

n The Media



The Personal
DNA Project
Volunteers Wanted

Coffee
Science
The Perfect Brew

Hackers
Rule!
WarGames at 25

WIRED

Get
Internet
Famous!
(Even If
You're
Nobody)

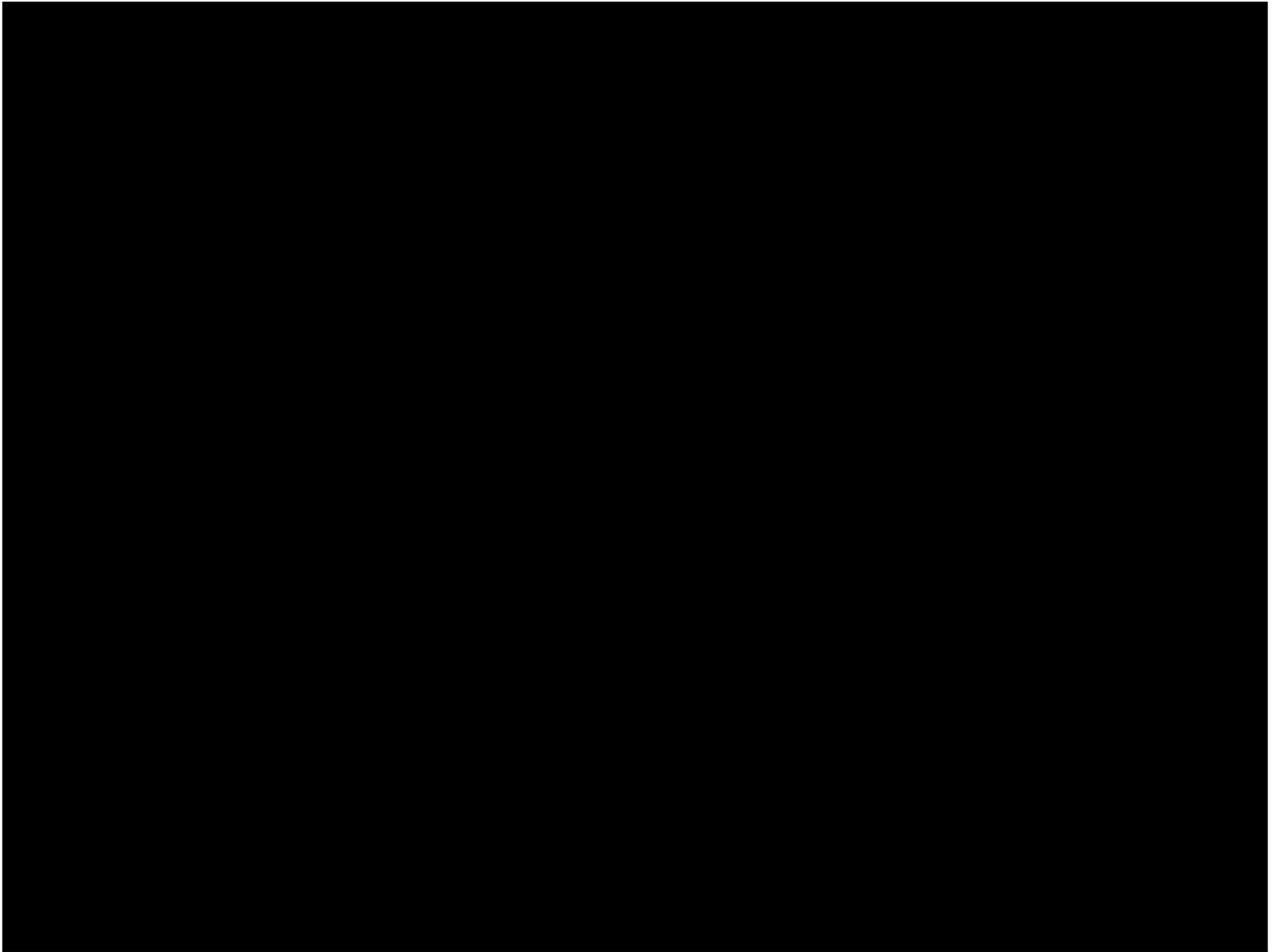
Julia
Allison
and the
Secrets
of Self-
Promotion
by Jason Tanz



Plus How to:

- Pretend to work
- Crash a party
- Rock at videogames
- Snag VC dough
- Meet your heroes
- Ace your exams
- Own Vegas
- Look good on TV
- Spruce up a blog
- Grovel like a pro

SHO'S THAT GIRL? | PLUS: ROCK





Meet Julia Allison. She can't act. She can't sing. She's not rich. But thanks to a genius for self-promotion—plus Flickr, Twitter, and her blogs—she's become an Internet celebrity. How she did it—and how you can, too.

