

THE INTANGIBLE ARNOLD: THE CONTROVERSIAL MR. OLYMPIA CONTEST OF 1980

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There is nothing so finely perceived and so finely felt as injustice.¹

—Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*

Arnold has a gift that cannot be acquired no matter how hard an athlete trains, no matter how many pep talks—replete with references to Michelangelo's sculpture—he absorbs. It is, of course, the gift of charisma, something capable of magically compelling his opponent's collapse and the judges' favorable votes.²

—Jimmy Savile

Arnold Schwarzenegger, dubbed the “Austrian Oak,” is often regarded as the most successful bodybuilder of all time, having won 14 world physique competitions, including five Mr. Universe and seven Mr. Olympia titles, the latter being the sport's highest prize. Furthermore, he was able to parlay his success as a bodybuilder, and bodybuilding itself, into the mainstream of American culture where he emerged as a leading box office attraction, starring in numerous blockbuster films, including three *Terminator* classics. This notoriety helped him to marry into one of the nation's leading political families and become a two-term Governor of California. Despite his foreign birth and mannerisms, Arnold became a latter-day Horatio Alger and a fulfillment of the modern American Dream.³

The means by which he gained so many triumphs in three such disparate sectors, however, have not been without controversy. An instance of possible undeserved recognition and injustice to his rivals is provided by the 1980 Mr. Olympia Contest in Sydney, Australia. It was not so much that Schwarzenegger decided to come out of retirement five years after his last Olympia victory but his allegedly less than perfect physical con-

dition and questionable judging at the 1980 event that caused such a furor in the physique world and threatened to undermine his growing fame. “The Olympia was a fiasco,” declared one bodybuilding fan, “Arnold pulled every trick in the book. He won because everything but his body was in super shape.”⁴ *MuscleMag International's* correspondent announced, “Arnold Wins! But Was It On Reputation?”⁵ “Come on, give us a break!” was the reaction of *Muscle Training Illustrated*.⁶ Even after two decades the Sydney decision remained, “by far the most controversial in the event's history” according to *Flex* editor Peter McGough.⁷ How Arnold managed to stage a comeback to defeat a better-than-ever field of top contestants has perplexed bodybuilders, pundits, and historians since that time.

Evidence from manuscripts, muscle magazines, memoirs, interviews, and social science research, however, reveals that this outcome was the culmination of a natural course of affairs since the beginning of Schwarzenegger's extraordinary public career. Arnold won the 1980 Mr. Olympia Contest less by virtue of his physique than by various intangible factors: his previous domination of the sport, a biased judging panel and,



This shot by photographer Vince Basile showing the backs of Arnold Schwarzenegger, Chris Dickerson and Frank Zane bears testament to the fact that although Arnold was taller and broader than Chris Dickerson, in the center, or Frank Zane, on the right, he lacked the thickness and leg development of previous years.

above all, his winsome personality. Ironically, in a sport where physical appearance had become the sole criterion for assessment, it was largely non-physical factors that were critical to his victory. In bodybuilding, a subjective medium where so much depends on individual perceptions and preconceptions, disagreements are almost inevitable. The outcome was less an objective assessment of contestants' bodies than it was a subconscious approval of an icon. Perhaps more than any other sport, winning and losing in bodybuilding is often not a matter of who *is* best but who *appears* to be best in the eye of the beholder.⁸

The beholders' eyes in this instance were conditioned by a series of events leading up to the Sydney contest, the most important being the six successive Olympia victories Schwarzenegger reeled off from 1970 to 1975. Almost equally significant to Arnold's emer-

gence as the world's premier bodybuilder was his defeat of Cuban-born Sergio Oliva, a three-time Olympia winner, at a Mr. World Contest, held in conjunction with the 1970 World Weightlifting Championships in Columbus, Ohio. It was there that Schwarzenegger met Jim Lorimer, a Nationwide Insurance executive, who ran both events. So impressed was Arnold with Lorimer's organizational skills that he promised, "I'll be back," to co-promote future contests with him and raise the status of bodybuilding. "When I am done competing," he told a dubious Lorimer, "I want to go into the promotion of the sport. I want to raise the cash prizes up to \$100,000, I want to professionalize the sport. . . . And I'm going to come back to Columbus and ask you to become my partner."⁹ On retiring after his Olympia win in South Africa in 1975, Arnold returned and co-directed the next four highly successful Olympias with Lorimer.

Schwarzenegger further enhanced his reputation in bodybuilding and the general public by taking his muscles to the movies, first in the forgettable *Hercules in New York*, then in *Pumping Iron*, which attracted much favorable attention, and finally in *Stay Hungry*, where he appeared in a supporting role with Sally Fields and Jeff Bridges and won a Golden Globe award for best new actor.¹⁰ That his career was in an upward trajectory was indicated by his selection in 1978 for the leading role in *Conan the Barbarian*, a high profile film adaptation of Robert E. Howard's fantasy adventure stories of the 1930s.

It was within the context of Schwarzenegger's reputation as the world's greatest bodybuilder during the early 1970s, his successful promotion (with Lorimer) of the world's greatest bodybuilding show in the late 1970s, and his burgeoning film career, in which he appeared destined to become another Reg Park or Steve Reeves, that the 1980 event must be set.¹¹ It should also be noted, in light of Arnold's repeated assurances that he had no intention of coming out of retirement, that the field of athletes who entered the competition in Sydney had no expectation that they would be competing with such a legend of sport. Yet during the summer of 1980, in order to build a body that would properly reflect the muscular image of Conan, thoughts of reentering serious physique competition emerged. As Schwarzenegger recalls, his role required that he transform from "a lean young warrior of about 215 pounds to a full-bodied, robust king" of about 230 with the first scenes shot featuring the latter. He started training in August, but when the production schedule was moved from January to October, he had to "get big, and fast." With Franco Columbu, his old training companion, to push him, Arnold adopted a rigorous "double-split, six-days-a-week" program and soon started hearing from his friends that he was within 80-90% of contest shape and should consider competing in Sydney.¹² Additionally his mentor, Joe Weider, when asked his opinion, responded, "Arnold, you're a champion. If you can get in shape and want to enter the contest, go ahead." But the final decision came to Arnold in a Zen moment.

One day, just a few weeks before the contest, I woke up and the idea of competing was fixed firmly in my mind. 'Yes,' my mind seemed to be saying to me, almost beyond my control, 'you

must compete.' . . . The same thing happened one day when I suddenly realized I should become an actor. There's an inevitability about such a feeling that you can't analyze or you'll destroy it. It's just a gut instinct.¹³

With the moral support of Columbu, Weider, and his girl friend, Maria Shriver, he tentatively decided to enter the October 4th contest.¹⁴ For the time being, however, Arnold kept the decision to himself, telling neither Weider nor Eddie Einhorn, the head of CBS Sports, who had hired him to do the color commentary in Sydney.

In the meantime, fifteen other elite bodybuilders, including numerous multiple Mr. Universe and Mr. America winners, were acting on the assumption that the competition for the 1980 title would be among themselves.¹⁵ They knew that Arnold would be coming to Sydney to provide color commentary for a CBS airing of the show, but they had no expectation that he would be competing. Foremost of those contenders was Frank Zane, who had won the contest for the three past years. In fact, Zane, who had suffered an injury several months earlier, received encouragement from Arnold to defend his title, clearly implying that no such comeback was in the making. No less expectant of winning was Mike Mentzer, who had won the 1978 Mr. Universe title with a perfect score, the first in IFBB history, and was runner up to Zane in the 1979 Olympia. Mentzer had spent the past year adding ten pounds of hard and well-defined muscle to an already magnificent physique. "Digesting his 1979 loss," notes writer Peter McGough, "Mike planned to leave no stone unturned in his onslaught for the 1980 Olympia crown." From February to October, he was "consumed 24 hours a day" by the thought that his training, diet, aerobics, and motivation was totally focused on improvement.¹⁶ "Chris Dickerson, though forty-one, had been steadily improving for the past decade under the tutelage of three-time Mr. Universe Bill Pearl. Always known for his outstanding calves and symmetry, he came to Sydney after "an impressive string of Grand Prix victories," according to reporter Jack Neary, and "couldn't have looked more polished." Likewise Boyer Coe, who had placed third in 1979, was "absolutely out of this world." He had "a repertoire of poses, mostly arm shots, that's beyond compare."¹⁷ Australian Roger Walker and Canadian Roy Callender were also in the best shape of their lives. That Arnold



Oscar State (L), Ben Weider, and Bill Pearl were part of the officiating team for the 1980 contest. Pearl was supposed to serve as a judge at the contest but removed himself from the final judging panel—in the spirit of fairness—because he had helped Chris Dickerson prepare for the contest.

did not reveal his intentions publicly or to his fellow bodybuilders may be attributed, he explains, to his concern for his friend Paul Graham, the promoter of the contest. “I thought that if it were generally known that I was going to compete, a number of the other bodybuilders might decide not to enter, and this would be bad for the contest and the fans.” Arnold also feared it might be awkward for all concerned if he happened to change his mind about competing in October.¹⁸ These considerations ultimately worked to his advantage.

Indeed, Schwarzenegger’s options remained open up to the final twenty-four hours. But the prospects of his staging a successful comeback did not augur well upon his arrival in Sydney. To resolve any lingering doubts, he asked his old friend, Dan Howard, who had formerly operated Gold’s Gym in California and was cognizant of the condition of the competitors, for his opinion. “I did not know as yet whether he was actual-

ly going to enter the contest, but he asked me to step outside the little gym where he was working out and did some poses for me. I told him, ‘Arnold, you’re not ready.’”¹⁹ Nor did Arnold’s chances seem much greater to his competitors, once they learned of his intentions. Coe recalls that he and Mentzer felt “sympathy for Arnold. Both of us knew we were in very top shape, and we knew we had him beat before we ever stepped on stage. We both believed Arnold had made a huge mistake.”²⁰ Perhaps the greatest question mark concerning Schwarzenegger’s condition and whether he should compete was raised by the title fight of Muhammad Ali and Larry Holmes that was beamed live from Las Vegas on the Friday night before the Olympia. All the bodybuilders were watching the fight from their hotel rooms, but for Arnold it had a special meaning.

