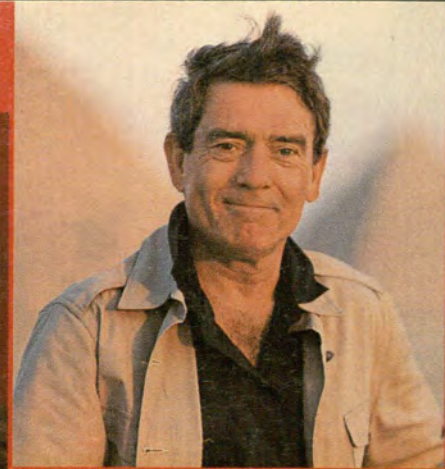


Dan Rather battles the heat (and NBC!) in the Middle East

AUGUST 27, 1990 ■ \$1.95

# People

weekly



**EXCLUSIVE**



Lisa Steinberg's mother:

**"THEY  
KILLED MY  
LITTLE  
GIRL"**

Here is the untold story of Michele Launder's horrifying discovery that her child, illegally adopted by Joel Steinberg and Hedda Nussbaum, was the victim in the nation's most shocking child abuse case. Michele's agony had just begun...



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### UP FRONT 36-48

CBS anchorman **Dan Rather** was vacationing in France when news of Saddam Hussein's Middle East war broke. Forsaking *la vie en rose*, he hopped the first charter and began covering the story round the clock

□ Abandoning homes and possessions, some of the 2,500 **Americans in Kuwait** escaped across the border, bringing back their own war stories

□ The knights of the casting table have spoken: Hard on the epic heels of Errol Flynn, **Kevin Costner** becomes the newest Robin Hood to lead his merry men across the big screen

□ Master of the bizarre **David Lynch** hosts a weirded-out premiere for his new movie, *Wild at Heart*

### TUBE 51

When **David Letterman** reads his Top 10, America listens, then laughs

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Sentenced to wear a T-shirt that advertises his crime, **Russell Hackler** is in trouble again

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Pulitzer prizewinning novelist **William Styron** weaves a nonfiction tale from the dark side: his own journey back from a crippling bout with depression that almost caused him to take his life

### ADVENTURE 87

In Arkansas's **Crater of Diamonds State Park**, it's finders-keepers for gem hunters who come across the fruits of fusion

### 44 KEVIN COSTNER: ROBIN (HOLLY)HOOD

In merry Hollywood in the season of summer, there toiled several bands of competing movie moguls whose merry thoughts turned to making megabucks by producing a new movie (at least the 15th) about a famous outlaw named Robin Hood. No Batman he, the 12th-century man among men was nonetheless a super . . .



CHRISTOPHER LITTLE/OUTLINE PRESS

### 91 JOIE LEE: MO' BETTER SISTER

In the Fort Greene section of Brooklyn, where she grew up, the other kids called her Joy the Boy, she says, "because I was such a bully." As a teen she Frenchified her name to Joie (pronounced Zhwah), but "even now most people call me Joy or Joe Lee . . .

### ON THE COVER 66

In a riveting excerpt from *I Wish You Didn't Know My Name*, **Lisa Steinberg's** birth mother, **Michele Launders**, speaks for the first time about the double agony of giving up her baby at birth and bearing the burden of guilt over little Lisa's cruel death