- HOW TO
- **Promote YOURSELF** P108
 - **Boost YOUR OEEK CRED** P116
 - **Be the HERO** P118
 - **Fake It TILL YOU MAKE IT** P122

Almost Famous

by Jason Tanz

PHOTOGRAPH BY PLATON

Am five minutes late to catch Julia Allison's

latest publicity stunt—literally five minutes—but I can see from two blocks away that she has already drawn a crowd. There she is, at the epicenter of Times Square. About a dozen tourists surround her, and more join every minute. All around them, theater marquees and build-

ing-sized billboards jostle for attention, but they are no match for Allison. She has asked a few friends to join her this afternoon—former hedge-fund analyst Meghan Asha, handbag designer Mary Rambin, and Randi Zuckerberg, the sister of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. They are all dressed in 1980s Jazzercise outfits; Allison wears purple spandex, leg warmers, and glittery eye shadow. Strains of Martha and the Vandellas' "Dancing in the Street" waft thinly from Rambin's iPod speakers. The four women bounce around, giggle, and shout encouragement at one another. Their audience is captivated. Allison has enlisted a couple of cameramen to document the event. Her new Web site, xojulia.com—

like her previous sites, juliaallison.com, itsamejulia.com, and juliajulia.com—is dedicated to sharing almost every waking moment of Allison's life. Visitors to xojulia.com can follow her schedule of bacchanalite parties and fancy dinners, see photos of her latest outfits, and read her dating advice. They can watch videos of Allison playing with her dog or horsing around with friends. If readers want an extra shot of Allisonana, her Twitter stream provides periodic updates like a postmodern news ticker.

After about 15 minutes, a police officer wanders by to bust up the party. Allison doesn't have the required performer's license, and her admirers are clogging up Times Square. No problem! The mob follows her a couple of blocks uptown, looking for another vacant patch of asphalt where she can make a scene. As we cross 44th Street, a passerby squints at us. "You guys are famous?" she asks. "What do you do?"

Good question. Allison may not be famous by the traditional definition; certainly nobody here seems to recognize her. But to a devoted niche of online fans—and an even more devoted niche of detractors—she

is a bona fide celebrity. She says that more than 10,000 people read her blog daily, and gossip sites like Gawker, Radar Online, and Valleywag detail her every exploit. An anonymous blogger has set up a site, RebloggingJulia.com, dedicated to parsing Allison's posts. The *New York Times* has profiled her, and *New York* magazine has called Allison—a dating columnist for *Time Out New York* and former editor-at-large for *Star*—"the most famous young journalist in the city."

But with all due respect, Allison's renown has little to do with her day job. Indeed, it's hard to describe exactly what she's famous for. She's not an actress or a singer or a misbehaving heiress to a hotel fortune. She hasn't recorded any meme-ready videos like Tay "Chocolate Rain" Zonday or Tron Guy or the "Leave Britney Alone!" dude. She doesn't flaunt tech knowledge like bloggers Robert Scoble or Dave Winer. She is undeniably pretty—flowing black-coffee hair,

sparkling eyes, gamine physique, broad smile—but beauty alone can't account for her celebrity.

Allison is the latest, and perhaps purest, iteration of the Warholian ideal: someone who is famous for being famous. Like graffiti writers who turned their signatures into wild-style gallery pieces, she has made the process of self-promotion into its own freaky art form. Traditionally, it takes an army of publicists, a well-connected family, or a big-budget ad campaign to make this kind of splash. But Allison has done it on her own and on the cheap, armed only with an insatiable need for attention and a healthy helping of Web savvy.

"She used this medium and became unstoppable," says Chaire Sicha, former managing editor of Gawker. "She just made it happen in a way that seemed seamless and kind of magical."