You hear the stories of the old guys, the former champs, coming back and getting wiped out by the new guys. And it was happening to Ali right before my eyes. Just like me, he decided to come back one more time. I could see he was making a mistake and for a split second I had to wonder if I’d be making the same mistake by entering the Olympia the next day. Would I be risking my legend? But it was only for a split second.²¹

Despite the fact that Schwarzenegger had sometimes been called “The Muhammad Ali of Bodybuilding” and that the boxer had been a leading role model for him, Arnold quickly recovered his determination to pursue his seventh Mr. Olympia title.²²

Whether Arnold gained a psychological advantage at a confrontation with his rivals during a morning meeting before the contest is debatable. At issue was a proposal supported by the other fifteen that they should dispense with the traditional two weight divisions (under and over 200 pounds) to ensure that the six finalists would be drawn from the best men overall and not just the top three from each class. Arnold objected, saying that the current system, in effect since 1974, protected the smaller competitors by enabling them to compete with their peers before going up against the big boys. Besides, it was who placed first, rather than the other placements, that mattered. But it was not so much the



Boyer Coe, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Australian bodybuilder Roger Walker stand in a semi-relaxed pose waiting the judge's decision.

arguments presented or even the votes at stake as it was Arnold's condescending attitude towards Boyer Coe, who was the foremost proponent of a change, and his personal attack on Mike Mentzer, saying: "We all know Zane beat you last year because you have a big stomach!" An incensed Mentzer then leaped up 20 feet away, rebuking Schwarzenegger and walking menacingly towards him. Ben Weider averted almost certain violence by intercepting Mentzer, and his brother Joe eventually defused the situation by pulling Arnold aside and saying: "Why wreck the whole contest for everyone if the best man is going to win anyway?" Arnold then withdrew his objection, but this encounter had the effect of raising already high tensions and placing Schwarzenegger at the center of the drama that would soon unfold on the stage of the Sydney Opera House. Arguably it also made the competitors less aware of another issue that would loom much larger in the actual contest. Before the meeting adjourned Bill Pearl, who supervised judging procedures, asked them if they had objections to any of the judges. "No one uttered a peep," observed Jack Neary.²³

At the ensuing contest there were three rounds of pre-judging, the first two of them featuring compulso-

ry poses and the final one allowing contestants to perform their own routines. Then the seven finalists engaged in a pose down.²⁴ It was immediately apparent to Neary, when Arnold stepped on stage that "he had made a mistake." At only 90% in shape, his biceps were, according to Neary, "peaked and mighty" and his chest "full and imposing," but he also had "slender thighs, underdeveloped triceps and deltoids, and a mediocre midsection."

In Neary's view, Dickerson, Coe, Mentzer, and perhaps

Zane looked better.²⁵ Bill Pearl would have placed Coe or Dickerson first, and both Zane and Mentzer above Arnold, though he admitted that Mentzer was "not a good poser. His poses looked like something that came from Eugen Sandow" and were at least fifty years out-of-date.²⁶ Australian reporter and bodybuilder Robert Nailon, however, observed that Arnold "did not disappoint in his ability to excite a crowd as well as attract the judges" by jumping out of line, possibly as a psychological ploy, and striking most muscular or double biceps poses during the compulsory rounds until he received a disqualification warning.

Evaluating the physiques, I didn't think Arnold looked his best compared to the past. His thighs were smaller front on and he wasn't as cut as he normally appeared in competition but he still had a lot going for him and stood out. Zane had great shape and was ripped but I felt he was too lean (10 pounds too light). Dickerson was in good shape but his arms looked small. Coe was big and

ripped, had exceptional arms but looked blocky. Mentzer was also big but didn't look finished. . . . As Reg Park said to me after the judging: 'All eyes were on Arnold; he was the biggest and the tallest and doing a side chest in a line up, who could compare[?]'²⁷

Achilles Kallos, reporting for *Iron Man*, noted that while Arnold's arms, chest, and upper back "showed signs of their former perfection," his leg development was weak and that his "three year layoff showed. I couldn't help thinking of Muhammad Ali."²⁸ The final top men, in order, were: Schwarzenegger, Dickerson, Zane, Coe, Mentzer, Walker, and Callender.

Audience reaction to Arnold's victory was mixed. While his appearance in the contest and posing routine received a warm welcome and generous applause, it was the opinion of many that his physique was not necessarily the best. "For the first time in his heralded career," Neary reported, "Arnold was booed—by approximately 40% of the more than 2000 fans who filled the posh seats of the opera house."²⁹ According to Jeff Thompson, a bodybuilding aficionado from South Australia, "it was a full house, and a loud booning resounded through the whole structure. The booning was quite intense. It eventually subsided, and there was some applause."³⁰ Boyer Coe recalls that "as the booning continued, people down front started peeling off the armrests on their seats and throwing them onto the stage."³¹ Perhaps the most telling sign of the displeasure incurred by Arnold's win was the regret expressed by *Iron Man* editor Peary Rader, in a note following the report of the contest by Achilles Kallos, that he found it

advisable to delete some of the author's 'colorful' comments relating to the judging and placings, both from his article and an accompanying letter. We have received a lot of calls and letters about the Olympia and with one exception, they all expressed great surprise at the decisions.³²

Yet Arnold seemed oblivious to the swirl of controversy surrounding him. "You know the applause was very clearly overwhelming for me" is his recollection decades later. "There were maybe some boos there, but I mean,

I cannot even remember those as far as that goes."³³ What Thompson remembers is that Arnold, after a brief acceptance speech, hastily departed, and as he was walking down the steps from the Sydney Opera House he could be heard shouting, "Where are you Maria?" almost as if he was seeking to be rescued from the hullabaloo of his tumultuous victory.³⁴

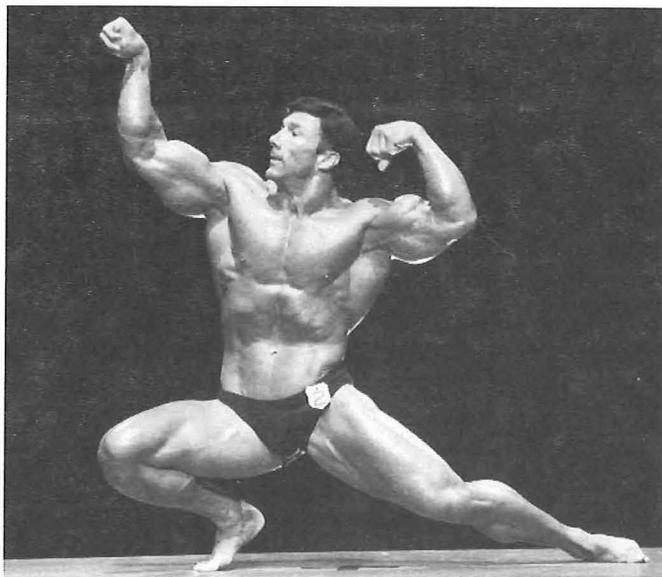
The reaction of Schwarzenegger's competitors was even less equivocal. Zane was so angry that he broke his trophy to bits, while Coe and Mentzer left theirs behind and vowed never to return to Australia.³⁵ "Is there no justice?" the enraged Coe demanded to know as he sent chairs into the walls.³⁶ But he had a premonition of foul play. "When they announced Mike fifth," he recalls, "I knew for sure that Arnold won. . . . A fair placing for Arnold in that competition would have been eighth or ninth." Coe was disappointed but went on to further laurels.³⁷ The impact on Mentzer was far more devastating. "When I was called fifth," he said, "I was totally shocked. It was just a ridiculous placing, made more ridiculous by an out-of-shape Arnold winning." He not only retired from competitive bodybuilding but pursued a self-destructive course that culminated in his early death in 2001.³⁸ The reaction of Dickerson was less dramatic as he quietly returned to his hotel. Before leaving the premises, however, he remembers that there was "a lot of booning and a lot of shock," with lots of people coming up to him and saying "they didn't agree with what was done." He was further consoled afterwards at a bodybuilding seminar in Auckland, New Zealand, where Ben Weider introduced him as "the man who should have won the Mr. Olympia contest" and repeated those sentiments to him "a number of times." Three weeks later, on returning to Los Angeles, Dickerson, while training at the World Gym in Venice, was surprised by a visitor from Australia who presented him with a three foot high trophy that read, "Mr. Olympia 1980, Chris Dickerson, presented by the Australian Bodybuilders." For Dickerson, patience and perseverance eventually paid off when he finally won the title in 1982.³⁹ Virtually all of the competitors, however, swore before leaving that they would not enter the Pro Mr. Universe Contest a month later or the following year's Olympia, both of which were to be conducted by Arnold, to signify their displeasure over the outcome in Sydney. Only Platz showed up for the former, while eight of the Sydney contestants (not including Zane, Coe, or Mentzer) came to the Columbus Olympia.⁴⁰

Arguably the most devastating result was the decision by CBS, in light of the controversy, not to broadcast the 1980 event. About two weeks prior to the contest, it sent a film crew to California under producer Sherman Egan to gather human interest material on four of the leading contenders—Mentzer, Coe, Zane, and Dennis Tinerino—and then on to Sydney. A day or two after the contest, Egan called Coe,

and we (Mike Mentzer, Frank Zane and myself) met with Sherm. He made it clear, that in his limited knowledge of bodybuilding it was clear to him that the contest was fixed and that they could never show this on CBS, and they would not even bother to edit it. He told me that if I ever cared to watch it, to come to CBS in New York and that he would be happy to show me the raw footage. Late in 1980 . . . I happened to be in New York, so I called Sherm up, he set up the viewing, and so on a cold Saturday afternoon, Chris Dickerson, Wayne Demilia, his wife and myself, watched the footage. It was even worse than I thought. I quickly realized why CBS could never show it. Sherm laughed and said about the only thing they could do with it was possibly put it on *60 Minutes!*⁴¹

Although CBS had one more year on a three year contract with the IFBB, it did not bother to send a film crew in 1981 and has not covered a bodybuilding event since 1979.⁴² The extent to which the contest might have been rigged depends in the first instance on whether the scoring of the seven judges shows any pattern of favoritism towards Arnold or disinclination for any of the other finalists. Their respective totals for the first three rounds and the posedown are shown in the table on Page 12.