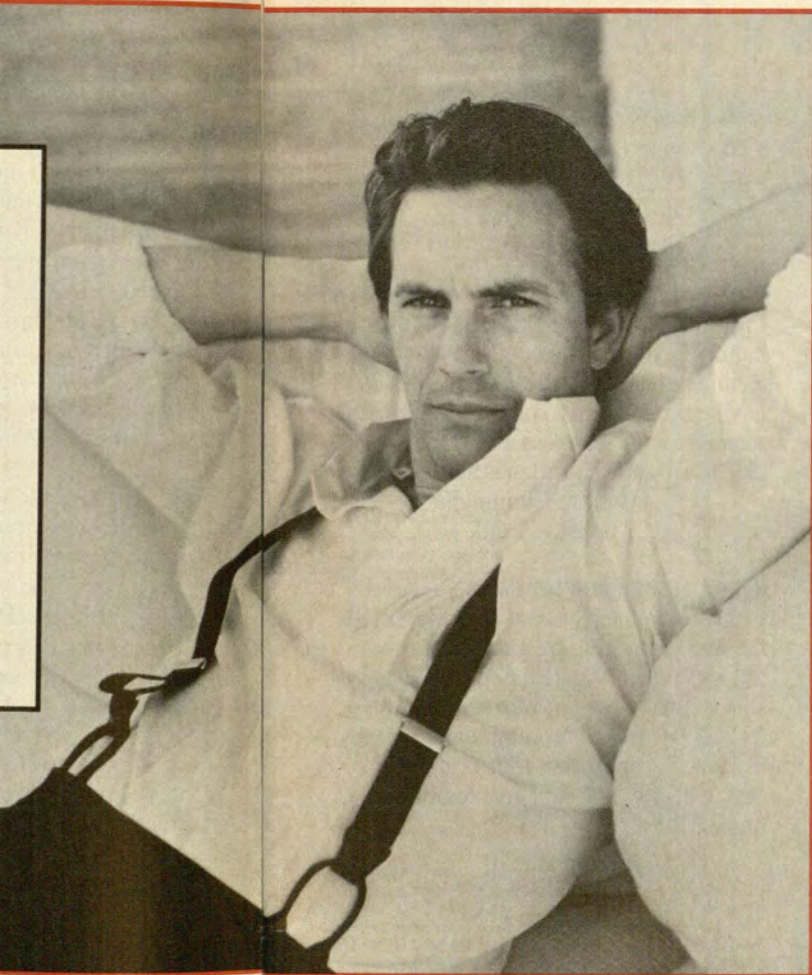
Cover photograph by New York *Newsday*

Inset left:  
Christopher Little/Outline Press

Inset top right: Harry Benson

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HELMUT NEWTON/SYGMA



BEN WEAVER

## 100 DYNAMITE LADY: KERB-O-O-O-M!

With supertime still in progress in the tranquil south Florida community of Port Charlotte, only a few spectators have settled in at the county baseball stadium to see the Port Charlotte Rangers play the Clearwater Phillies. No matter what . . .



CHRISTOPHER LITTLE/OUTLINE PRESS



HARRY BENSON

## SCREEN 91

*Mo' Better Blues* star **Joie Lee** is grateful for her brother's help, but now she's ready to move beyond **Spike** in expanding her movie career

## ON LOCATION 98

Those lips! Those eyes! Those tantrums! **Suzanne Pleshette** plays *The Queen of Mean*, disgraced hotel empress **Leona Helmsley**, in a TV movie

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# PICKS & PANS

## PAGES

### ■ AS THOUSANDS CHEER: THE LIFE OF IRVING BERLIN by Laurence Bergreen

While there were few predictable things about the late composer Irving Berlin, we can be fairly certain how he would have felt about this book: He would have hated it. Not because it is unflattering—though its recounting of his bursts of temper, competitiveness and callousness would hardly have pleased him—but because it exists. A near total recluse the last 20 years of his 101-year life, Berlin refused to appear at celebrations of his life and denied use of his astonishing array of hit songs, which included “Alexander’s Ragtime Band,” “White Christmas” and “Easter Parade,” to just about everyone, even Steven Spielberg, who wanted the rights to “Always.” That a 600-page book on him could be written without his cooperation would no doubt have infuriated the man Bergreen paints as the greatest control freak of his age.

Yet if Bergreen, author of the acclaimed 1984 biography *James Agee: A Life*, had trouble researching this book, you couldn’t tell from its wealth of detail and anecdote. As a child, Berlin emigrated from Russia to New York City’s Lower East Side, later changing his name from the Jewish Israel Baline to the American Irving Berlin and marrying non-Jewish socialite/journalist Ellin Mackay against her father’s wishes.

In covering this familiar ground, Bergreen has turned up some new tales: In London during World War II, for example, Berlin was invited to lunch with Winston Churchill, and found his encounter with the Prime Minister—who kept grilling him about politics—uncomfortable. It turned out Churchill had been expecting his guest to be political commentator *Isaiah Berlin*.

A strength of the book is its attention to people involved with Berlin. Bergreen, by discussing Florenz Ziegfeld, George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers and Ethel Merman (among others), has written a book that is as much 20th-century entertainment history as biography. And by chronicling Berlin’s failures—such as his 1962 musical *Mr. President*—as well as the successes, he gives us a complete portrait of a career.

As for Berlin the man, Bergreen writes, the composer could be generous—he donated the royalties of “God Bless America” to the Boy and Girl Scouts; he also could be cheap, refusing even to buy his wife a car. (“Tell her to buy it herself,” he snapped. “She has her own goddamned money.”)

Famously fastidious—he dressed nattily and was a prude about friends’ extramarital affairs (he apparently had none)—Berlin



**As Thousands Cheer**  
*Composer Irving Berlin, clockwise from above: at far right at a benefit in 1916 with, among others, Oscar Hammerstein I (seated), John Philip Sousa (sixth from right) and Jerome Kern (far left); at his piano in 1910; singing part of his Mr. President in 1962; with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers during the making of 1935's Top Hat; with second wife Ellin Mackay, fleeing reporters in 1926*



used language so foul as to offend even his admirers. Achingly insecure, he feared performing in public and forbade his barber to hum non-Berlin tunes. Yet he called “White Christmas” not only his best song but “the best song anybody ever wrote.”

