

The interview inside is rather short, but there's a lovely full page portrait of HST wearing his safari hat (as on the cover of Shark) and sitting in front of his IBM Selectric. In the background you can see a bookshelf overflowing with books and stacks and stacks of newspapers and magazines. Amazing. I can make out a volume of Generation of Swine with a piece of paper sticking out of it, The Maltese Sangweech by Bill Cardoso, and Snowblind by Robert Sabbag.

"The Last Outlaw: The Sinister Sex and Drugs Case of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson" by Richard Stratton is an endearing article with "Beware! Today the Doctor, Tomorrow You!" across the bottom.

The interview came after HST was acquitted on all charges racked up during his infamous "lifestyle bust" where police searched his home for 11 hours. The article describes Gail Palmer-Slater as a 35 year old businesswoman ;-). Much of the article sounds and is from Songs of the Doomed . The last section of that book, The Nineties: Welcome to Jail, details HST search, trial and acquittal. Not much new here if you have the book.

However, towards the end, the article really picks up. Stratton buys a disposable camera, and the man in the shop asks who he was going to photograph. "Ah, some old freak over in Woody Creek," Stratton replies. Eventually it is understood to be HST.

"Listen, do me a favor," the man said. "Ask him the one question that is on everyone's mind: How does he do it? How does he continue to live the way we did back then and survive?"

It is the most perplexing aspect of this baffling character. How does he do it? We've been drinking heavily all night. He's got a head full of THC. Every so often, like an anteater, he buries his nose and comes up gasping. The Dunhills are consumed incessantly. He keeps the hours of a vampire who's been sucking blood from speed freaks. And yet...yet, he makes sense. To me he makes more sense than anyone else who is writing today, because he UNDERSTANDS WHAT IS HAPPENING.

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So I asked the Doctor, "How do you do it?" We are out in his backyard, a combination one-hole golf course and target-shooting range. Dr. Thompson is demonstrating an infrared nightscope he has attached to a high-powered rifle. He even looks well. In his fringed Indian apron, and wearing some kind of wooly dive-bombers hat see photo section, Hunter, by E. Jean Carroll , traces of chocolate cake from lunch on his lips, he looks remarkably healthy for a man who, by his own admission, has never just said no.

"I made my choice a long time ago," the Doctor says as he peers through the scope. "Some say I'm a lizard with no pulse. The truth is -- Jesus, who knows? I never thought I'd make it past 27. Every day I'm just as astounded as everyone else to realize I'm still alive."

Possibly he doesn't understand, but I doubt this. I realize through the fog in my own brain that Dr. Thompson is in a kind of psychophysiological state of grace, because he has for all these years remained true to himself.

Lovely. I couldn't have said it better myself. I'm not into the drug scene, so I don't pretend to know anything...but I have to say that most of the ads in this issue say "No personal checks".