These data indicate that four of the judges (Busek, Ryan, Kawashima, and Park) placed Arnold first (including bonus points), and two of them (Busek and Ryan) gave him a perfect score in all three rounds. By the same token, two judges (Blommaert and Howard) gave Dickerson perfect scores throughout, but the four favoring Arnold plus Walczak, who scored him low, cancelled them out. Curiously Mentzer had no great support



Louisiana's favorite son, Boyer Coe, was in arguably the best shape of his life at the 1980 contest. Coe had been third place in 1979, but reporter Jack Neary described him in 1980 as "absolutely out of this world." He had "a repertoire of poses, mostly arm shots, that's beyond compare."
Photo by Vince Basile

from any quarter and had especially low scores among the four alleged Schwarzeneggerphiles, who rated Mentzer a total of nineteen points less than Arnold, while the other three judges scored Mentzer three points higher.

An individual analysis of the judges provides a clearer rationale for their voting tendencies. It is hardly surprising that Albert Busek, as one of his oldest and dearest friends, should be predisposed to favor Arnold. Biographer Laurence Leamer calls him one of the two crucial people in Arnold's life. The other would be Franco Columbu.⁴³ After seeing Schwarzenegger win the Junior Mr. Europe Contest in 1965, Busek, who managed a gym in Munich, facilitated Arnold's move to Germany from Austria where he became an instructor under Busek. "I was interested in Arnold as a great athlete to bring him to Munich," Busek recalled.⁴⁴ A year later he enabled Schwarzenegger to enter the 1966 Mr. Universe Contest in London. "If it hadn't been for Albert, I wouldn't have been able to compete," Arnold recalls.⁴⁵ Bill Pearl refers to Busek as "a very good friend of Arnold" who "still idolizes him" on the level of a "sycophant." Boyer Coe recalls encountering Busek in the lobby of the hotel where they were staying on the day after the Olympia in Sydney. "He told me that he would have voted for me first, but he had to vote for Arnold out

of friendship.”⁴⁶

Brendan Ryan was regarded somewhat as a “mystery figure,” an Australian who was not well known in American or international bodybuilding.⁴⁷ According to Coe, who otherwise knew “nothing about him,” Ryan managed the gym operated by Olympia director Paul Graham, and because of that connection Boyer was “sure he did what he was told to do.”⁴⁸ Further insight into Ryan’s tie to Arnold comes from testimony of Arnold’s former girl friend, Barbara Outland Baker, with whom he lived for nearly six years in the early 1970s. In her autobiography, *Arnold and Me*, she vividly describes her encounter with Ryan and his wife Audra who were among the “300 close friends and family” invited to the inaugural luncheon for Governor Schwarzenegger in 2003.

How surprised I was to realize that the handsome blond Australian was another old contact from the seventies. He joined in our chatter and drove me back in time. ‘Once I arrived in California, Arnold made my stay great! . . . Remember, he let me borrow your Volkswagen? I was so excited because I knew this was the favorite car at the time. But then in the heat of summer, Arnold asked me to pick up something from Joe Weider in the valley and gave me directions. I kept driving and driving, figuring something was going wrong when I stopped to find out he’d told me to take the wrong direction on the freeway! So in your shaky car without air conditioning, I finally made it out to the hot valley!’

At the inauguration ceremonies on the following day the Ryans and Bakers were included among those escorted on a “virtual red carpet” which also included the likes of Rob Lowe, Danny DeVito, Jamie Lee Curtis, and Dennis Miller. “Bystanders stared at us as if to say, ‘You must be exceptional because of your VIP treatment, but who are you?’”⁴⁹ It was obvious that those with whom Arnold had bonded during his precarious years as a newly-arrived immigrant remained special to him throughout later life.

Also seated at their luncheon table and sharing

in the later festivities with Baker, her husband John, and the Ryans were Mits Kawashima, yet another judge from the 1980 Olympia with close connections to Schwarzenegger, and his wife, Dot. The Kawashimas also had stories about Baker’s old Volkswagen from the times they borrowed it on visits to California in the 1970s “to relieve their Oahu island fever” and catch up on the latest equipment, training trends, and nutritional products for their Honolulu gym. “They’d always stay at the Hotel Roosevelt in Hollywood where we’d meet for healthy, but lively dinners.” According to Baker, Mits regarded Arnold as “his ‘first-born adopted son,’ a once twenty-one-year-old young man he had watched grow into one of the most powerful men in the world.”⁵⁰ Bill Pearl notes that Mits and Arnold were linked as business partners and had co-sponsored a contest in Hawaii.⁵¹ Coe remembers Kawashima as “a beautiful old man” and thinks “he just got caught up in the emotion of the moment and voted for Arnold” in 1980 but later regretted it.⁵² Kawashima, along with Busek, also served as an usher for Schwarzenegger’s wedding in 1986. Although Mits knew most of the other bodybuilders at the Olympia, his relationship with Arnold was special.

Most accounts of Schwarzenegger’s life dwell on the importance of Reg Park as a role model for his early development. Arnold admits that after watching him in the film role of Hercules, he became “obsessed” with Park. He was “the image in front of me from the time I started training. . . . I had this fixed idea of building a body like Reg Park’s. The model was there in my mind; I only had to grow enough to fill it.” Later, after winning the NABBA Mr. Universe Contest in 1967, Arnold accepted Park’s invitation to visit his home in Johannesburg, South Africa.

He had a beautiful sprawling single-story house with an Olympic-size pool in front, the whole thing surrounded by a rose garden and acres of flowers and trees. . . . At first I felt out of place, but before long my discomfort disappeared. Reg and his wife, Maryanne (*Ed note: correct spelling is Mareon*) treated me as if I were their son. They included me in everything they did; they took me to parties, films, dinners. Being with them opened my mind to what was possible for me aside from endless days taken up

totally with training. I could have a gorgeous house, businesses, a family, a good life. Being with them, I felt fulfilled.⁵³

A decade later Schwarzenegger was able to return their hospitality when Park's teenage son, Jon Jon, spent a year and a half in Long Beach. Arnold looked after him, Jon Jon recalls. "I spent a great deal of time with him on weekends in the spare bedroom. He'd sometimes drive down and take me for dinners, pick me up, bring me back to L.A. You know, he treated me kind of like a kid brother."⁵⁴ These were meaningful personal relationships that would go far to compromise any objectivity Park might have towards Arnold's physique in a competitive setting. "Reg was in Arnold's camp 100%," reckons Coe, "even giving Arnold instructions from the judges table."⁵⁵ In Pearl's estimation, "Reg and Arnold were as tight as ticks."⁵⁶

With four of the judges arguably predisposed towards Arnold, owing largely to personal considerations, it mattered less how the other three judged him. Mike Walczak, a California physician and an authority on nutrition and steroids, had some personal associations with Schwarzenegger and his girl

Mr. Olympia 1980 Judge's Scorecards

Albert Busek (Germany)		Mits Kawashima (USA)	
Schwarzenegger, Zane	60	Schwarzenegger	59
Dickerson, Coe, Walker, Callender	59	Dickerson, Zane	57
Mentzer	58	Coe	54
Tinerino	57	Mentzer	53
Platz, Emmott, Viator, Bannout, Waller	56	Walker, Callender, Tinerino	52
Corney	55	Corney, Waller	51
Padilla	54	Platz, Duval, Viator	50
Duval	53	Padilla, Emmott, Bannout	49
Mike Walczak (USA)		Jacques Blommaert (Belgium)	
Tinerino	60	Dickerson	60
Schwarzenegger, Mentzer	59	Zane, Callender	59
Zane, Coe, Walker	57	Coe, Mentzer	58
Platz	56	Walker	57
Dickerson	55	Platz	56
Padilla	54	Schwarzenegger, Tinerino, Emmott	55
Callender	53	Corney	54
Duval	52	Padilla, Bannout	53
Corney, Viator	50	Duval, Viator	52
Bannout	48	Waller	51
Emmott, Waller	45		
Reg Park (South Africa)		Dan Howard (USA)	
Schwarzenegger	59	Dickerson	60
Dickerson	57	Zane, Coe	59
Zane	56	Schwarzenegger	58
Mentzer, Callender, Tinerino	54	Mentzer, Walker, Callender	57
Coe	52	Tinerino, Platz	56
Walker, Platz, Padilla	50	Bannout	54
Viator	48	Corney, Emmott, Waller	53
Corney, Emmott, Duval, Waller	47	Padilla, Duval	52
Bannout	46	Viator	51
Brendan Ryan (Australia)		Posedown/Bonus Points	
Schwarzenegger	60	Schwarzenegger	5
Zane	57	(Busek, Ryan, Walczak, Kawashima, Park)	
Dickerson	56	Dickerson	2
Mentzer, Callender, Tinerino, Platz	54	(Blommaert, Howard)	
Walker	53		
Coe	52		
Padilla	50		
Emmott, Viator	49		
Corney, Duval, Bannout	47		
Waller	45		
		Finalist Totals	
		Schwarzenegger	300
		Dickerson	292
		Zane	291
		Coe	280
		Mentzer	278
		Walker	277
		Callender	277

friend Barbara.⁵⁷ His scores were somewhat idiosyncratic, as he put Dennis Tinerino (who eventually finished eighth) in first place. He did Arnold no harm by placing him second (tied with Mentzer) but, most importantly, by relegating Chris Dickerson (Schwarzenegger's closest rival) to eighth place, Walczak effectively protected the lead established by "Arnold's friends." Few observers seem aware of any special ties he might have had with the competitors or the rationale for his selection as a judge, but Walczak's low scores for Dickerson were critical to the contest's outcome.⁵⁸

