

# WAR ON CULTURE L A G

## Battle P1: Operation 'Premise'

An original radio drama by

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## CAST

ANNOUNCER	Episode titles, and other important stuff.
HOST	Segment host.
GEORGE	George Costella, off-mike snide-remarker.
PROF. ED	Professor Ed Mucillage, who has an unfortunate verbal tic; every few words he spasms a bit (indicated by italics), and the word warbles in pitch.
EZRA VERBICH	Etymology expert.
LEONARD GUIGLEY	Smooth but sappy interviewer.
TODDLES POTSDARN	Country-dweller.

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## INTRO

1. **MUSIC:** **PROGRAM THEME--UP. ("THUS SPOKE ZARATHUSTRA,"**  
**PERFORMED BY MULTIPLE KAZOOS, SLIDE WHISTLE,**  
**TOY PIANO, ETC.) ESTABLISH. FADE UNDER.**
2. ANNOUNCER: And now...Infinity Limited, L-T-D, in  
conjunction with Econo-Drama Enterprises,  
hesitatingly presents another battle in the  
continuing...
3. **SFX: (ECHO ON)**
4. ANNOUNCER: War...on...Culture.....Lag....
5. **MUSIC: THEME SWELLS, PETERS OUT AFTER ENDING CHORD. CUT TO**  
**SOMETHING MORE PASTORAL ("BATTLE HYMN OF THE**  
**REPUBLIC" ON POLKA ACCORDION?).**
6. ANNOUNCER: Many sociologists, theologians, fiction  
writers, and outpatients have observed that  
our society is failing to keep its mores and  
folkways in harmony with the exponentially  
increasing body of scientific and technical  
knowledge available to us. Once we figured  
out what this meant, a hardy band of us have  
been inspired to do something about this  
crisis, this "culture lag."  

While few understand the menace, we all  
understand "war" as a means of "combating"  
threats. Thus, this "battle." The mission of  
our Cultural Corps of Engineers: to erect a  
bridge across the chasm between enlightenment  
and entertainment.

But now, on with the show--there's a big  
lag out there!
7. **MUSIC: UP, ENDS ON TRIUMPHAL CHORD, THEN OUT.**

8. ANNOUNCER: Today's battle: Operation 'Premise', in which we metaphorically pitch our tents, and literally pitch our concept.

This episode is brought to you by the good soldiers at the Remarkable Marker Company, makers of "Hi-tech Headstones"--see video of your loved ones looped forever. Now in 3D!

9. HOST: Greetings, fellow travellers. I'm your host, Ward Cleaver; we're so grateful for a few minutes of your time. Don't let the title fool you, ladies and gents--this ain't the usual slap-and-tickle hour. What we try to do here at the ol' Culture Lag HQ is look at important issues in novel--or should we say, short podcast--ways. Goodness knows we can *all* be better individuals--not to mention groups; to make any progress, we must maximize that miracle lump at the top of our necks.

Thanks to Douglas Adams and others, we know the Meaning of Life isn't an answer; we go in search of the right questions. We'll explore virtually any topic if we can find some sort of universal truth in or around it. And hopefully, we'll have some fun along the way.

10. GEORGE: (SNORT OF DERISION.)

11. HOST: Something, George?

12. GEORGE: (GRUFFLY, OFF-MIKE.) That'll sell.

13. HOST: Looks like I'm forced to introduce George Costella—a thoroughly average fella—our audio engineer and gofer extraordinaire.
14. GEORGE: (BARELY AUDIBLE GRUNT.)
15. HOST: George came with the studio, I believe. His presence has been, uh, invaluable, and his union contract inviolate.
16. GEORGE: (OFF-MIKE.) Local 2, United Cable-Pullers, Bulb Changers, & Amalgamated Cord Pluggers? Heck, that died years ago.
17. HOST: (SURPRISED.) Oh *really*...well, payroll will certainly be interested in that....

