

## Basics of becoming Californian revealed in new how-to book

How To California  
by JONATHAN ROBERTS  
Dell Trade Paperbacks  
\$6.95

By ROBIN BLACK  
Senior Staff Writer

They've finally done it. They've revealed the secrets of the stars and anyone else who can be identified with Southern California.

Yes, in the spirit of preppy how-to books and other vital self-help manuals, there is finally a book on the stands that can help the average, non-Californian achieve that very blond, very laid-back image that seems inborn among native of Los Angeles and its vicinity.

The book — by naturalized Southern Californian Jonathan Roberts — is a guide to an 11-week crash course on How To California, and covers such essential areas as cars, fashion, surfing, sex and the Whole Mellow Thing.

There are some characteristics that go unmentioned among true Southern Californians (SCs) — being blond, for example. Therefore, Roberts stresses throughout the manual the importance of being — and becoming — blond (but always insist the sun did it, he says).

Just as important as being blond is being tanned. The true SC has a perpetual tan, usually established on weekdays at the beach in order to avoid embarrassment on the weekends, when important people might be around.

Another important lesson is The Spotlight Pickup, or how to get a date or more with the promising individual who happens to

pull up next to you at a red light:

1. Make eye contact to establish whether the other person has potential.

2. Try to make verbal contact by rolling your window down or getting the other person to roll his down.

3. Roberts suggests using some oblique opening line like "Wanna have lunch?"

4. Make a date (good luck).

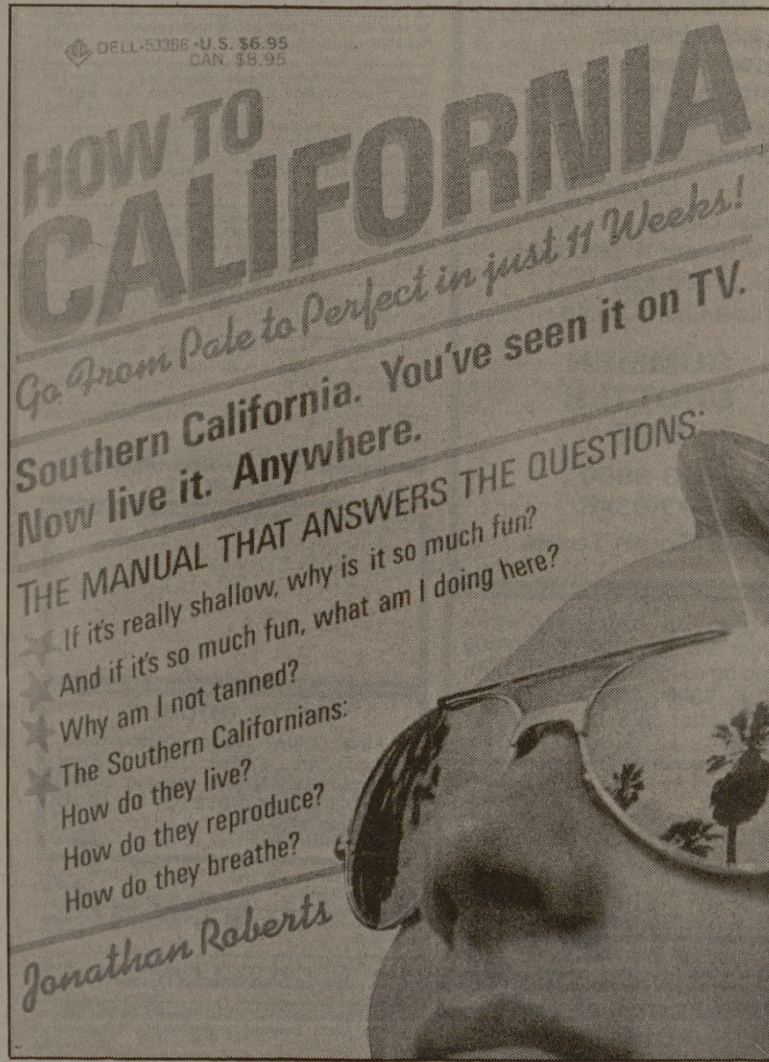
Roberts also reveals just how important it is that the non-SC should never, ever come across as being "hyper." Southern Californians, he insists, never get excited. Or if they do, they never let you know it.

Also included in the how-to book is an especially useful section on jacuzzi etiquette, with such tips as: DO NOT take off all your clothes if no one else in the tub is doing so; DON'T pee — it doesn't dissipate the way it does in a big pool — they'll see it; DON'T dive — there is no deep end. And finally: It is NOT CUTE to put the cat into the whirlpool.

Roberts is even kind enough to include a SC glossary in the back of the book, so when you become an SC, you can sound like an SC.

The book is effective — it takes an almost-honest, tongue-in-cheek look at the stereotype that is attached to people in Southern California (probably partially true), and Roberts manages to carry it off in a very dry, tasteful manner.

Roberts — is not new in the how-to game — he conceived and co-authored *The Official Preppy Handbook* and has been a contributing writer to *The New York Times* and *The Village Voice*.



## Review: high-tech 'Electric Dreams' too cute to stand

By SHAWN BEHLEN  
Staff Reviewer

"Electric Dreams" is, in a word, cute. The klutzy hero is cute. The leading lady is cute. The computer's voice is cute. The computer's graphics are cute. Et cetera. Seeing this film is like being force-fed about two cups of sugar.

