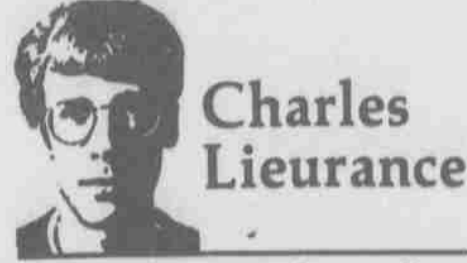


# Batman T-shirt shunned by pastel people of downtown chic

The "Denver Lifestyles Magazine" tag I'd made up worked real well for a while:

"Well, see, there's more than just one lifestyle in any city: Lifestyles, see, not lifestyle. Everybody has different needs — the wealthy, the artsy wealthy, the white collar worker with money — lifestyles."

"Why are you dressed that way?"



**Charles Lieurance**

"Came into town for a college reunion and wasn't really prepared to cover anything. Seems the mag's doing a story on convention centers in the midwest — the cheapest, the most luxurious, the best and brightest — all pretty high end, you know."

"Well glad to have you here, Batman."

He laughed glancing, still a bit nervously, at my Batman T-shirt. Gave me that handshake reserved for clients and fraternity brothers. You can bet he wouldn't shake the waiter's hand that way.

High end. Best and brightest.

Of course, by the time the Aryan youth had my arm locked up behind my head while the pipe-smoking manager held the door open for me, the "Denver Lifestyles" badge didn't carry much weight.

Apparently everyone was taking the fact that the Clayton House Hotel had put stucco on everything, put in a miserably red version of P.O. Pears downstairs, a drippy little fountain and a wading pool, and raised their rates to \$50 a night, pretty seriously.

"Why don't you just leave?" asks the undertaker, or whoever the weasel-faced cretin in the dark blue suit is.

"Listen, I work for a publication that could sell your home out from under you and repossess your kids before you could say crab puffs and a wine cooler, *por favor* so buck up."

"Well, you sure don't dress like it."

That's right, hit a man where it hurts. Bull's eye on the wardrobe. Call my children drool monkeys. Call my wife a manatee. Call my mother a slaving canine. But don't mention the Batman T-shirt.

The invitation said nothing about dress codes. During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which included a miraculously coincidental announcement of 3 million dollars worth of manna from Washington in the form of a downtown development grant, mention was made of the swimming pool.

"Looks like most of you aren't dressed for it but there is a pool upstairs."

Hell, we were dressed precisely for such a diversion.

Some crab puffs, an egg roll, something green on a cracker, three

more Jack and cokes and a good swim. Shaping up to be a fine afternoon.

A few words about downtown redevelopment: Hunter S. Thompson has mentioned that the '80s are a generation of swine. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the plans for renewal of the Lincoln downtown area. Nowhere were the pigs more willing to wrap up in their pearls and strut about oinking than at the Clayton House opening Friday afternoon.

"La la la la..." said the city council member.

"La la la la..." went the hotel owner.

"La la la la..." said the woman who'd chosen the wall paper.

"Another Jack and coke, Batman?" said the bartender.

"La la la," said Batman.

The thing is, Lincoln isn't Boulder, or Denver, or San Francisco or even Omaha. Lincoln is the princely home of the low-brow. Putting up anything resembling the Boulder Mall or Denver's Tabor Center downtown would only scare the daylight out of outstate, from whence comes the major portion of the state's income. Outstate is already petrified silly of what goes on here in the east. You think putting up a Bloomingdale's on O street is going to make farmers who are already convinced that we don't know they exist give up their quickly growing arsenals, their neozazi and their revolutionary death-wish?

If any of these downtown developers were really in touch with the needs of the state, they'd raze the whole project, put up a big Richman Gordman and make the Lied Center its toilet facility.

High end. La la la.

Remember the '70s when business was so bad that no one dared use the "We have the right to refuse service to anyone," option? Got four heads, a rocket launcher and a goiter the size of Minneapolis on your throat, come on in. Can I get you coffee?

But now it's Reagan time, a time for new opulence. As the Dead Kennedys so aptly put it, "Drink up, drink up, happy hour is now enforced by law..."

In the last three weeks I've had this option used on me three times. All three times it was for wardrobe, haircut...

"No coffee thanks, just a half-Nelson and a kick in the pants, please."

I remember seeing the movie "Giant" when I was a little boy. You know the scene where Rock Hudson gets kicked out of a diner for supporting a black man's right to eat there.