## EUSOCIALITY

HOST: (cont.)

But now let's dive into something that typifies what we try to do here.

Bear with us—we know there's a sizeable and vocal minority who have a hard time accepting the work of people who are masters of a subject. Speaking of colleges, there's always been those who suspect learned folks of *something*, and perceive a bias in what they do. Unfortunately, us low-budget radio types have to settle for the folks that know the most and work cheap.

Today's we turn to Professor Ed Mucillage, chair of the Biology Department at local Central University Northeast. Now we should alert our listeners that Ed has just a hint of a verbal tic, but I'm sure we can all hear past that.

Welcome, Professor—how's things?

18. PROF. ED: (TICS INDICATED BY ITALICS.) Oh, fine; with the *budget* cuts, I'm now Chair of the *Sociology* Department, as well, so I've got paperwork up the wazoo.

19. HOST: (LIGHTLY.) Is that the anatomical term?

20. PROF. ED: Ha. With the regents selling naming rights to just about everything, including a Wisconsin bank, I might soon be working for *Wausau* Alma Mater U.

**21. SOUND: SNICKERS IN BACKGROUND.**

22. HOST: I understand you bring us some interesting news from your department....
23. PROF. ED: Yes, there's exciting work going on in the biological sciences, especially in the area of the *brain*. We're getting tantalizingly close to quantifying how individuals see the world, and why people tend to hold the views they do. In fact, we may be close to understanding how *brain* storage is actually achieved.

In *Biology*, my field, the great E.O. Wilson continues to refine his work on "eu-socialialty," the cooperative behavior that is present in some of Earth's most successful species.

**24. SOUND: SNICKERS IN BACKGROUND AT THE DRAWN-OUT "EU" SYLLABLE.**

25. HOST: And what sort of critters are we talking about...?
26. PROF. ED: Ants, bees, wasps, *nematodes*, that sort of thing.

**27. SOUND: RENEWED SNICKERING IN BACKGROUND.**

28. HOST: We should note we've reached Professor Ed via what must be the last pay phone in town; he seems to have attracted a bit of a "peanut gallery" there in the Student Center.
29. PROF. ED: As I was saying, Professor Wilson's work with *ant* populations, in particular, has fleshed out the concept of "eu-sociality." The term describes organisms who live in colonies of overlapping generations, and who provide cooperative care of young and reproductive division of labor.

**30. SOUND: LAUGHTER, BROAD MOCKING OF STUTTER IN BACKGROUND.**

31. PROF. ED: This "eu-social" behavior features individuals sacrificing for the good of the group, which may have some *linkage* to how humans evolved altruism.

**32. SOUND: LAUGHTER, MOCKING CRESCENDOS.**

33. HOST: Isn't this just typical. The world wonders why we can't have civilized discussions. For the sake of the Philistines in the background, the Professor is saying "eusocial", E - U - social. That's from the Greek, isn't it Ed?

34. PROF. ED: That's right—"well", "good".

35. HOST: You lost me....

36. PROF. ED: That's what "eu-" means.

**37. SOUND: LAUGHTER RESUMES.**

38. HOST: I think we'll have to leave it there for now.... Professor Ed Mucillage, everybody; we'll check in again sometime *after* the lunch hour.

**39. MUSIC: INTERLUDE.**

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

40. ANNOUNCER: And now, as a public service for those with limited vocabularies, we summarize the program so far in Lowest Common Denominator language.

**41. SOUND: SEVERAL SECONDS OF GRUNTING AND SNORTING, CRESCENDOING TO A GAGGLE OF WILD MONKEYS.**

## COMMERCIAL: GRITTY SOAP

42. ANNOUNCER: The cynics have always said that all of mass media is merely an excuse to sell soap. Well, far be it from us to break with tradition—so now, a word from today's sponsor.

You say you still feel like a walking mucous membrane after your shower? The hot new body wash make you feel like you just stepped out of an oil slick? Is your soap just not cutting it—the sebaceous emissions, that is?