It's easy to dismiss Allison as little more than a rank narcissist—and many of her

HOW TO PROMOTE YOURSELF

vocal online critics are happy do just that. But come on, admit it: You've spent a good half hour trying to pick out the most flattering photo to upload to your MySpace page. You struggle to come up with the not-just-to describe your Facebook status. You keep a bank of self-portraits on Flickr or an online scrapbook on Tumblr or a running log of your daily musings on Blogger. You strategically court the gatekeepers at StumbleUpon or Digg. You compare the size of your Twitter-subscriber rolls to those of your friends. You set up Google Alerts to tell you whenever a blogger mentions your name. See? Self-promotion is no longer solely the domain of egotists and professional aspirants. Anyone can be a personal branding machine.

"People have been so paranoid about having any presence online for such a long time," says David Karp, founder of the Tumblr blogging service and a friend of Allison's. "A lot of them have gone through that transition of 'Well, shit, it's out there. I'm searchable on Flickr or Google.' The cat is out of the bag, and the only way to take back that control is to get out there and have a presence, have an identity that you feel represents you."

Like it or not, we are all public figures now—famous, as the new cliché goes, for 15 people. "By actively keeping a blog and using Twitter and maintaining my social network profiles, I am shaping my image," says Ian Schaefer, CEO of Deep Focus, an Internet marketing firm in New York and LA. "Maybe not for the general public, who couldn't care less, but for the 500 or so people who care about me and are actively or passively paying attention."

And nobody gets people to pay attention quite like Julia Allison. In the week after her midtown dance party, reactions will pop up on blogs across the Internet. One typically tart comment refers to the tableaux as "suburban girls gone wild." Valleywag, Gawker's

Silicon Valley sister site, publishes an entire gallery of photos.

Chalk up another win for the Julia Allison juggernaut. "This technology gives us direct power over our own brand," Allison says. "In the past, I would have had to go through a reporter or a PR rep. Now we are all our own publicists. And we all have to learn the tricks."

Step 1 Get Noticed

WHEN SHE WAS a junior at Georgetown University in the fall of 2002, Allison decided she had a thing for medical students. They were smart and driven and a little older than she was, all big turn-ons. So she got a job at the medical school library, where she had the opportunity to meet the entire class—and date several of its members. Before long, she was getting invited to med student parties. She was given a nickname—the Meditator—which she chose to interpret as affectionate. At the end of the school year, during graduation ceremonies, her photo popped up in a slide show retrospective. It was all very flattering.

In late 2004, Allison moved to New York to break into the Manhattan media world and—as she wrote on a list of goals she brought with her at the time—"become a cult figure." It wouldn't take long, and she would accomplish it using the same strategy she employed to become the Meditator: Discover a niche, position herself at its choke point, and stay there until people start to notice.

For Allison, that choke point was Gawker, Nick Denton's media-gossip site that pulls in millions of readers every month, many of them fellow journalists. It was the equivalent of the medical school library—the place where Allison would be seen by everyone in her target audience. She began writing a dating column for *AM New York*, a free consumer newspaper, and peppered Gawker's tip line with links to her articles. Nothing. Then she started commenting on Gawker's stories; the site's editors banned her for "gratuitous self-promotion that makes even the gratuitous self-promoters at Gawker blush." It wasn't until she showed up at Nick Denton's 2006 Halloween party dressed as a "condom



HOW TO BECOME STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT

Last year, Sam Nelson beat out the most popular kid in class to become student body president of Shorewood High School near Seattle. We asked him to share his campaign tactics.

Move fast.

When the guy I was running against put his campaign video online, I knew I had only 24 hours to respond. Any longer and it would look like I was copying him. My brother, his friend, and I copied ourselves dancing to "This Is Why I'm Hot" by Akon and posted the clip that evening.

Become a media darling.

If voters see that other people have watched your video, you look more popular. I took out a catchy URL, www.robobomb.com, that linked to my YouTube video, and out it went over campus. That way people didn't have to search for the clip; they'd remember the name and go straight to it. Soon I had thousands of hits.

Rally your base.

I was the underdog, so on election day I changed the theme song on my MySpace page to Frank Sinatra's "High Hopes," which is about overcoming long odds.

Reap the spoils.

I was 80-80. A month later, I got a blow-bombshell girlfriend. I couldn't walk down the hall without someone shouting, "Sam! Dude! Your girlfriend is so hot!"

Julia, Julia, Julia! Allison has raised her profile by posting photos online and with online pals, including (from left) Amanda McPherson, Nancy Whangan, David Winer, a film editor Chris Anderson, and Richard Branson.



direct power over our own brand,” Allison says. “In the past, I would have had to go through a reporter or a PR rep. Now we are all our own publicists. And we all have to learn the tricks.”