No, Berlin wouldn’t have liked this book. But then, he might have been relieved that Bergreen is not of the overanalyzing school of biographers. (A good thing, too: When the author tries to explain Berlin’s personality, his prose gets forced.) Mostly Bergreen lays out the facts of a long life. Perhaps Berlin—who always said he wanted to write simple songs in plain language for everyday people—would have understood after all. (Viking, \$24.95)—*Sara Nelson*

### ■ COYOTE WAITS by Tony Hillerman

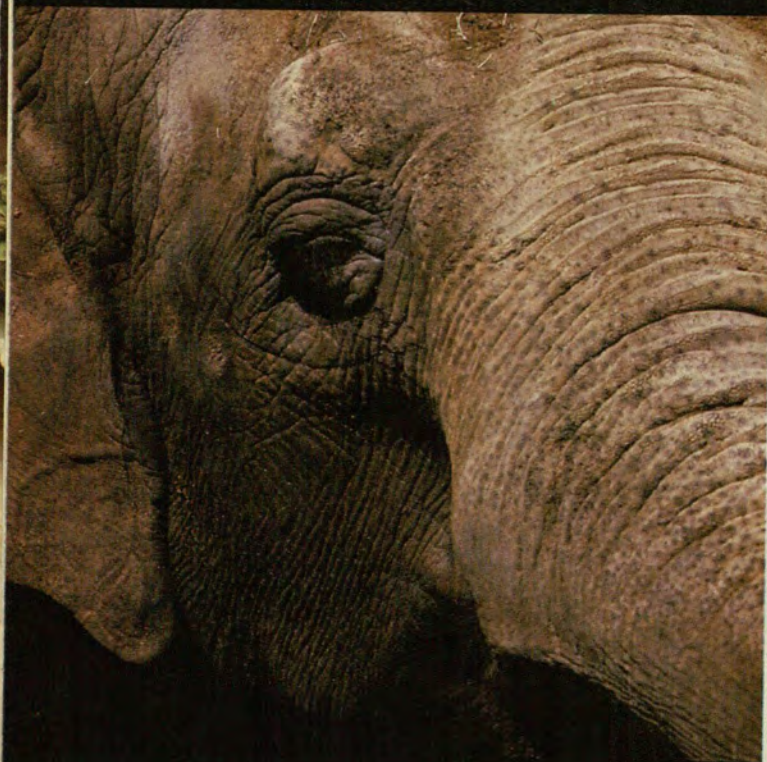
The gun that kills Tribal Policeman Delbert Nez at the start of Tony Hillerman’s latest (and characteristically satisfying) novel presents no mystery. Officer Jim

Chee finds it in the belt of an ancient Navaho shaman who is walking away in a drunken daze from the patrol car where Nez lies dead. Chee, wracked with guilt because his inattention contributed to Nez’s death, is convinced that he need look no further for his killer.

Then Lt. Joe Leaphorn, Hillerman’s other Navaho cop hero, backs into the case, strictly unofficially, as a favor to a distant clan connection. Working independently, Leaphorn and Chee start to find complications in what had seemed a watertight case. There’s a mysterious Vietnamese teacher with a reputation for having done hard things during the war. There’s witchcraft. The FBI is involved. *Biligaana* (Caucasian) academics seem too interested in the case, and the ghost of Butch Cassidy—yes, Butch Cassidy—hovers over the action. The title’s coyote is Coyote of Navaho myth, who represents chaos, and who lurks just at the fringes of all of man’s doings.

Leaphorn and Chee have appeared in Hillerman’s last three novels. Together, they’re a study in contrasting styles. Chee is

Ever have skin  
this dry?



Ever find dry skin  
relief that lasts?



Ever try  
**EVERSOFT?**

## PICKS & PANS

PAGES



**Tony Hillerman**  
*Putting his Navaho  
detectives Chee and  
Leaphorn back to  
work—to entertain-  
ing effect*

young and still idealistic, and doesn't always obey the rules. He also believes in the old ways of his people, even hoping to become a shaman himself. Leaphorn is battle-scarred and worldly-wise and quietly skeptical about everything.

Hillerman's elevation into the best-seller ranks is a great justice of American popular writing. While his novels are mysteries, they are also exquisite explorations of human nature—with a great backdrop. Set among Native Americans, they are quintessentially American. (Harper & Row, \$19.95)—*Michael Neill*

### ■ THE BURNING SEASON

by Andrew Revkin

### ■ THE WORLD IS BURNING

by Alex Shoumatoff

The evening of Dec. 22, 1988, Francisco "Chico" Mendes was gunned down outside the back of his house in Xapuri, Brazil, a rubber-trading town in the steamy heart of the Amazon basin. The murder would surely have gone unnoticed but for the fact that Mendes, who helped organize Brazil's first forest-workers' union, had become a hero of the U.S. environmental community, which wined and dined him from Washington, D.C., to Miami.

Since 1977 Mendes's Xapuri Rural Workers' Union had regularly put themselves between the forest and the chain saws of wealthy cattle ranchers whose slash-and-burn policies were destroying up to 100 acres of the Amazon per minute. Mendes and his followers had already managed to drive two of Brazil's biggest ranchers out of the state of Acre.

After Mendes's death, the man most people suspected of being behind his murder was a rancher named Darly Alves da Silva, who lived on 10,000 acres in Xapuri with his wife, three mistresses, 30 children and a dozen or so hired *pistoleiros*. "We all knew it would happen," a friend said of Mendes's death. "He was like a steer that had strayed from the herd."

No one expected an international furor over Mendes's death. But the rain forest had become the ecological *cause du jour*; 1988 was the warmest year on record worldwide, and the words "global warming" were on everyone's parched lips. Environmentalists, journalists and movie moguls swarmed over Xapuri.