Get to the root of your problem with new *Gritty*, the soap that cleans 'til it hurts. *Gritty* is the only way to scrub; it contains exclusive formula SIO2AL2O3, trademarked as SparFeldia (granite crystals).

Yes, *Gritty* will leave you feeling fresh, tingly, and slightly raw like no other soap can!

For a limited time, receive a free sample of Ow-B-Gone body lotion with each purchase. New *Gritty*—soap, depilatory, and skin resurfacer all in one!

(LOWER.) Some tingling may be the sign of a serious medical situation. The Igneous Group assumes no liability for improper—or any—use of *Gritty*. Some bleeding is normal; not recommended for those with clotting deficiencies.

(NORMAL.) *Gritty*—use it for a new you!

**43. MUSIC: INTERLUDE.**

50,000 YEARS AGO TODAY

44. HOST: To *really* know where we've come from, perhaps we'd best look even further back. Let's hear now from Ezra Verbitch of the Allan-Hayden Culture Club.

45. VERBITCH: In case it's slipped your collective unconsciousness, let's look back to this date (ECHO) 50,000 years ago. (END ECHO)

Our top story—Rogg, that bastion of the community and all-around crazy guy, met an untimely death today, victim of a hunting accident. The tragedy occurred while Rogg was bravely attempting to rid the area of a marauding beastie. His plan was brilliant: bring the creature down by rolling boulders at it from the top of the hill. Unfortunately, he didn't realize the inherent

danger in dislodging a boulder by *pulling* it from the downhill side. Rogg--flatter but not forgotten. We believe Sir Isaac Newton was a distant descendant.

On a happier note: we recall that the first health club was invented on this day in antiquity. Yes, this is the anniversary of Bam the Elder's great discovery—that a stout length of tree could discourage the advances of unwanted predators, improving one's health. Bam quickly rose in status among his clan-mates, until they went up against Neandertals swinging pieces of *fossilized* tree.

A footnote; Bam was also responsible for coining the phrase "Join the club." This was originally a strong exclamatory statement, indicating some part of the addressee's anatomy was about to have direct contact with Bam's branch.

The very first "Good news, bad news" joke was also told on this date. This standard of the format, often copied but rarely topped, went something like this: Two cavemen were fleeing for their lives from a dinosaur. One says to the other, "Well, I've got some good news and some bad news." "What's the good news?" asks the second man. "Well, it looks like we've lost that stegasaurus. "And the bad news?" "It doesn't look like these pterodactyls want to put us down!"

(SNICKERS)

46. HOST:

These flashbacks to the *original* good ol' days have been supplied by Ezra Verbitch and the other diligent but near-sighted researchers at the Allan-Hayden Culture Club.

**47. MUSIC: INTERLUDE.**

## A FEW MOMENTS WITH MR. TODDLES POTSDARN

48. HOST: As part of our commitment to explore those who think differently, we dispatch observers to the field for periodic think pieces. Here's one now....

**49. SOUND: SOUNDS OF THE COUNTRY, THEN BRUTISH TESTING OF THE MIC.**

50. GUIGLEY: (OVER-MODULATED.) Leonard Guigley here, with another Allan-Hayden "Report on the Run."  
(CRACKLE, NORMAL LEVEL.) I have with me today a man who is far above the other residents of Outskirts, Ohio--and I mean that most literally. Believe it or not, the home of this man is thirty feet above me, nestled amid the mighty boughs of an ancient oak tree. Let's talk now with this asocial climber, Mr. Toddles Potsdarn.