Step 1 Get Noticed

WHEN SHE WAS a junior at Georgetown University in the fall of 2002, Allison decided she had a thing for medical students. They were smart and driven and a little older than she was, all big turn-ons. So she got a job at the medical school library, where she had the opportunity to meet the entire class—and date several of its members. Before long,

H
B
B

Las
out
in c
bod
we

control is
ce, have an
you.”

res now—
15 people.

g Twitter
profiles, I

hafer, CEO
ng firm in

ne general
ut for the

e and are
ion.”

attention
after her

ll pop up

ate. At the end of the school year, during
graduation ceremonies, her photo popped
up in a slide show retrospective. It was all
very flattering.

In late 2004, Allison moved to New York to
break into the Manhattan media world and—
as she wrote on a list of goals she brought
with her at the time—“become a cult figure.”

It wouldn't take long, and she would accom-
plish it using the same strategy she employed
to become the Medstitute: Discover a niche,
position herself at its choke point, and stay
there until people start to notice.

For Allison, that choke point was Gawker,
Nick Denton's media-gossip site that pulls
in millions of readers every month, many of

Mo

Whe

aga

vide

24 h

ger

copy

frien

danc

Hot'

clip t

Bec

If voi

ple h

you l

out a

bebc

my Y

up al

isary," complete with a low-cut bustier festooned with Trojans, that Denton decided to act. The next morning, he met with managing editor Chris Mohney and demanded that he write an item about Allison.

Meatspace party-crashing may sound like a low tech way to meet the online cognoscenti, but Timothy Ferriss, whose skill at reaching bloggers helped turn his book, *The 4-Hour Workweek*, into a best seller, says it can be effective. "It's a matter of ensuring you have the channel with the least competition," he says. "Email is by far the most crowded channel, followed by phone. The least common is in-person."

Mohney's piece, "Field Guide: Julia Allison," was a vicious character assassination. In 800 words—a monster tome by Gawker standards—it charged Allison with exploiting a long ago dalliance with then-congressman Harold Ford for its publicity value, published her given surname (Baughner, which she dropped when she arrived in New York), accused her of plagiarizing a village in one of her columns for the Georgetown paper, and said that "her habit of purring and flirting with taken or married men frequently brings the claws out from those menfolk's significant others." The piece garnered more than 17,000 pageviews and scads of vitriolic remarks from Gawker's notoriously harsh commenters. "I sure hope this is the LAST Gawker post we see about this useless ho-bag," one wrote. Allison says she cried for three days after reading the story. She begged Denton to take down the article (a fruitless effort that she would continue for more than a year). She considered sending a point-by-point rebuttal. Instead, she posted a photo on her blog of herself in her condom dress, displaying her shapely ramp. "Dearest Gawker," she wrote. "Kiss my ass."

And so a complicated symbiosis was born. Allison befriended Gawker's writers, dropping by the office in Chelsea or sending instant messages with passive-aggressive story suggestions—an upcoming date she was looking forward to, or the fact that Fall Out Boy bassist Pete Wentz used to babysit her, or some faux humiliation. "She'll send these notes and say, 'Oh my God, I can't believe I posted this, it's so personal, please don't link to this,'" says Emily Gould, who wrote for Gawker at the time. "And I'd say, 'Are you sure? Because now I kind of want to.'" The writers, facing an unrelenting 12-posts-a-day workload, couldn't resist the easy produc-

ALLISON'S TRICK IS TO THINK OF HERSELF AS THE SUBJECT OF A MAGAZINE PROFILE, WITH EVERY BLOG POST OR TWITTER UPDATE ADDING DIMENSION TO HER AS A CHARACTER.

tivity of a quick Allison item, although they usually took great pains to layer each story with a healthy coating of snark. Gawker's readers ran up the pageviews, even as they filed the comments section with requests to please, please stop covering Julia Allison. And Allison grew an ever-thicker skin, clinging to the frenzy and eschewing the schaden. After a few laps around this feedback loop, Allison could cross "become a cult figure" off her to-do list.

Step 2 Keep Them Hooked

A WEEK BEFORE flying out to see Allison, I sign up to get her Twitter feed sent to my cell phone. I regret it almost instantly, as my inbox fills with mini-updates. **Rizz:** "At sushi." **Rizz:** "In the car on the way to the Hampton." **Rizz:** "In the Hampton with the girls." I can see my wireless bill shooting up like a taxi meter on the Autobahn.