When he's been appropriately head-locked (all new management must use this movie as martial arts training) and thrown outside on the ground, the management of the diner throws a sign on his chest. The sign says:

"We have the right to refuse service to anyone."

All my life I thought this whole situation was mythical. The first time I ever saw one of those signs again, (at least one that looked like it meant business) was at O'Rourke's when I came to UNL. I thought, well, I suppose in a bar this kind of thing is necessary.

But no one ever put me in a headlock in O'Rourke's and tossed me out onto 14th Street. As far as I know, nobody's ever been put into a headlock by the management at O'Rourke's.

Certainly, not for wearing a Batman T-shirt.

But the Clayton House is certainly not O'Rourke's. It's upscale, high-tech, and stuccoed up one side and down the other. The people wear pastels, yellow ties — emblems of the new economic optimism (read naiveite).

Worst of all, they drink slow. I drank four pretty sturdy drinks to every wine cooler they sipped. They drink the way Reagan drinks. Like they're watching out for a fatal hernia or a bleeding ulcer. Like old people.

The question comes to mind: If these people had liked me more, if they'd talked decently to me and treated me like the human being I like to think I am, would I have treated them this way in print? Or would I have thought they were swell, decent human beings, doing decent things for a decent town.

I'd like to think my conscience is clean enough that I can admit when my attitude is partially sour grapes.

No, I don't like their "la la's" whether they're "la laing" at me or with me or "la laing" while they drop kick me from the 13th story of the Clayton House.

I don't like that they believe what that palsied prune in Washington is telling us: That in America there are no poor. That a few upscale, high-end developments here and there can hide the ghettos.

America has the right to refuse service to anyone.

Out on the street again, released from the Aryan youth's stranglehold I noticed the transients folded over in the heat on the corner of 11th and O. It was a sappy bit of moralism, a tedious, obvious image. The masque of the Red Death. Inside the partiers, brightly clothed, la la la, while outside the Reagan poor collapse in the elements.

The image isn't as scary as its obviousness. How can signs exist so prominently and go unread?

I won't preach. I lied with my "Denver Lifestyles" badge and drank too much of their alcohol. I swam in their pool without swimwear and tried to be one of the high-end people without donning proper costume. I'm a disgrace to my profession and God knows I'm proud of it.

I respond to invitations, though.

If you want me in a suit, say so in print.

If there's a swimming pool handy, I'll probably be standing in it in my Christian Dior ascot, Generra polo shirt and all. And could someone bring me a drink?

# 'Cherry Moon' shines with glamour

Review By Scott Harrah  
Senior Reporter

1984's "Purple Rain" was a flashy, flamboyant and totally ludicrous vehicle for Prince and Apollonia's lingerie. But "Under the Cherry Moon," Prince's second film, abounds with lighthearted charm and some trite but true statements about love. And unlike "Purple Rain," it actually has a plot.

Prince, who directed the piece, plays Christopher Tracy, a suave gigolo and sometime piano player who cavorts through the luxurious nightclubs and *soirees* of the Nice, France, society-set with his wisecracking sidekick Tricky (Jerome Benton).

Prince meets a wealthy young heiress named Mary Sharon (Kristin Scott Thomas) who has just turned 21 and is about to marry a nice, glitzy society man so she can cash in on her trust

fund. The two, of course, fall in love, much to the disgust of Mary's snobbish parents.

The rest of the story is — you guessed it — predictable and contrived. But what makes this all so engaging to watch is the sassy, stylish visual elements of "Cherry Moon." The entire picture is filmed in black and white, giving everything a romantic 1940s aura. Michael Ballhaus' breathtaking cinematography captures all the elegance and glamour of the Riviera with eye-catching conviction.

Florid, flowing costumes make each scene look like a page from an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel. And elaborate shots of things like the French coastline and those famous, grand Riviera hotels add spice when the storyline seems to drag a bit.

The acting, however, fluctuates tremendously. At times, the cast comes

off mawkish in the tear-jerking sequences, but the performances are no more melodramatic than those in 1940s classics like "Wuthering Heights." Prince is often amusing as cocky, arrogant Christopher, and Kristin Scott Thomas, with her bitchy, sensual British accent, exudes an alluring attitude from every pore.

The pair's on-screen chemistry seems natural. Although their lovebird repartee seems a bit put-on, the two make up for it with plausibly sexual facial expressions and body language.

Former Omaha resident Jerome Benton is both convincing and witty as the sarcastic, streetwise Tricky.

The only thing it's missing is the presence of a cherry moon.

"Under the Cherry Moon" is rated PG-13 and is currently showing at the Douglas 3.

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