The plot, what there is of one, concerns a love triangle with a girl, a guy and his computer. Miles is an up-and-coming architect who spends his spare time working on his favorite project: inventing an anti-earthquake brick. Pretty exciting.

Miles does have a couple of small problems, though. He is clumsier than Chevy Chase in a comedy skit and Gerald Ford in real life combined. He is also terribly unorganized and can never get anywhere, including work, on time. So, he buys a computer. The computer, however, is not just any computer. Miles purchases Edgar, the latest in top-of-the-line technology.

He takes his new toy home, misspells his name so that Edgar addresses him as Moles (how cute) and hooks it up to every gadget in his high-tech apartment. Edgar takes control.

About this time, Miles gets a new neighbor — Madeline — a concert cellist who has just moved into town to play with the local orchestra. Miles falls in love with her and so, eventually, does Edgar.

From there, we have numerous scenes in which Miles and Edgar fight for control of Madeline and the apartment. These are interspersed with scenes in which Miles and Ma-

deline discuss commitment. Scattered through all that are several MTV video clones.

The high point of the film is newcomer Lenny Von Dohlen. Even though he had little to work with in this film, he has created a character that you can't help but like and cheer for. Think of a cute and friendly, but kind of nerdy Yuppie, and you have the Von Dohlen version of Miles. We will definitely see more of this guy in the future, but, hopefully, he will have better material.

As the ads for "Electric Dreams" loudly proclaim, it is brought to us by the director of Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean" video. It shows. The video is great, but it's also only a couple of minutes long. The film, unfortunately, is quite a bit longer.

"Electric Dreams" only real success is its visual appeal; it looks extremely slick and classy. Otherwise, it wears fairly thin. Not even the music, by Culture Club, Philip Oakey of the Human League, Heaven 17, Giorgio Moroder and others, is memorable. The premise of the film is just not strong enough to hold our attention for nearly two hours.

And that is unfortunate. With a stronger script for Von Dohlen to work with and more non-video scenes for Edgar (such as the hysterical one in which he calls Dr. Ruth Westheimer, the noted sex therapist, to ask what love is), this film could have been a slick comedy with serious comments on society's current love affair with computers. As it stands now, though, "Electric Dreams" is nothing more than a very long ad for MTV.

## Movie about 'Bear' Bryant to premiere Sept. 20

United Press International

BIRMINGHAM — The world premiere of "The Bear," a movie chronicling the life of the late University of Alabama football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant, will be held Sept. 20 and will benefit the American Paralysis Association.

Kent Waldrep, a former Texas Christian University running back who was paralyzed as a result of a tackle in a 1974 game against Alabama, said Embassy Pictures would donate about \$250,000 from the Birmingham premiere to the APA.

The research foundation was founded five years ago by Waldrep, who is its president. He said during a

news conference Wednesday at Legion Field, where he was injured, that premiere proceeds would go toward a Bear Bryant Fund.

Ben Collier, an APA board member and chairman of the board of National Industries in Montgomery, presented Waldrep with a \$15,000 check representing the sale of the first VIP table for premiere patrons.

"This fund will bring in the dollars necessary for the research to get us out of these wheelchairs," Waldrep said. "It's going to be through events like this premiere that we're going to whip this thing."

Bryant and Gov. George Wallace, who was paralyzed in a 1972 assassina-

tion attempt, were both honorary APA directors. Waldrep said he and Bryant became close friends following Waldrep's spinal cord injury on Oct. 26, 1974.

"It was so special that he took the time to pursue a close relationship with me," Waldrep said. "He was that way from the time of the accident until his death, always calling me on the phone, filling me in on what the team was doing, keeping up with how I was getting along."

Bryant died at the age of 69 in January 1983, about three weeks after retiring from coaching following a Liberty Bowl win over Illinois, a record 323rd career victory.

After the coach's death, his family and movie producer Larry Spangler disagreed on aspects of the filming of "The Bear." As a result, most of the movie was filmed at Agnes Scott College in Atlanta instead of at Alabama.

Part of the disagreement reportedly concerned the selection of actor Gary Busey to play Bryant. Waldrep, who saw the movie at a Dallas screening last week, said Busey did as good a job as anyone could portraying Bryant.

"I think he did the role justice," Waldrep said. "He was under tremendous pressure, playing a legend. Who could play Bear Bryant? To his

family and friends, that's not going to be Coach up there on the screen, but we will always have our special memories of him that no one else will."

Waldrep, 30, also said he didn't agree with critics who believe Spangler's version of Bryant won't reveal any of his human faults.

"I think a lot of people don't think he was a human being," Waldrep said. "Bryant was a bit bigger than the average person. But the film is about more than that. It's about the love he had for people, God and country."

"I can't think of any film like it, except 'Rocky,' and that was about

human determination. 'The Bear' is the story of a man who was bigger than life. It's a story about building character."

The \$8 million film directed by Richard Sarafian was financed by Worldwide Capital Management Inc. of Dallas and will be released Sept. 28 to 700 theaters in the South and West, with plans to release it to another 700 in the East and Midwest on Nov. 16.

A second premiere is scheduled for Sept. 21 in Memphis, Tenn., where Bryant coached his last game in the 1982 Liberty Bowl.

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