To be honest, Allison isn't exactly a power

Twitter. She has 1,300 followers and sends 10 or so updates a day—a paltry sum compared to entrepreneur Jason Calacanis (28,000 followers) or Robert Scoble (27,000 followers) or blogger Scott Brice (12,000 followers), all of whom average at least 20 daily updates. "For some people, it has replaced blogging,"

Beale says. "More people are going to see a link I post to Twitter than on my blog."

In the past, celebrities meted out photos and interviews to favored sources, carefully cultivating their public images by controlling the flow of information. Today, lifebloggers like Allison and Justice "Justice" Ezarik defuse their fans with data. "I post 10 to 15 mobile photos to 10 different sites a day," Ezarik says. "I try to post one video a day. I usually collect all my posts on MySpace and Facebook. I have a live show on Sunday and a Nokia phone that lets me stream live video throughout the day. It's kind of never-ending."

Allison's greatest accomplishment isn't the volume of content she creates; it's that



5 WAYS TO BE LIKE JULIA

Want to be famous like Julia Allison? Here are the tactics she deployed to gain online notoriety. Use at your own risk.

It's not who you know, it's who you're next to. When you go to a party, be sure to get photographed with well-known guests—even if they have no idea who you are. By posting these pics on your blog, you can make yourself look like an established personality.

Dress against type. Heading to a party filled with tweed-clad geeks? Consider a flashy designer dress. Have a reputation for glamour? Stick with a simple T-shirt. Counter-intuitive wardrobe choices keep your fans guessing.

Embrace erigma. One day, Allison announced that previous matters were causing her life and she'd never sing again. The next day she was back, in the same dress (or whatever). Newsies and self-servants? No one knows—that's why they keep watching.

Let your minions fight your battles. Sure, Allison has her critics—but all the discussion helps keep her in the spotlight. "Create fan websites and attackers," says Timothy Ferriss, author of *The 4-Hour Workweek*. "Don't spend a lot

of time defending yourself. If someone attacks you, let it all there. If you respond, you don't give other people a chance to get engaged and defend you."

Be a hot woman with an exhibitionist streak. Write and say.

she gets anyone to care about it. Her trick, she says, is to think of herself as the subject of a magazine profile, with every post or update adding dimensions to her as a character. "I treat it like a fire," she says. "You have to add logs, or it'll be like one of those YouTube videos that flame out."

One way to add logs: blog about your active love life. Allison cemented her status as a Gawker target when she started dating *Men's Health* editor Dave Zircornio in January 2007. Six months later, Allison began seeing Jakob Lodwick, a founder of CollegeHumor.com and Vimeo and another regular subject of Gawker gossip. They documented the courtship on their blogs, posting photos of themselves cuddling, videos of each other frolicking on the beach, and emails in which they debated the finer points of dating. One painful video, in which Lodwick accuses Allison of being too "demanding" and she fights back tears, was featured on Gawker under the headline "Hey, Quit Paying Attention to Julia Allison and Jakob Lodwick!" In November, they started jakobandjulia.com to chronicle the "inner-workings of a real relationship, with all its flaws." Flaws, indeed; the couple broke up three weeks later—via blog post.

Soap opera aside, readers have been drawn in by the question of whether Allison is in control of her fame or victimized by it. Critics may pan her as a narcissist, but Allison regularly shows a savvy self-mockery. After Radar named her the third-most hated person on the Internet—she placed just above the marine seen on YouTube tooting a puppy off a cliff—her knowing response was even the most hardened Gawker commenter. "I want to thank my agent, who has been with

is the LAST Gawker post we see about this useless ho-bag," one wrote. Allison says she cried for three days after reading the story. She begged Denton to take down the article (a fruitless effort that she would continue for more than a year). She considered sending a point-by-point rebuttal. Instead, she posted a photo on her blog of herself in her condom dress, displaying her shapely rump. "Dearest Gawker," she wrote. "Kiss my ass."