**51. SOUND: INEFFECTUAL TARZAN YELL, TREE RUSTLINGS (INDICATING THE DESCENT OF POTSDARN FROM TREE ABOVE.)**

52. GUIGLEY: Welcome, Mr. Potsdarn--my, what a, uh, *dramatic* entrance.

53. POTSDARN: Yeah, just showin' off a little, there, on the ol' emergency exit....

54. GUIGLEY: Potsdarn--I guess a name like that tends to elicit chortles from people, does it not?

55. POTSDARN: Well, "Toddles" is hardly a straight line.

56. GUIGLEY: No, I suppose not. Well, this is quite a home. Tell me: what's it like to live in an elevated, split-level teepee?

**57. SOUND: PERIODIC SOUNDS OF BIRDS, ETC. IN BACKGROUND THROUGHOUT.**

58. POTSDARN: Well, it beats the beejeebers out've a trailer! But this is just our summer home, you know.
59. GUIGLEY: Really.
60. POTSDARN: Yeah, winters are kinda fierce in this place.
61. GUIGLEY: I can imagine.
62. POTSDARN: So, when the snow's deep enough you outta see the igloo we throw up. Two bedrooms and a half bath in that sucker.
63. GUIGLEY: That *is* interesting. But seriously—is this really safe?
64. POTSDARN: Shore it is; good ol' old growth chinquapin oak, nothin' like 'em. My son, Arbol, he spent so much time in this tree, makin' me climb up after him and all, that I figured "if ya can't beat 'im..."—and I can't, I really can't....
65. GUIGLEY: What about your wife? Is she happy with these living arrangements?
66. POTSDARN: Shore, shore--you don't hear Mabel complain much. 'Course, come ta think of it, I don't hear her say much anything any more, since we moved....
67. GUIGLEY: Yes, I was wondering about the perfectly good mansion in front of us.
68. POTSDARN: Oh, there she is callin' me now. Comin', dear!
69. GUIGLEY: I don't hear anything, just the wind through the tree.

70. POTSDARN: That's Mabel: she rustles when dinner's ready.
71. GUIGLEY: By any chance, Mr. Potsdarn, are you a tree surgeon?
72. POTSDARN: (CHUCKLES.) No, but by golly you're close—I'm a brain surgeon.
73. GUIGLEY: Of course. And I'm a sap for asking.
74. POTSDARN: Yeah, well, I'd best toddle off. Nice talkin' to ya.
75. GUIGLEY: Yes, uh, thank you, Mr. Toddles Potsdarn.

**76. SOUND: MAN CLIMBING TREE.**

77. GUIGLEY: This has been Leonard Guigley with more News You Should Know. And now, back to the studio.
78. HOST: Nice to see Leonard can still "tree" a good interview. (LAUGHS.) What say we "leave" him (MIRTH INCREASES) and see if we can "root out" something else. (STARTS LOSING CONTROL AS HE OBVIOUSLY ENJOYS A RUN OF ATROCIOUS PUNS.) Let us "branch out" into a whole "forest" of "wood-be" "knotty" material.... This is your host, Ward Cleaver, saying "Timber!"

**79. SOUND: FADE OUT DURING HOST'S HYSTERICS.**

**80. MUSIC: INTERLUDE.**

## OUTRO

81. ANNOUNCER: Time to wrap up *this* skirmish; I don't know if we've made a dent in the "lag," but we'll keep battling. Be with us next time, as we continue to explore *why* we think, *how* we think, and what changes *what* we think (besides propaganda, fear, humor, alcohol, and puppies).

This episode was brought to you by the Remarkable Marker Company, makers of "Hi-tech Headstones." This Remarkable product plays every image of your loved one ever caught on media, looped for eternity. It's "Virtual Immortality" (patent pending). Mark 2 includes 3D, wireless internet, and Xbox connectivity.

Make a day of it; now paying respects is fun for the whole family. All for just a small percentage of your estate.

Be sure to be with us the next time we try to get around to fighting ignorance, when we launch another battle in the (ECHO)  
WAR...ON...CULTURE.....LAG....

**82. MUSIC: THEME UP, THEN FADE OUT.**

**THE END.**

Writer/Director's notes for Battle P1: Operation 'Premise'