

**Rule No. 69:** A man over the age of 25 should not make innuendos about things that happen to involve the number 69. **Rule No. 73:** All bottled water comes from a faucet in Richmond. **Rule No. 93:** There is no thrill like the thrill of getting cash in the mail.

Man at His Best Light Reading

The Manliest Catalogs Ever

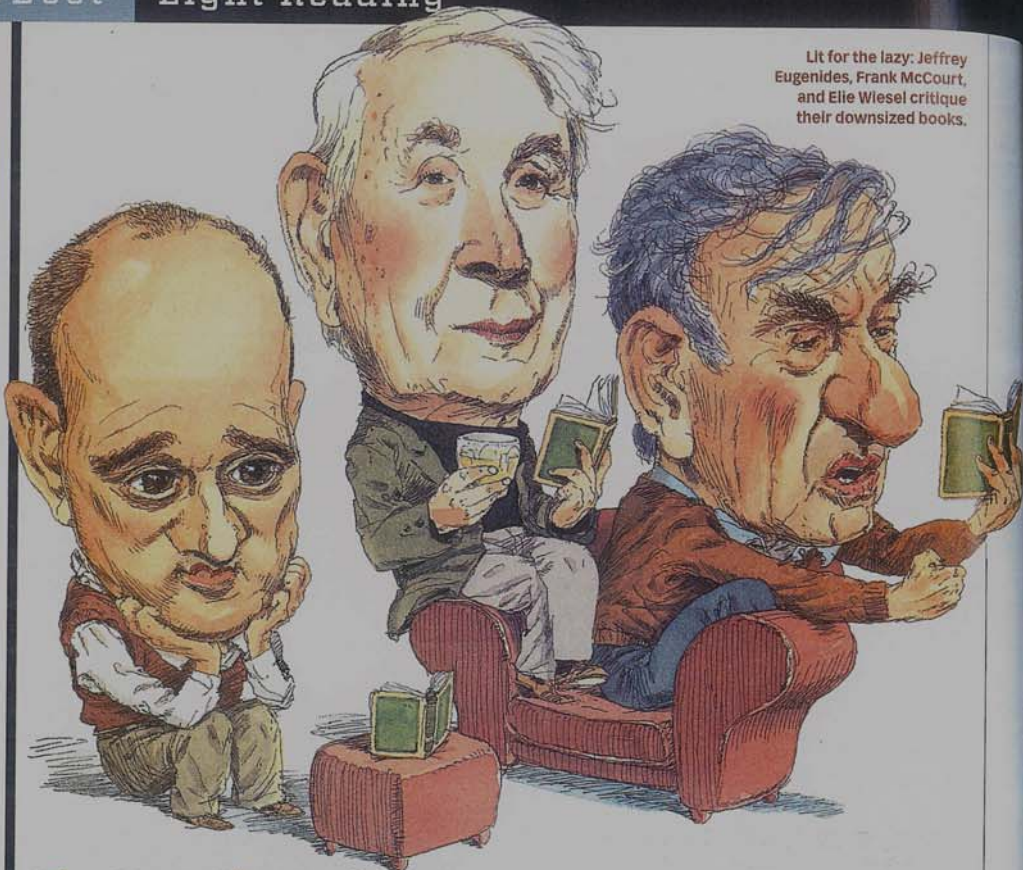
**PERHAPS YOU FEEL** that flipping through catalogs—Victoria's Secret aside—makes you look a skosh effeminate. We're here to help. Try these.  
—DEREK FAGERSTROM

▶ **CABELA'S** Rods, reels, bows, arrows, guns, ammo, even blowguns for the kids! Oh, and let's not forget the Jerky Shooter (\$30). If you're gonna take the time to stalk it, blast it, and drag it home, you're damn well gonna want those jerky strips to come out nice and uniform. Just stuff, aim, and squeeze. **800-237-4444; cabelas.com.**

▶ **MO HOTTA MO BETTA** You want hair on your chest? This will give you a freakin' shag rug. Almost every item in this spicy-foods catalog includes a Scoville measurement: 500 units for those who want it mild, 1,000 for those who like it hot, and 5,000-plus for stupid people. Might we recommend the tasty chile-pepper blend called "I Am on Fire—Ready to Die!" (\$4.75). **800-462-3220; mohotta.com.**

▶ **SOVIETSKI COLLECTION** In the market for an authentic Soviet "tank-buster" missile you can use as a paperweight? How about a radiation detector? And it's never too late to start your collection of miniature Soviet-leader figurines (figurines—not dolls, buster). From Lenin to Putin, a set of six costs \$100. **800-442-0002; sovietski.com.**

▶ **THE AMERICAN TAILGATER COMPANY** Like all tailgaters, you live for the pregame camaraderie, the smell of the grill, the incessant blaring of "Who Let the Dogs Out"... but could do without those public poop thermoses. Why share? The Throne will set you back \$180 with the privacy curtain or, what the hell, only \$36 without. You can buy other stuff, too. **800-844-4263; americantailgater.com.**



Lit for the lazy: Jeffrey Eugenides, Frank McCourt, and Elie Wiesel critique their downsized books.

**The New Cheat Sheets** We're sure you didn't use Cliffs Notes in high school. Just like you didn't watch scrambled porn. Well, now comes SparkNotes, a new line of study guides for adults (written by Harvard grads) that we're sure you won't use, either. In addition to offering distillations of Shakespeare and Milton, SparkNotes also condenses and analyzes contemporary books like *Snow Falling on Cedars* and *All the Pretty Horses*. With them, even the busiest man can pontificate about literature on the cocktail circuit. But is that a good idea? We asked three authors to critique the cheat sheets of their own works.  
—DANIEL TORDAY

**Jeffrey Eugenides, *The Virgin Suicides***  
Brevity isn't a defining feature of SparkNotes; for my book, they were roughly as long as the novel itself, but intelligently written, staggeringly comprehensive, and thoughtfully composed. I picture a moonlighting English Ph.D. typing on a laptop between sessions of the MLA. They are rather lovingly and hagiographically inclined, about which no author will complain. The authors of SparkNotes know more about my novel than I do—and more about my life than I do. Reading my biography, I had the unquiet feeling of having been the victim of identity theft. I think the SparkNotes are extremely well done, smart, diligent, informative, flattering, and cheater-friendly. But they're like Borges's universal library—so vast that it contains the entire world. It would be so much easier just to read the book.

**Elie Wiesel, *Night***  
Of the 40-odd books published and Ph.D. dissertations written about me and my work, this one is the

poorest, the least serious. I find it outrageous. I hope it will not be read, particularly by uninformed students. The authors totally misunderstood and misinterpreted the book. For instance, *Night* is not a novel, not even a fictionalized memoir; it is pure testimony. Every word is true. And only Holocaust deniers dare to transform a survivor's memory into fiction.

**Frank McCourt, *Angela's Ashes***  
The notes themselves are very intelligent. But there's only one way to smell a flower: Stick your nose in it. It's appalling that people would want to read the notes of a bunch of Harvard grads rather than a simple book. You can't get the flavor of a book any way but sitting down, putting it down from time to time, having a drink, having a pee, and coming back. That's the experience of reading a book. People who are so busy that they need to read these notes before they run off to a book club—what is it all about? There must be somebody in there they're trying to make out with. It's always sex.