And so a complicated symbiosis was born. Allison befriended Gawker's writers, dropping by the office in Chelsea or sending instant messages with passive-aggressive story suggestions—an upcoming date she was looking forward to, or the fact that Fall Out Boy bassist Pete Wentz used to babysit her, or some faux humiliation. "She'd send these notes and say, 'Oh my God, I can't believe I posted this, it's so personal, please don't link to this,'" says Emily Gould, who wrote for Gawker at the time. "And I'd say, 'Are you sure? Because now I kind of want to.'" The writers, facing an unrelenting 12-posts-a-day workload, couldn't resist the easy produc-

tion. They took great pains to layer each story with a healthy coating of snark. Gawker's readers ran up the pageviews, even as they filled the comments section with requests to please, please stop covering Julia Allison. And Allison grew an ever-thicker skin, clinging to the *freude* and eschewing the *schaden*. After a few laps around this feedback loop, Allison could cross "become a cult figure" off her to-do list.

Step 2 Keep Them Hooked

A WEEK BEFORE flying out to see Allison, I sign up to get her Twitter feed sent to my cell phone. I regret it almost instantly, as my inbox fills with mini-updates. *Bzzzt*. "At sushi." *Bzzzt*. "In the car on the way to the Hamptons." *Bzzzt*. "In the Hamptons with the girls." I can see my wireless bill shooting up like a taxi meter on the Autobahn.

To be honest, Allison isn't exactly a power

Twitterer. She has 1,000 followers and sends 10 or so tweets a day—a paltry sum compared to entrepreneur Jason Calacanis (28,000 followers) or blogger Scott Beale (10,000 followers), all of whom send at least 20 daily updates. But for Allison, it has replaced Beale says. "More people are clicking on a link I post to Twitter."

In the past, celebrities used to give interviews to favor their public image and cultivate their public persona. But now, the flow of information is so fast that celebrities like Allison and Justin Bieber use their fans with data. Allison posts photos to 10 different social media sites. "I try to post one video a day. I try to post all my posts on MySpace. I try to do a live show on Sunday. I try to do a live show on Sunday. I try to do a live show on Sunday. It's kind of never-ending."

Allison's greatest achievement is the volume of content

She has 1,500 followers and 10 or so updates a day, a tiny sum compared to her Jason Calacanis (12,000 followers) or Robert Scoble (7,000 followers) or Matt Beale (12,000 followers) of whom average at 10 updates a day. "For some time, blogging has been replaced by Twitter," she says. "More people are going to see my posts on Twitter than on my blog." In fact, celebrities meted out photos and videos to favored sources, carefully controlling their public images by controlling the information. Today, lifebloggers and Justine "iJustine" Ezarik deluge us with data. "I post 10 to 15 mobile videos a day," Ezarik says. "I post one video a day. I usually collect photos on MySpace and Facebook. I have a live video on Sunday and a Nokia phone that streams live video throughout the day. It's never-ending."

Her greatest accomplishment isn't the amount of content she creates; it's that



5 WAYS TO BE LIKE JULIA

Want to be famous like Julia Allison? Here are the tactics she deploys.

It's not who you know, it's who you're next to.

When you go to a party, be sure to get photographed with well-known guests—even if they have no idea who you are. By posting these pics on your blog, you can make yourself look like an established personality.

Dress against type.

Heading to a party filled with khaki-clad geeks? Consider a flashy designer dress. Have a reputation for glamour? Stick with a simple T-shirt. Counter-intuitive wardrobe choices keep your fans guessing.

Embrace enigma.

One day Allison announced that online haters were ruining her life and she'd never blog again. The next day she was back. Is she a train wreck or a mastermind? Narcissist or self-satirist? No one knows—that's why they keep watching.

me since I was just mildly annoying," she wrote. "Of course I want to thank my self-promotional narcissism and my incessant desire for infamy at any costs. Thank you so, so much.")

But sometimes Allison's critics leave rotten fruit at her head with such force that even she can't make lemonade out of it. After she disclosed an ex-boyfriend's bipolar disorder in a Gawker Q&A, irascible blogger Loren Feldman posted an anti-Julia rant, calling her a "vapid, vapid, cruel, mean monster" and "one of the saddest train wrecks in the history of the Internet." In January, Reblogging Julia launched to provide "a critical analysis of the public ramblings of the creature formerly known as Ms. Baugher, who provides a massive amount of content to parse." And after Valleywag ran photos of Allison cosmopolitanizing with Digg cofounder Kevin Rose—publicly that Allison says killed their burgeoning relationship—she declared she had enough. "I can't do this anymore. It's ruining my life," she wrote on her blog. Gawker's Denton personally marked the occasion with a four-word item: "It's over. For now." The mini-post brought in 11,000 pageviews and 160 comments. Allison's site brought in more than 17,000 readers that day, a new record.