That left only two judges who could damage Arnold's chances for a comeback. The most serious threat was Jacques Blommaert, a Belgian gym owner, who had virtually no personal links to Arnold and was widely known for his independence of mind. At the time of the Sydney event, Ben Weider referred to Blommaert as "the most experienced and respected bodybuilding judge in the world."⁵⁹ Len Bosland recalls him as "a character, a little guy who drank a lot . . . and thought for himself. If something was wrong he fought it."⁶⁰ Coe remembers Blommaert as "one of only two honest judges on the panel . . . He was a straight up honest guy."⁶¹ Pearl agrees that Blommaert was "unbelievably independent-minded" and was at one time very influential in the IFBB. But he and his brother Julian were eventually "dropped by the wayside because they were getting in the way. Anyone who stepped on Ben Weider's toes had to go."⁶² At the 1980 Olympia, Blommaert gave Dickerson a perfect score and relegated Schwarzenegger to a tie for eighth.

The other "straight up guy," in Coe's estimation, was ironically also a personal friend of Arnold. But he was "never in anyone's pocket."⁶³ Like Busek, Ryan, Kawashima, and Park, Dan Howard was close to Arnold in the early days. At about the time Schwarzenegger migrated from Austria, Howard, who worked as an athletic trainer at the University of Tulsa and was a competitive bodybuilder, was coming to California in the summers to train at Gold's Gym. "I've always been close and friendly with Arnold," states Howard, "and lived with him one summer in an apartment house. I taught Arnold trap shooting and skeet. We had some fun times." Therefore Arnold had reason to believe, by the way he reckoned personal ties, that his friend would be in his corner. But Howard gave Dickerson a perfect score and ranked Arnold two points behind at fourth. "In the contest Arnold posed the way he always had, and it

was out of date," he says. "I had no doubt that if he had six more weeks he would have been in proper shape to win. I don't think Arnold should have won." After the contest, during a cruise in Sydney harbor, Howard told Arnold that he had to judge the contest fairly and that Schwarzenegger's fourth place finish was "his problem, not my problem." Arnold seemed incredulous, pointing out that "they were friends, after all," and he could not believe Dan did not place him first. According to Howard, Arnold refused to talk to him for a year.⁶⁴ The intangible Arnold had seemingly met his match with the stubborn Oklahoman.

But it did not matter. The cards had already been stacked in Schwarzenegger's favor.⁶⁵ Although the Weider brothers and their chief facilitator Oscar State had the final say, it is the contest director and President of the Australian Bodybuilding Federation, Paul Graham, who is the leading suspect in the selection of judges so favorably disposed to Arnold. Graham recalls that he met Schwarzenegger in 1968 soon after they both arrived in America as budding bodybuilders. "The gym owner at Studio City [Vince Gironda], outside Hollywood, put us together because he came from Austria and I came from Australia, and he thought we came from the same country."⁶⁶ But Graham, who was wrestling professionally under the name of Lord Paul Graham, soon became involved in some illicit activity in which Arnold could have easily become an accomplice. The context of their relationship is captured so well by Laurence Leamer that it deserves to be quoted in full:

Los Angeles was a meat market, a struggle for survival. Arnold saw bodybuilders living in their cars, hustling their bodies, selling steroids, doing whatever they had to do to get by. Fortunately or unfortunately, Arnold was able to share an apartment in Studio City with an Australian bodybuilder named Paul Graham.

On December 9 and 10, 1968, two automobiles were stolen in Los Angeles, only to reappear in the Antipodes. In January 1969 the Justice Department filed a complaint asserting that Paul Graham had "transported two stolen Mustangs, a 1965 Ford Mustang and a

1966 Ford Mustang, in foreign commerce from Los Angeles, California, to Sydney, Australia.’

Arnold danced a sinuous waltz to stay away from various illegal activities that bodybuilders used to make money. Arnold was close enough to Graham that in 1969 they were staying together in a hotel in Hawaii for a bodybuilding exhibition. ‘He said that he had some legal problems, and one day he left the hotel,’ said Arnold. ‘The next thing I knew, I was getting a phone call to visit him in some institution down in Long Beach. He and I never talked about it. I was very far removed and never saw him take any cars. It was a sensitive thing.’⁶⁷

Boyer Coe offers a more nuanced version of this story related to him by long-time friend Bill Drake who had also lived with Arnold in those years.

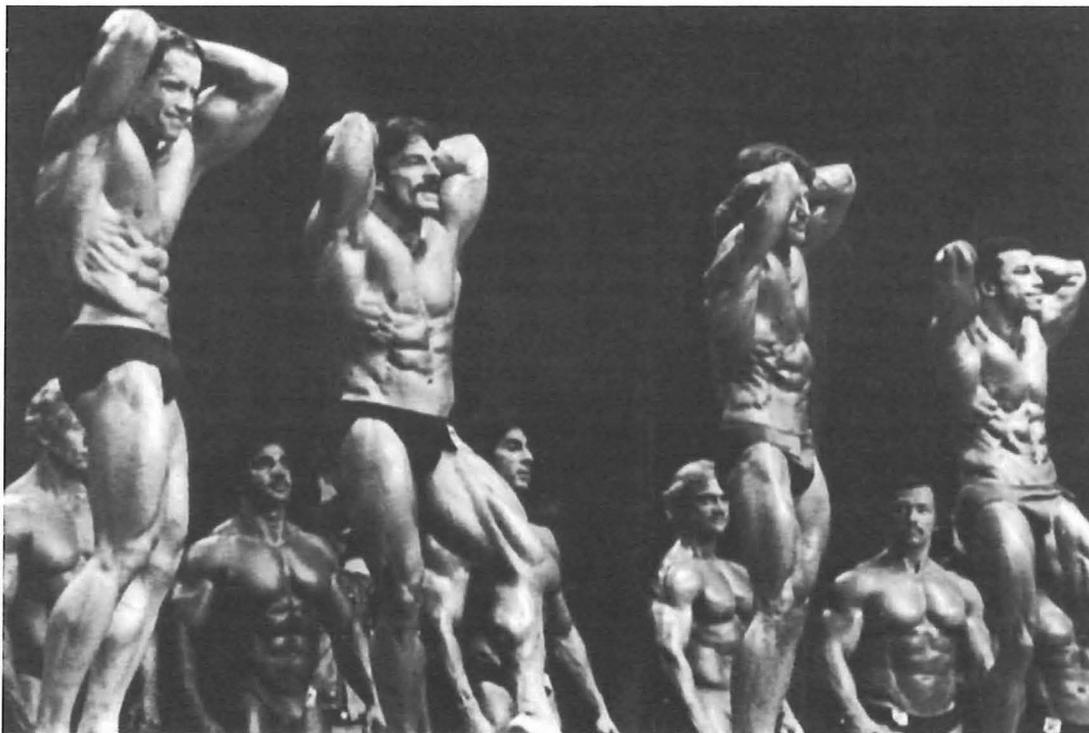
I am not quite sure what Arnold’s involvement [was] in this. Anyhow, as luck would have it, Arnold gets in a wreck in one of these hot cars, and the gear shift gets jabbed into his leg. Bill quickly gets him out of there, away from the scene and to the emergency room. Shortly after this, Arnold and Paul take off for Hawaii, until things cool down. While in Hawaii they are arrested by the FBI. Paul takes the fall and goes to Terminal Island for several years. So Arnold now owes Paul. This is a fact, as it turns out, one of the arresting FBI agents was the father of Cathy Gelfo—who happened to be the girl friend of Mike Mentzer—which was not known until years later. Naturally you will find no arrest record of Arnold, as he was very close to George Bush, senior, and he was able to get this removed. So there is no record of this.

Whether Arnold owed Paul for taking the fall on

this rap and how much “Paul was in Arnold’s pocket big time,” as Coe asserts, is uncertain.⁶⁸ But Leamer is surely correct in concluding that Arnold was not the kind of person who would abandon an old friend in adversity. Indeed Arnold, in speaking later of his association with Graham, stated that “he always has been a fantastic friend and a great human being.”⁶⁹ That this intimate tie with the past was sustained into later life is indicated by the fact that Arnold served as best man at Graham’s marriage to his wife Carol in 1981 and that Graham was a groomsman at Arnold’s wedding.

When confronted with the possibility decades later that the 1980 Olympia was fixed, Graham flatly denied it, saying that “even at 75 per cent of his best shape,” Arnold was “good enough” to win.⁷⁰ Coe’s “take” on the process, as a not unbiased participant, is that “Arnold picked who he wanted as judges, well in advance and had Paul invite them and set it long beforehand.”⁷¹ But the view of Bill Pearl, from the vantage point as head of the judges, differs only slightly. “Yes, most of the judges had something to gain from Arnold’s win,” he asserts, and his selection “was not based on his physique. I know that Arnold did not enter the contest until he knew who was on the judging panel.”⁷² Most vehement in his conviction that Graham had “fixed” the judging process in favor of his old friend is the contestant who stood the best chance of beating Schwarzenegger. According to Dickerson, “the promoter was a real low life, a bigot, who had a real dislike for me—partly on racial grounds and partly for my sexual orientation.” Graham even told another official that “Chris couldn’t win because he was a fag.” Indeed, Dickerson, who was short, black, and gay, was a diametric opposite to the kind of image Arnold represented. Also contrary to Arnold’s approach, Chris, with his polite and gentlemanly demeanor, always kept a respectable distance from contest judges and always believed that “you should let your body do your talking.” It is hardly surprising that Dickerson believes that “the whole thing” in Sydney “was orchestrated,” and “if there was a culprit, it was Graham.”⁷³ Bodybuilding insider Rick Wayne confirms that the contestants were subjected to a judging panel “selected by promoter Paul Graham.”⁷⁴

Perhaps the best indication that something was awry with the judging process is the effort undertaken by Australian journalist Vince Basile to show that the scoring was bogus and that the results should be “changed.



