



HANDBOOK for the VIRGIN VOTER

*Congratulations!
You are 18 years old.
Today you receive the most cherished gift known to man
(or woman) — THE RIGHT TO VOTE!
You are now the political peer of Mark Spitz and Carole King,
Sammy Davis, Jr., and Martha Mitchell.
Your vote counts the same as Nelson Rockefeller's and
Bebe Rebozo's; no more — no less.
One man (or woman) — one vote.
That's democracy.*



History of Voting

The word “vote” comes from *votum* (which is Latin, not Indian), and it means “a vow.” Therefore regard your ballot as a solemn pledge of allegiance to our formula of government.

The word “ballot” is derived from *balls*. Why? In the earliest recorded elections, the candidates were distinguished from one another by balls of different colors.

The British colonies in America instituted the custom of choosing representatives by secret ballot. Before that, those who stood up to be counted often wished they had not.

For more than two hundred years each American voter marked and folded his ballot, then stuffed it into an overcrowded box. This gave rise to the expression, “You can take that ballot box and stuff it.”

Nowadays we have replaced such primitive procedures with voting machines, which never break down except on Election Day.

The Political Parties

We live under a two-party system.

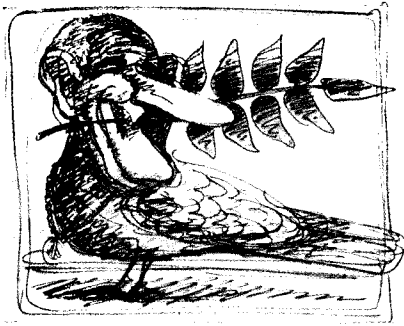
You will be welcomed into either party, whether your selection has been determined by heredity, environment or tossing a dime.

The Republican symbol is an elephant; the Democratic, a donkey. Either one will take you for a ride.

Both parties embrace a wide spectrum of political philosophies. The Democrats range from Eastland to Wasteland; the Republicans from Ripon to Ripoff.



by Edward Sorel and Edward Eliscu



The Primary

The purpose of the primary is to designate the party nominees. Your participation enables you to indicate the lemming of your choice.

You must allow at least six hours for the primary, since you will probably be sent to the wrong address or to a building which has been torn down. When you do locate the right polling place, 20 minutes before closing time, there will be 60 people in line ahead of you. Discouraging? Perhaps, but an excellent preparation for Election Day.

Election Day

On the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November you will meet the test of citizenship. As you approach the polls you will be welcomed by a friendly policeman with a gun on his hip. He will direct you to a line where the clerks are older than Old Glory crucified to the wall. After an hour or two your name will be checked and rechecked. No thumbprints necessary. Yet. You are cleared.

Approach the cubicle with confidence. Observe that there is no turnstile. No dime necessary. This one is on your government. Enter and pull the lever. You are now on all-American territory, behind the canvas curtain.

Levers and logos, names, amendments, propositions and proscriptions challenge you. Will you give in to claustrophobia or will you stay to shape the future of your country?

This moment of truth is not easy for you. If you vote the straight ticket, remember that the party which piously preaches peace hemmed and hawked a long, dirty war. And the party that bellowed for "law and order" can turn out to have broken the laws, bugged, burglarized, bribed, blackmailed and bungled.

Then again you may prefer to choose your candidates *a la carte*, providing you keep a few pertinent facts in mind:

Will you vote for the man with the ethnic pitch who, because your name ends with a vowel like his, calls you brother? Remember Brother Cain.

All the candidates have railed against inflation, pollution, drugs, discrimination, crime and dogturd in the streets. Which will do something about them? Remember that in our country we change the men. Only totalitarian countries change the system.

When you vote you are in the privileged position of hiring a public servant. You must realize that the public servant problem will not vanish overnight. Remember that those you choose are accountable to you. And if they should prove dishonest, you have the inalienable right to try and catch them.

So stand up tall and pull the levers. The results can't possibly be worse than they were before you acquired this God-given constitutional right to rule. And when you have performed your civic duty, you will open the canvas curtain and exit smiling. You have enjoyed your first secret ballot. Only you will know what crimes you have unwittingly abetted in the name of voting. ■



Janis Joplin:
**Lady Sings
Dem Kozmic Blues**

by Andrew Kopkind

Buried Alive, by Myra Friedman,
Morrow, \$7.95.

Going Down With Janis, by Peggy
Caserta, Lyle Stuart, \$7.95.

*"There are no second acts in
American lives."*

— F. Scott Fitzgerald

Somewhere between Port Arthur, Texas, where she was born, and the Landmark Hotel in Hollywood, where she died, Janis Joplin relinquished the terms of ordinary existence and became a "metaphor" for her generation and its times. Drop-out, dooper, hooker; rock star, sex freak, super hip—Janis did not merely make the scene; she *was* the scene. There was almost nothing about the youth subculture of the late '60s that Janis did not embody in her raucous white blues style and her reckless white life style. But it was her style of death which now seems the *beau geste* of her 27 years. Nearly finished recording an album (*Pearl*) that was to determine the future of her popularity, and torn between lesbian longings and an impending heterosexual marriage, Janis picked up the heroin needle which she had earlier abandoned and shot herself into the ultimate down. Now, even her death is not her own; it merely extends the metaphor.

Like Marilyn Monroe, with whom she shares some striking mythic qualities, Janis remains a topic of conversation and an object of curiosity long after the ubiquitous Los Angeles County Medical Examiner has closed his files on another O.D. Both women crumbled under the strain of the same central contradiction: public adoration against inner inadequacy. What was