Don't worry. It wasn't over. The next day she followed up with a postscript: "I may have overreacted a bit." Three weeks later, she posted a video of herself lip-synching 4 Non Blondes' "What's Up?" on a ski lift. And three months after that she officially resumed her regular blogging schedule.

HOW TO TWEET

Used correctly, Twitter's 140-character blurbs provide a stream of helix to your adoring public. But how to overshare without overwhelming? To find out, we asked Twitter's top talents what makes a great tweet. Here's what they had to say, in 140 characters or less.

"If you want more people to follow you on Twitter, give your real name on your account profile. Not everyone knows you by your username." —Scott Beale

"Every single Twitter post you write should be something that could get you laid, ruin a marriage, or bring a tear to a fat little kid's eye." —Joshua Allen

"Don't answer, 'What are you doing?' Be funny. Be brief (duh). Leave your lunch unpublished. Dicto your late plane. Incomplete sentences." —Jason Kutler

"Twitter is a community. It's not all about you. Engage your peers by asking them questions. You don't have to actually read the answers." —Nick Krimmel

"Frequently linking to yourself from Twitter is a terrific way to highlight your skills as an unlovable marketing knob. Go easy on the spam." —Merlin Mann

"Don't try to impress—just be yourself. But go a little beyond your comfort zone; share something you're hesitant about sharing." —Evan Williams

Step 3 Extend Your Brand

"I THOUGHT THAT GAWKER POST about you today was very nice." Allison tells Ramin over lunch salads at a Greenwich Village café. She speaks soothingly, like a mother comforting a child after a deflating T-ball game. Allison spends a lot of time

encouraging Ramin, whom she befriended a year ago. She persuaded Ramin to take up blogging after signing her up for a Tumblr account last December. She liked regularly to Ramin's posts and uploaded pictures of the two of them together as a way of directing her site's visitors to Ramin's page. And when Allison went on hiatus, even more of her readers started following Ramin as a surrogate for their Allison fix.

And now, if Allison has her way, she will

NEXT HOW TO BOOST YOUR BLOG

turn Ramin—and their friend Adu—into true Web celebrities, just like herself. In the same way that Denton used his platform to make Allison a proto-celebrity, she is now using her public profile to do the same for her friends. But this is not charity; it's her attempt to build the Allison brand. "Two C-list starters can get together and make one B-list couple; this is very similar," she says. "Mary can meet with five people, and I can meet with five other people, and Meghan can meet with five other people, and all the press we get individually builds the team as a whole."

In July 2007, having conquered—and perhaps overestimated—the Manhattan media market, Allison set her sights on a new target: the Silicon Valley startup world. In a flashback to her Gawker breakthrough, she flew to the Bay Area to attend the annual TechCrunch party thrown by influential blogger Michael Arrington. Dressed in a flattering Diane von Furstenberg dress, Allison made an

immediate impression among the blue-shirt-and-khaki-wearing attendees. The next day, Arrington posted a video on his site of Allison cooing for the camera, telling her audience that she had a thing for geeks, and urging them to call her. Soon Allison had become a Valleywag staple, befriended the likes of CNN's Caroline McCarthy and Sepolia Capital's Mark Kravine, and—like Jack in the Box opening a new restaurant franchise—introduced her brand of ignorance-if-you-dare provocation to the Web 2.0 startup world. When she left town at the end of the weekend, the Valley-based blogosphere reacted as if it had just survived a flash flood. "We are all in awe," one blogger wrote, "and quite honestly left scratching our heads over how someone, in such a short period of time, could make an incredibly controversial impact—with an entire community breathing a sigh of relief at her departure."

Newly reintroduced as a tech-world ingenue, Allison began entertaining plans to launch her own business. Instead of using her outside personality to drive pageviews

to Gawker and Valleywag, she thought, why not capitalize on her reputation to launch her own Web portal? She signed up Ramin and Adu to act as cofounders of the site—nosociety.com—and began developing content: lip-sync videos, a talk-show series modeled after *The View*, and the collected musings that the trio were already posting on their own blogs. They enlisted Shane Parrish, a marketer who had helped design Web strategies for Barneys New York and Project Runway, to serve as their creative director. In mid-June, Allison signed a deal with Bravo to follow the women's startup adventures and broadcast them as a reality show called *IT Girls*.