Left to Right, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mike Mentzer, Frank Zane, and Chris Dickerson compare abdominals at the 1980 Mr. Olympia.

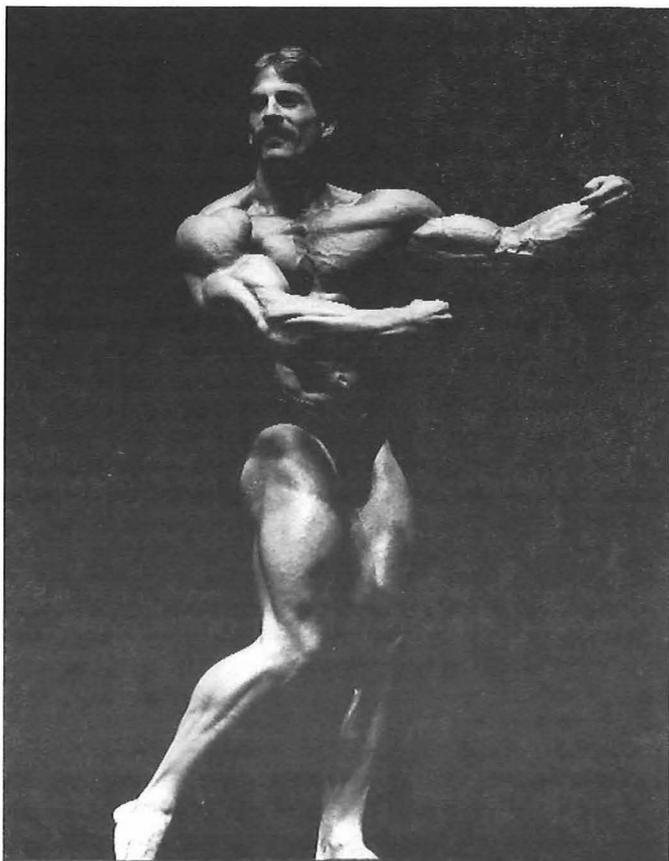
It does appear that Chris Dickerson should have won & it can be proved,” Basile’s wife Roz told Mabel and Peary Rader. “Vince has spent the last 2 weeks on the judging analysis of the contest & there will be a meeting this Friday. However this is very confidential at this point.”⁷⁵ But Basile’s analysis, published in the March 1981 issue of *Iron Man* instigated no such changes. It merely pointed out hypothetically that if Bill Pearl had not recused himself as a voting judge, because of his close association with Dickerson, and his vote been counted instead of Ryan’s, “Dickerson may have been Mr. Olympia 1980.” Basile also believed the IFBB point system was “virtually bankrupt, and doesn’t always guarantee that the best man will win.”⁷⁶ But he must have known that this procedure, employed since 1974, was so closely tied to Ben Weider’s aspirations to make bodybuilding an Olympic event (since similar sports employed points) that there was very little chance of changing it.

A more substantive undertaking, indicative that the powers-that-be had allowed the Olympia judging process to get out of their control, was the adoption by the IFBB Congress in Manila on November 28, 1980, of an addendum to its constitution stating that it was “strict-

ly forbidden for contest organizers to select their own panel of judges.” This responsibility, according to the new rules, would be in the hands of a professional judging director who, assisted by a committee, had authority to suspend or revoke the judging card of any judge deemed to be biased or incompetent.⁷⁷ Rick Wayne confirms that this system became operational in the following summer when “IFBB president Ben Weider ... sat down with the

federation’s general secretary, Oscar State, to choose the team that would judge the ’81 Olympia. This was in keeping with the decision following the Sydney Olympia to have the IFBB rather than the promoters take responsibility for the results of its various contests.”⁷⁸ As further evidence the Weiders were determined to undo the impression of judging bias that was so apparent in Sydney, “everything was done by the IFBB to guarantee a fair decision,” reported Garry Bartlett for *Iron Man*. “The judges were chosen based on their past reputations for fairness and just decisions.” Head judge Roger Schwab assured Bartlett that “after what happened last year, we must be sure that things are run extremely fairly. . . . I plan on not letting any competitor get away with anything. We have a chance of setting the record straight and we can only do this if our judging is beyond question.”⁷⁹

Despite such altruistic intentions, the fallout from the Sydney Olympia and suspicions of Arnold’s influence reappeared in Columbus when his best friend, Franco Columbu, took the title with what many deemed a lesser physique than those of Chris Dickerson, Tom Platz, and Roy Callender. Again, many in the audience were outraged. “The greatest booing contest of all time”



As this photo by Chris Lund vividly attests, Mike Mentzer was in terrific shape at the 1980 Olympia. Mentzer was so angered by the results of the contest that he announced after the show that he would never compete again.

is how Wayne phrased it. *"Oh no! Oh no! That sonofabitch Arnold's done it to us again!"*⁸⁰ Len Bosland, who announced the event, recalls that "the whole place was just one big boo. I thought I wanted to get off this stage before they start coming up here."⁸¹ To *MuscleMag International* Editor Robert Kennedy the audience was right; the Columbus event was as "equally sour tasting" as the outrage in Sydney and to some even superseded it in "unacceptable inequities of justice." When Platz was announced as third "the crowd almost rioted," and Joe Weider "literally jumped to his feet and ran out of the auditorium," refusing to come on stage to raise Franco's hand in victory after Dickerson was announced as second. "I upset my brother Ben enormously," Joe admitted, "and I am a great fan of Franco's but I didn't feel he should have taken first place today." Later Joe, not normally prone to swearing or drinking, "downed two full glasses of wine at the Sheraton bar and angrily declared," according to Kennedy, "What is it

with those fuckin' judges. Why can't they be honest? I want our shows to be honest!"⁸²

Runner-up Chris Dickerson and many fans believed the result to be a "carry-over" from Sydney. Joe Weider recalls how "the memory of Australia dominated the Columbus scene. Those who had been certain Arnold's fame and not his physique had won him the title in Sydney were now convinced that Arnold had somehow presented his friend with the title."⁸³ But journalist Bill Dobbins, who carefully analyzed the event, doubts that Arnold "had set things up for his friend to win in Columbus." Indeed the Weiders, State, and the IFBB had gained nothing from Arnold's 1980 victory and had "actually suffered on account of it;" hence their revision of the rules in Manila to ensure that "the problems that had developed during the Olympia in Sydney could never be repeated." Arnold too had nothing to gain by Franco's victory. While he was promoter of the 1981 Olympia and delighted that his friend had won it, the Columbus operation was a "smoothly run machine" overseen by Jim Lorimer with Schwarzenegger having "very little direct involvement in the preparations," according to Dobbins. "Nor did Arnold have any desire to get involved in another controversy. When he learned Franco would be competing, Arnold went out of his way to let people know he would have nothing to do with officiating the contest. And the IFBB, after the questions that arose in Australia, wasn't about to give him any say!"⁸⁴ Perhaps the only carry-over between the 1980 and 1981 Olympias was one of the judges, Jacques Blommaert, who had ditched Arnold in Sydney and would do the same to Franco in Columbus by placing him sixth!

To account for these two arguably unwarranted victories for Arnold, one for himself and the other for his best friend, it is necessary to look beyond judging procedures and into less tangible influences. Observers of Schwarzenegger's behavior make much of the psychological tactics he exercised on other competitors.⁸⁵ One of them occurred at the precontest meeting where he made a scene over weight classes and baited Mentzer into attacking him. "From then on," notes Wendy Leigh, "Arnold had the upper hand. Whenever Mentzer walked past Arnold, his entire body began to shake. Onstage, every time Arnold managed to catch his eye, he winked at Mentzer, who became so angry he forgot to flex." Likewise, Arnold distracted Zane during the prejudging by telling him jokes. "After five years away from com-

petition it was wonderful to use psychological warfare again,” Arnold admitted.⁸⁶ According to Dan Howard, “Arnold beats people before they go onstage.”⁸⁷ As the Sydney contest approached, it should not be surprising that Schwarzenegger focused his tricks on Mentzer, the apparent frontrunner. In September he confided to George Butler, who helped make Arnold famous in *Pumping Iron*, that he had just started training. “But don’t worry. I still fuck everyone else up. I am working on Mike Mentzer.” Furthermore “I don’t need to control the judges. I control the bodybuilders.” Indeed Arnold prided himself on being a trickster. “I improvised those things. . . . I’ve seen it with Ali, I’ve seen it with other sports, but in bodybuilding it was unique.”⁸⁸ To Bill Pearl the psychological advantage that Arnold exercised over his competitors took the form of intimidation. “Any advantage he could take onstage or offstage he would do,” stated Pearl. “He was the most aggressive competitor I have ever seen on stage. Arnold was so aggressive backstage that the others were virtually tongue-tied, and that was sad.”⁸⁹

