
about a lot: stand-up poet Matt Cook!

*CAMERA PUSHES TOWARD STAGE AS LIGHTS DIM. MATT COOK TAKES THE
STAGE AND PERFORMS.*

MATT COOK

"Pants in this city."

There are more pants in this city than there are
people.
There are more pockets than there are pants.
There are pennies in the pockets of people's pants in
this city.
There are pencils behind people's ears occasionally.
There are isolated pockets of people wearing pants with
pockets in this city.
There are puny little pictures of people on the pennies
in the pockets of people's pants in this city.
There are pieces of paper in the pockets of people's
pants.
There are confirmation notices in the pockets of
people's pants.
There are pencils behind people's ears sometimes.
There are puppies with microchips implanted in their
foreheads.
Thank god for that!
Thank god we'll never lose that puppy again!
There are lost puppy notification flyers posted in the
park with polaroid snapshots.
There are problems with the lost puppy polaroids in the
park!
There are serious problems with creative control on
lost puppy flyers!
I would like to see photo credits on lost puppy
notification flyers in the park.
The actual person who took the polaroid--I would like
to see his or her name in small lettering alongside the
picture of the lost puppy in the park.

Thank you....

APPLAUSE AND LIGHTS UP AS TWIN BROTHERS WALK STAGE LEFT.

TWIN #1

That guy was really great.

TWIN #2

A regular Malt Whitman!

DOUBLE EXPOSED IMAGERY OF GUESTS MEANDERING THROUGH THE SPACE OF THE SET TO THE SOUND OF AMERICAN ANALOG SET'S INSTRUMENTAL "PUNK AS FUCK."

WOMAN'S VOICE #1

You're strange.

WOMAN'S VOICE #2

Not from the inside, darling.

DISSOLVE TO: JUBILEE FRONTING A LARGE GROUP OF GUESTS. STANDING ON EITHER SIDE OF HER: A LITTLE GIRL IN A DRESS AND A YOUNG, COLLEGE-AGE MAN. JUBILEE TURNS TO THE LITTLE GIRL.

JUBILEE

Hi! What's your name?

FLORA

Flora!

JUBILEE

And this handsome young man, what's your name?

TIM

Tim.

JUBILEE

And now it's completely my pleasure to introduce Flora and Tim.

FLORA AND TIM SHAKE HANDS.

TIM

Hello!

FLORA

Hi!

JUBILEE

(to camera)

Somehow that always feels right! And now it's a different sort of pleasure to introduce Flora, her new

pal Tim--and you!--to the fresh-from-the-oven sounds
of...The Ingredients!

*THE INGREDIENTS BEGIN PERFORMING THEIR SONG "THE MAINSTREAM."
PISTACHIO IS ON DRUMS. A SERIES OF SHOTS OF THE BAND PERFORMING
THE INSTRUMENTAL LEAD-IN.*

GUEST

We're um inside a metaphor, right? It feels like I'm
inside some sort of metaphor, but a metaphor for what,
that's what I can't figure out.

MS OF PISTACHIO PLAYING DRUMS.

PISTACHIO

Tell me about it!

CU OF JUBILEE

JUBILEE

When you're with us--

CU OF SUGAR

SUGAR

You're within us--

CU OF PARFAIT

PARFAIT

Just as we're within you!

FREEZE FRAME ON PARFAIT. FADE TO PINK.

*RAPID CUT TO DRUM BEAT: MELTING ICE CREAM CONE ALTERNATING WITH
CU OF FLAG CAKE. THE INGREDIENTS SING:*

The Mainstream!

*THE INGREDIENTS PERFORM THE SONG WHILE THE SOCIALISTS PERFORM
"THE MAINSTREAM" DANCE IN UNISON.*

THE INGREDIENTS
(singing)

Flowing to you
Flowing through you

The hits just keep on comin'

Always room for one more
In the Mainstream!

Flowing to you
Flowing through you
It's coming for you
All for you and one for all

In the Mainstream!

On and on
Floating on
Floating in
The Mainstream!

Woh-oh
Try and stop it!
Woh-oh
Stop and try it!
Woh-oh
Everybody buy it!

MUSIC AND DANCING CONTINUES AS THE IMAGE SHRINKS AND RECEDES. AS IT DOES SO, IT FREEZES AND BECOMES A REFRIGERATOR MAGNET, ARRANGED AMID A GROUP OF SUCH MAGNETS.

CLOSE-UPS OF REFRIGERATOR MAGNETS IDENTIFYING THE PERFORMERS.

WIDE SHOT OF THE DANCERS AS PRINCIPAL CREDITS ROLL. FADE OUT.

Woh-oh
We sorta know where it's going
We sorta go where it's flowing

The Mainstream!

CREDIT SCROLL.

END.