But Schwarzenegger’s influence on his competitors, no matter how formidable, cannot alone explain his

successful comeback in 1980. Len Bosland raises the interesting possibility that the judges or whoever selected the judges (in this instance Paul Graham) were attempting to please the Weiders by favoring Arnold. “Joe Weider held a great influence and possibly influenced the outcome. I think there was a lot of manipulation over who was the most salable and would look best on magazine covers. The voting of the judges may have had something to do with their desire to satisfy Weider and enhance their standing in the IFBB.” Bosland likens the Weider influence to that which Hoffman supposedly once wielded over the Mr. America Contest, whose winners always seemed to appear on the covers of *Strength & Health* just prior to the event.⁹⁰ Bill Pearl, though he does not believe the Weiders “rigged” it, observes that “Joe was tied heavily to Arnold, and it was important for him to win the contest.”⁹¹ John Balik also does not perceive any possible Weider influence on the judges and recalls that Mentzer had become Joe’s “poster boy” after Arnold’s retirement from competition.⁹² A survey of the seven issues of *Muscle & Fitness* published prior to the Sydney Olympia reveals that four of the contestants (Dickerson, Zane, Coe, and Tinerino) appeared on the



During his presentation on this topic at the 2009 annual meeting of the North American Society for Sport History, author John Fair circulated copies of this photograph to the academic audience in attendance, before his analysis of the event, and asked them to choose the man they felt deserved to win the title of Mr. Olympia 1980. Fair did not identify the men on the handout and asked them simply to rank the men based on who had the best physique. To Fair’s surprise, Arnold, second from the left, “won” over Coe, on the left, and Zane on the far right. So, perhaps the losers were simply jealous.

front cover, while Mentzer (at 11) authored the greatest number of articles, followed by Schwarzenegger (6), Dickerson, Coe, and Viator (4), Tinerino (3), Zane (2), and Bannout, Padilla, and Emmott (1). Also Mentzer's brother Ray and Zane's wife, Christine, both authored three. Along with his many endorsements of Weider products and advertisements for his "Heavy Duty Training System," an endearing photographic feature with Mike and his girl friend Cathy Gelfo entitled "The Magnificence of Man" appeared in the December 1980 issue, just prior to the contest.⁹³

Some indication of how Arnold could counter the immediacy of Mentzer's exposure and the popularity of his training methods in the muscle media is provided by what social psychologists call the "halo effect." First detected by Edwin L. Thorndike of Columbia University in 1915, it identifies a cognitive bias whereby an observer's perceptions are influenced by his previous perceptions of an individual. There is "a marked tendency to think of the person in general as rather good or rather inferior and to color the judgments of the [ir other] qualities by this general feeling," wrote Thorndike.⁹⁴ Subsequent studies over the next century not only confirm the efficacy of the ubiquitous halo but even suggest that it might not be a rating error and could even contribute to greater observer accuracy through its broader perspective.⁹⁵ These tendencies are also evident in other behavioral indices, including "effects of prior performance," "mere exposure effect," "serial position effect," and "scripting," all of which identify similar subliminal stimuli acting on current perceptions.⁹⁶ That these kinds of perceptual forces were operative at the 1980 Olympia event in Sydney is the view of John Balik, who recalls that "1974 was Arnold's best year. You have that picture in your head. Every one of the judges probably saw and remembered Arnold at his best."⁹⁷ Wayne Gallasch believes that it was at the outset "an Arnold/Mentzer contest to some degree. In a close decision though, Arnold would win. Judges always go with the champion."⁹⁸ In a not dissimilar way to boxing or other sports where human judgment determines the scoring, a halo based on past performances and perceptions comes strongly into effect.

But the halo that Schwarzenegger wore at Sydney was earned not only through many years of hard work and commitment but from attributes that few other competitors possessed, attributes which would make him special in the eyes of the judges. Gallasch summarizes

these key factors as "reputation, charisma, and personality. Charisma and past record is what Arnold had going for him."⁹⁹ For Balik too, Arnold was number one "because of the charisma factor. He wasn't just a champion; he was much more than that."¹⁰⁰ Years after the emotional trauma of Sydney subsided, Frank Zane was able to reason that "Arnold could have won the Olympia with a number of different bodies because of his attitude. It was all his attitude."¹⁰¹ However much he may have been predisposed on personal grounds to favor Schwarzenegger in his judging, Reg Park also

didn't think Mentzer was in the same league quite frankly. There's a certain amount of 'presence' on stage which counts – call it charisma, call it showmanship – and I don't think Mentzer had that appeal to the public. Arnold had that appeal even five years after 'retiring'. He wasn't the Arnold of '75, but to my mind he was good enough to win the contest.¹⁰²

Likewise reporter Garry Bartlett, reflecting on Arnold a year after his win in Sydney, was a true believer in the force of his personality.

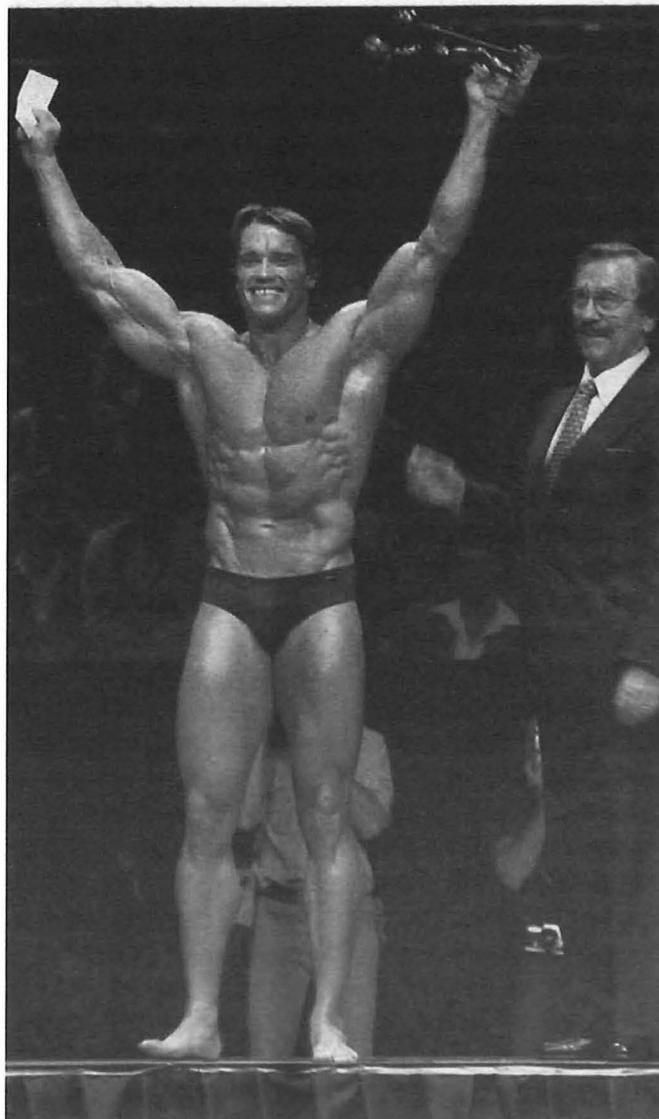
Regardless of what anyone thinks of Arnold, the man has charisma. Even fully clothed his presence is the center of action. He is like the sun and everyone else are the planets. ... It is very seldom that Arnold is ever alone. There is someone always talking to him or trying to talk to him. I am truly awed by this man.¹⁰³

It was Arnold's "charisma" that also captivated Barbara Outland Baker, years after their relationship, enabling her to see that his domination of the sport was "not just because of his symmetry and mass. ... To be in his presence was to fall under the spell of his seductive smile, perfected shrewdness, and mesmerizing leadership. ... Arnold held a Ph.D. in Charisma."¹⁰⁴ This intangible quality had such potency because it was so deeply embedded in his personality and not simply a device that could be turned on for physique judges. "I'm always the leader," is how Arnold perceived himself, "because I'm

the more outgoing personality, I'm a domineering person."¹⁰⁵ As Wendy Leigh observes, "he is endearingly funny, winningly sly, mockingly charming. It is virtually impossible not to like him."¹⁰⁶ From another journalist's perspective: "His physical power is balanced by great humor, prodigious charm, that same mixture of sweetness and sass, mock arrogance and mock innocence, that Ali once possessed."¹⁰⁷ That Arnold was able to make a successful comeback the day after the fall of his erstwhile idol, however, shows that history does not necessarily repeat itself.

Indeed Arnold was able to bring to bear a full arsenal of forces from the psychological realm to compensate for whatever physical attributes he might be lacking. Reputation, charisma, and personality were all working in his favor, but it was equally necessary to channel these attributes effectively to achieve maximum impact. It was here that Arnold's extraordinary ability to focus came into play. According to Balik, "Arnold has the ability to focus on you to the point where you are the only person in the room. He is truly into the moment and totally into you."¹⁰⁸ Baker concurs that he "had that uncanny ability to connect intimately with anyone he chose. And he was determined to make that connection with each judge."¹⁰⁹ Schwarzenegger thus built a reputation, according to one biography, as an "unstoppable force" who personified the American Dream—a "dominant icon" whose "body is the one we think of when we want to describe something larger than life."¹¹⁰ From the 2008 perspective of Robert Nailon, he was "the bodybuilding phenomenon of the decade, even century, and is a legend."¹¹¹

Arnold was not quite a legend in 1980, but all of the makings of it were there. That his unique personality played a vital role in the outcome at Sydney is unmistakable, but any final assessment must include two vital misconceptions on the part of his competitors and the many fans who so keenly felt a sense of injustice. The first was an assumption that Arnold was not going to compete and the contest would be limited to those who had been trying for the past five years to build an Arnold-like reputation. "None of the competitors wanted Arnold back" is the view of Balik. "Part of the problem was the expectation that Arnold was not going to be there and the disappointment that resulted when he did show up." For Mike Mentzer, who had the highest expectations, it had long-reaching and disastrous consequences.¹¹² The second misconception was the expectation that, even with



Arnold received his seventh, and final, Sandow statuette—the trophy given annually at the Mr. Olympia Contest—from his mentor, Joe Weider. Arnold's happiness is readily apparent.

Photo courtesy H.J. Lutcher Stark Center

Arnold in the competition, the contestants would be judged on the merits of their physiques and not on criteria that were not prescribed by the rules but somehow crept into the scoring. Ironically, it was this very emphasis on physical development, devoid of other personal attributes, that enabled the IFBB's Mr. Olympia to surpass the AAU's Mr. America in popularity and prestige over the preceding decade. What happened in Sydney was hardly a desirable outcome for the Weiders, whose career and fortune were based largely on successfully promoting the hypermuscularity of their bodybuilders, but Arnold, unlike the others, could not be so easily com-

modified. His behavior could neither be predicted nor controlled.

In light of these intangible factors, Arnold's win in Sydney should not be so surprising, but it does raise serious questions about whether bodybuilding is more of an artistic endeavor than a sport. There is much truth in the observation by Adam Mars Jones, in his review of *Last Action Hero*, that it was only fitting that in such an inherently post-modern sport as bodybuilding, the "prize-winning body is a piece of muscular development that is already in quotation marks; it wins prizes not for what it is capable of, but for what it looks like it is capable of."¹¹³ Indeed it has always been a subjective medium where no small degree of "smoke and mirrors" can come into play, hence opening the way for controversy. But the final word for the extraordinary events that occurred at the Sydney Opera House in 1980 must be left to Maria Shriver Schwarzenegger's maternal grandfather, Joseph P. Kennedy, who famously remarked in 1946 that "it's not what you are that counts, but what people think you are."¹¹⁴

Notes:

(All cited letters are in the author's collection unless otherwise noted.)

1. Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996), 57.
2. Richard Schickel, "A Delicate Beefcake Ballet," *Time* (24 January 1977): 16.
3. Although Arnold seems far from finished with his illustrious multiple careers, biographies of him abound. See Wendy Leigh, *Arnold: An Unauthorized Biography* (Chicago, Congdon & Weed, 1990); George Butler, *Arnold Schwarzenegger: A Portrait* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1990); Nigel Andrews, *True Myths, The Life and Times of Arnold Schwarzenegger* (Secaucus, New Jersey, Bloomsbury Publishing, 1996); Laurence Leamer, *Fantastic: The Life of Arnold Schwarzenegger* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 2005); Louise Krasniewicz and Michael Blitz, *Arnold Schwarzenegger: A Biography* (Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 2006); Joe Mathews, *The People's Machine: Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Rise of Blockbuster Democracy* (New York, Public Affairs Press, 2006); and Daniel Weintraub, *Party of One: Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Rise of the Independent Voter*, (Sausalito, California, Polipoint Press, 2007). See also the endearing portrait of Arnold's relationship with his former girl friend in Barbara Outland Baker, *Arnold and Me: In the Shadow of the Austrian Oak* (Bloomington, Indiana, AuthorHouse, 2006); Tom Minichiello's novel, *Bodybuilders, Drugs & Sex* (Fort Myers, Florida, Mid City Press, 1997), where Arnold serves as model for the protagonist, and Arnold's autobiography, *Arnold: The Education of a Bodybuilder* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1977).
4. John Vancouver, "Muscle Mail," *MuscleMag International*, 23 (March, 1981): 18.
5. "Olympia: Arnold Wins! But Was It On Reputation?" *MuscleMag International*, 22 (January, 1981): 50.
6. "Mr. Olympia: Give Us a Break!" *Muscle Training Illustrated*, No. 90 (February, 1981): 65.
7. Peter McGough, "The Mike Mentzer Story," *Flex* (September, 2001), Rick Wayne concurs that it was "unquestionably the most controversial in the history of the Olympia" in *Muscle Wars, The Behind-the-Scenes Story of Competitive Bodybuilding* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1985), 158.
8. The best contemporary description of the event is Jack Neary, "Olympia Report, Arnold's Victory Creates Controversy & Bitterness," *Muscle & Fitness*, 42 (February, 1981), 8-24, 157, 160-61, 164-65, and 167. Arnold, however, disapproved of Neary's report, calling him a "whore" to his face. Interview with Jack Neary, cited in Leigh, *Arnold*, 185.
9. Interview with Jim Lorimer, June 29, 2006, Columbus, Ohio.
10. Arnold's apprenticeship in acting also featured minor roles in *The Long Goodbye* (1973); *Scavenger Hunt* (1979); and *The Villain* (1979).
11. For evidence that the Weider organization, headed by Joe and Ben Weider, and the Mr. Olympia Contest surpassed the Mr. America Contest, sponsored by the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) in the United States and the Mr. Universe Contest, sponsored by the National Amateur Bodybuilders Association (NABBA) in England, during the 1970s see John D. Fair, *MuscleTown USA, Bob Hoffman and the Manly Culture of York Barbell, 1898-1985* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 1999); and John D. Fair, "Oscar Heidenstam, the Mr. Universe Contest, and the Amateur Ideal in British Bodybuilding," *Twentieth Century British History* 17(3) (Fall, 2006): 396-423.
12. At the first Ms. Olympia Contest in August at the Sheraton Hotel in Philadelphia, Len Bosland recalls seeing Arnold training in the basement prior to the competition. "He looked great and said he was beefing up for his forthcoming movie role as Conan." Telephone interview with Len Bosland, January 17, 2009. Likewise Bill Dobbins, in reporting the event, noted that when Arnold got up to address the audience, it was "immediately apparent how much bigger he had become, and that he must be back in serious training. But there was as yet no hint of his plans for a comeback." Bill Dobbins, "The Ms. Olympia 1980," *Muscle & Fitness*, 42 (February, 1981): 29.
13. Arnold Schwarzenegger, "My Olympia Comeback," *Muscle and Fitness*, 42 (February, 1981): 6 & 148.
14. According to Rick Wayne, Maria was not enamored with the idea of a comeback. But Arnold's mind was made up, so Maria gave in. She threw the full weight of her support behind his efforts to break his own Olympia record and accompanied him to Australia. Wayne, *Muscle Wars*, 163.
15. The other contestants included Samir Bannout, Roy Callender, Boyer Coe, Ed Corney, Chris Dickerson, Roy Duval, Tony Emmott, Mike Mentzer, Danny Padilla, Tom Platz, Dennis Tinerino, Casey Viator, Ken Waller, Roger Walker, and Frank Zane.
16. Peter McGough, "The Mike Mentzer Story," *Flex*, 19(7) (September, 2001): 153-166 & 214-216.
17. Neary, "Olympia Report," 164.
18. Schwarzenegger, "My Olympia Comeback," 148.
19. Telephone interview with Dan Howard, February 9, 2009.
20. Boyer Coe to the author, February 10, 2009.
21. Neary, "Olympia Report:" 13-15. "It should have been declared no contest" was the view of sports editor Red Smith. It was "impossible to recall a champion or former champion who came up so empty

at the end." *New York Times*, October 5, 1980.

22. In addition to early role models Reg Park and Elvis Presley, according to Wendy Leigh, Arnold also admired Muhammad Ali and read Wilfred Sheed's biography, *Muhammad Ali: A Portrait in Words and Photographs* (New York, 1975). Interview with Art Zeller, cited in Leigh, *Arnold*, p. 128.

23. Neary, "Olympia Report," 161 and 164. According to Boyer Coe's version of the confrontation, it was Bill Pearl who restrained Mentzer. Coe to the author, February 10, 2009.

24. In describing the 1981 event, Joe Weider notes: "Each contender received a score ranging to a maximum of twenty points in each of three rounds of prejudging. In round one, contestants were checked for general appearance, symmetry, posture, muscle tone, and development. They were examined individually at first, completely relaxed, from all four sides, then examined collectively in a lineup. In round two, contestants were required to strike six mandatory poses, individually and collectively, as in the previous round—side chest, lat spread from the front and the back, most muscular, abdominals, and biceps. Finally each contestant was given the opportunity to offer his own routine for just one minute." After scores for the three rounds were tallied, the men repeated their individual posing routines in an evening performance, and during a final posedown the judges "picked their choice for first place by awarding that man just one point." Final placements were based on a summary of all three rounds and the posedown. Joe Weider, *Mr. Olympia: The History of Bodybuilding's Greatest Contest* (New York, 1983), 128-29.

25. Neary, "Olympia Report:" 164. "I felt that Arnold Schwarzenegger didn't quite have it," is how Vince Basile assessed Arnold's physique for *Iron Man*. "Cleverly he covered his faults and displayed his best points—two huge arms! He topped everyone in the three-quarters back shots, the side chest and standing side-on. The applause he received each time he posed was deafening and was definitely the loudest and the longest. How much applause was for Arnold the 'King,' and how much for his present physique is a good question." Vince Basile, "More About the Olympia," *Iron Man*, 40 (March, 1981), 25.

26. Telephone interview with Bill Pearl, January 19, 2009.

27. Robert Nailon, "1980 Mr. Olympia Retrospect—28 Years Later," http://www.bodybuilding.com/fun/1980_Olympia_review.htm. Australian Wayne Gallasch, who filmed the event, concurs that Arnold showed his arms and the flashy parts of his physique over and over. Interview with Gallasch, March 6, 2009, Columbus, Ohio.

28. Achilles Kallos, "Arnold Wins Mr. Olympia," *Iron Man*, 40 (January, 1981): 28.

29. Neary, "Olympia Report:" 165.

30. Telephone interview with Jeff Thompson, March 3, 2009, Kensington Park, South Australia.

31. Coe to the author, February 10, 2009.

32. Kallos, "Arnold Wins," 30.

33. Interview with Arnold Schwarzenegger, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 147.

34. Interview with Thompson.

35. *Iron Man* Editor Peary Rader was disappointed by reports he had heard of the Olympia, which he called a "fiasco," and by Zane's reaction. "I can understand his concern, however, it is bad policy to act like a child." Rader to Gary Bartlett, October 17, 1980, Rader Papers, The H.J. Lutchter Stark Center for Physical Culture and Sports.

36. Neary, "Olympia Report," 165.

37. Coe to the author, February 10, 2009. Interview with Coe, cited in Andrews, *True Myths*, p. 96, and Nailon, "1980 Mr. Olympia Retrospect."

http://www.bodybuilding.com/fun/1980_olympia_review.htm.

38. McGough, "The Mike Mentzer Story, 164.

39. Telephone interview with Chris Dickerson, February 4, 2009.

40. According to Coe, shortly after the 1980 contest, "the entire group of pro bodybuilders at the time, both here in the States and Europe agreed that we would boycott the Olympia to show a stance of unity. Ben [Weider] told me that it would never work. He was right." Coe to the author, February 13, 2009.

41. Coe to the author, February 11, 2009.

42. *Ibid.* This was also partly due to the resignation of CBS Sports' head, Eddie Einhorn, who was a fan of the iron sports. Under Einhorn's leadership CBS had covered powerlifting, the World's Strongest Man contest, and the Strongest Man in Football contest as well as bodybuilding, but after Einhorn was replaced by Van Gordon Sauter, whose enthusiasms were for other sports, CBS dropped these events. Interview with Terry Todd, March 5, 2009, Columbus, Ohio.

43. Leamer, *Fantastic*, p. 34.

44. Interview with Albert Busek, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 34.

45. Interview with Arnold Schwarzenegger, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 39.

46. Coe to the author, February 9, 2009.

47. Interview with Gallasch.

48. Coe to the author, February 9, 2009.

49. Baker, *Arnold and Me*, 286 & 289.

50. *Ibid.*, 289 & 291.

51. Interview with Pearl.

52. Coe to the author, February 9, 2009.

53. Schwarzenegger, *Arnold*, 17-20 & 82.

54. Interview with Jon Jon Park, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 84.

55. Coe to the author, February 9, 2009.

56. Interview with Pearl.

57. Interview with Bosland, and Baker, *Arnold and Me*, 146.

58. Coe and Walczak's fellow judge, Dan Howard, even doubted his presence at the 1980 Olympia. Coe to the author, February 5, 2009.

59. Ben Weider, "Bodybuilding's Belgian Connection," *Muscle & Fitness*, 42 (February, 1981): 63.

60. Interview with Bosland.

61. Coe to the author, February 9, 2009.

62. Interview with Pearl.

63. Coe to the author, February 9, 2009.

64. Interview with Howard, and Leigh, *Arnold*, 185.

65. Arnold, however, insisted that "there is simply no reason ever to suspect the integrity of the IFBB judges. . . . A relationship with a judge in bodybuilding is worth zero points. Period." Schwarzenegger, "My Olympia Comeback:" 150 & 152.

66. Malcolm Brown, "The Day They Booed Schwarzenegger," *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 11, 2003.

67. Leamer, *Fantastic*, 62-63. The Federal Bureau of Prisons verifies that Paul Maxwell Graham, #14113-148 served a full term at FCI Terminal Island, California, and was released on January 29, 1972. Jahmaal Marshall to the author, April 9, 2009. See also *United States v. Paul Maxwell Graham*, Complaint for Violation of U.S.C. Title 18, January 29, 1969, and Interview with Arnold Schwarzenegger, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 388.

68. Coe to the author, February 8, 2009.

69. Leamer, *Fantastic*, 63.

70. Brown, "The Day they Booed," October 11, 2003. Graham also dismisses Arnold's competitors' views as sour grapes. "They couldn't take the fact that Arnold could come back and do about three months' training and be able to beat them." Interview with Paul Graham, cited in Andrews, *True Myths*, 97.
71. Coe to the author, February 8, 2009.
72. Interview with Pearl.
73. Interview with Dickerson.
74. Wayne, *Muscle Wars*, 172. As further evidence of Graham's culpability, Wayne points out that he paid for the airfare and hotel of Franco Columbu who assisted Arnold and whose presence was resented by the other competitors. *Ibid.*, 164.
75. Roz Basile to Peary and Mabel Rader, October 19, 1980, Rader Papers, The H.J. Lucher Stark Center.
76. Basile, "More About the Olympia," 24.
77. "Rules for Professional Bodybuilders and Contest Organizers," (Montreal, IFBB, 1980).
78. Wayne, *Muscle Wars*, 172.
79. Garry Bartlett, "Columbu Takes IFBB Mr. Olympia," *Iron Man*, 41 (January, 1981), 38. Denie [Denis Walter] took much the same line, characterizing Oscar State as "an immutable honest martinette" and Roger Schwab as "a clean untouchable immune from influence peddling." Denie, "IFBB Mr. Olympia 'Fear Strikes Out,'" *Muscle Training Illustrated*, No. 97 (February, 1982): 26.
80. Wayne, *Muscle Wars*, 177 & 188.
81. Interview with Bosland.
82. Robert Kennedy, "Olympia '81, Columbu in Columbus: Can It Be True?" *MuscleMag International*, No. 28 (March, 1981): 24-27.
83. Weider, *History of Bodybuilding's Greatest Contest*, 128.
84. Interview with Chris Dickerson, and Bill Dobbins, "What Really Happened at the Olympia?" *Muscle & Fitness*, 43 (May, 1982): 86.
85. "He didn't just have physical potential, he had mental skills," observes early mentor Wag Bennett. Interview with Wag Bennett, cited in Andrews, *True Myths*, 46.
86. Leigh, *Arnold*, 183, and James Delson, "Penthouse Interview: Arnold Schwarzenegger," *Penthouse* (December, 1981), cited in Leigh, *Arnold*, 298.
87. Stephen Karten interview with Dan Howard, cited in Leigh, *Arnold*, 298.
88. Interview with Arnold Schwarzenegger, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 96.
89. Interview with Pearl.
90. Interview with Bosland.
91. Interview with Pearl.
92. Interview with Balik.
93. Bob Gardner, "The Magnificence of Man," *Muscle & Fitness*, 41 (December, 1980): 190-92.
94. Edward L. Thorndike, "A Constant Error in Psychological Ratings," *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 4(1920): 25.
95. F. Saal, R. G. Downey, and M. A. Lahey, "Rating the Ratings: Assessing the Psychometric Quality of Rating Data," *Psychological Bulletin*, 88(1980): 413-28; William H. Cooper, "Ubiquitous Halo," *Psychological Bulletin* 90(1981): 218-44; Sheldon J. Lachman and Alan R. Bass, "A Direct Study of Halo Effect," *The Journal of Psychology*, 119 (2001): 535-40; Steve W. J. Kozlowski, Michael P. Kirsch, and Georgia T. Chao, "Job Knowledge, Ratee Familiarity, Conceptual Similarity and Halo Error: An Exploration," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71 (1986): 45-49; and Barry R. Nathan and Nancy Tippins, "The Consequences of Halo 'Error' in Performance Ratings: A Field Study of the Moderating Effect of Halo on Test Validation Results," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75 (1990): 290-96.
96. Kevin R. Murphy, William K. Balzer, Maura C. Lockhart, and Elaine J. Eisenman, "Effects of Previous Performance on Evaluations of Present Performance," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 70(1985): 72-84; James W. Smither, Richard R. Reilly, and Richard Buda, "Effect of Prior Performance Information on Ratings of Present Performance: Contrast Versus Assimilation Revisited," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 73(1988): 487-96; Robert B. Zajonc, "Attitudinal Effects of Mere Exposure," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 9(June, 1968):1-27; Peter A. Frensch, "Composition During Serial Learning: A Serial Position Effect," *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 20 (1994): 423-42; R. P. Abelson, "Psychological Status of the Script Concept," *American Psychologist*, 35, (1981), 715-29, and S. J. Read, "Constructing Causal Scenarios: A Knowledge Structure Approach to Causal Reasoning," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52 (1987), 288-302.
97. Interview with Balik.
98. Interview with Gallasch. Another version of the argument was expressed by George Butler, who believed that Arnold's status was so great that "as long as he was in respectable shape he would win." Butler, *Arnold Schwarzenegger*, 145.
99. *Ibid.*
100. Interview with Balik.
101. Interview with Frank Zane, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 118.
102. Interview with Reg Park, cited in Andrews, *True Myths*, 97.
103. Garry Bartlett, "Backstage at the '81 Olympia," *MuscleMag International*, no. 30 (July, 1982), 19.
104. Baker, *Arnold and Me*, 105 and 155.
105. Schwarzenegger, *Arnold*, 113.
106. Leigh, *Arnold*, 143.
107. Nik Cohn, "Pumping Chic: The Launching of a New Folk Hero," *New York*, January 24, 1977, cited in Leigh, *Arnold*, 144-45.
108. Interview with Balik.
109. Baker, *Arnold and Me*, 105
110. Krasniewicz and Blitz, *Arnold Schwarzenegger*, xii & 49.
111. Nailon, "1980 Mr. Olympia Retrospect."
112. Interview with Balik. "Expectations were important," notes Wayne Gallasch. "They were high for Mentzer and for the other leading contenders, but the contest ruined Mentzer. He didn't handle set-backs well." Interview with Gallasch.
113. *Independent*, July 29, 1993, cited in Andrews, *True Myths*, 234.
114. The context for Kennedy's remark was a family meeting that was considering whether Jack Kennedy should run for the eleventh district congressional seat in Massachusetts. He was responding to a question from Maria's mother, Eunice, about her brother's ability, in light of his poor health, to be a congressman. Interview with Peter Hogue, June 2, 1981, cited in Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *The Kennedys: An American Drama* (New York, Summit Books, 1984), 150. Schwarzenegger echoed his version of this maxim. "For me and my career the image has been everything. More important than reality. The most powerful thing is what people perceive and believe about me." *The Guardian*, December 10, 1999, cited in Leamer, *Fantastic*, 256.

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