Can Allison really win an ironic fan base? Can someone who's famous for being hated convert that loathing into love? Allison insists she can—and modily forwards emails from fans who have been won over. But even if she can't, even if her new site is good for nothing more than providing continued fodder for the cannons that are pointed at her, that will be its own kind of success.

"There's no scandal that won't make her bigger," says Seth, the former Gawker editor. "She could be dumped by whomever. She's crossed every line already. Nothing bad can happen to her."

Well, unless people stop paying attention. But that doesn't seem likely. One evening after trailing Allison for most of the day, I returned to my hotel to see that she has sent me an email with a link to Gawker. It's the day's Gawker Stalker, a list of celebrity sightings emailed in by anonymous tipsters. Already, it looks like Allison's plan to celebrate her friends is paying off: "Union Square today around 2 pm. Saw Julia Allison and her 2 other friends mary and megan, noticed the other two first, dressed very well."

But it's the next sentence that makes my heart beat a little faster: "Julia Allison following them, talking to some guy." Hey! That's me! For a second, I confess, it's a thrill, to have my spectral presence broadcast to thousands of readers. But then I get annoyed. "Some guy"? That's it? No mention of my outfit, or my dulcet baritone, or even my height or weight? Not the slightest curiosity as to who I might be? Come on. What's a guy got to do to get noticed around here?

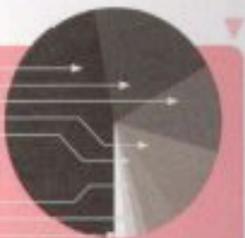
Senior editor JASON TANZ

(Jason_tanz@wired.com) wrote about *The View* TV loss *IT IS*.

HOW TO BUILD AN ARMY OF FOLLOWERS

Gary Vaynerchuk, the excitable host of Wine Library TV, has become a cult figure to the 80,000 "Vaynacles" who routinely tune into his vlog. How does he inspire such devotion? Simple: by spending more than twice as much time responding to emails as he does sleeping. Here's how Vaynerchuk allocated his time on April 29, 2008.

- 12 hours, 12 minutes responding to email
- 4 hours, 24 minutes sleeping
- 3 hours, 1 minute taking meetings
- 2 hours, 20 minutes commuting
- 1 hour, 14 minutes connecting to fans via Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Powid, YouTube, Vlogger, and other social media
- 25 minutes reading blogs
- 24 minutes eating
- 22 minutes producing vlog



HOW TO SET UP A VELVET ROPE ON FACEBOOK

Facebook makes it easy to share your Vegas vacation snaps. But newly minted Webonauts, take heed: Some of those photos could be damaging should they fall into the wrong hands. Here's how to make sure that only your BFFs get the tawdry details.

Pick Your Friends

Facebooking may sound violent, but it just means refusing to add wannabe buds to your Friends list—and it's totally acceptable, so don't be afraid to do. For the people you do add, set up two lists: one for mere contacts and the other for actual pals. That way only your real friends get to see that you've updated your status to "losh."

Protect Your Privates

To keep any snot-bug from digging up your profile, change your privacy settings so only friends of friends can get to you. You can also keep strangers from finding photos tagged with your name. And once your boss really needs to know every time you play a hand of Hold 'Em? Shut up! bobbermouth applications by unchecking all boxes except "Know who I get and access my information" when you install them.

Cover Your Tracks

Consider setting up a second profile with an alias known only to your closest confidantes. Then dump all the good stuff there. (Sorry, "Philip McGee" is already taken.)

er Kevin Rose—public-
n says killed their bur-
ionship—she declared
gh. “I can’t do this any-
ing my life,” she wrote
Gawker’s Denton per-
ted the occasion with
item: “It’s over. For now.” The
ought in 11,000 pageviews and
s. Allison’s site brought in more
eaders that day, a new record.
y. It wasn’t over. The next day
up with a postscript: “I may
cted a bit.” Three weeks later,
video of herself lip-syncing
s’ “What’s Up?” on a ski lift. And
after that she officially resumed
ogging schedule.

they had to
say, in 140
characters
or less.

“Don’t try to impress—just be y
beyond your comfort zone; sh
hesitant about sharing.” —Eva

Step 3 Extend Your Brand

“I THOUGHT THAT GAWKER post about
you today was very nice,” Allison tells
Rambin over lunch salads at a Greenwich
Village café. She speaks soothingly, like a
mother comforting a child after a deflat-
ing T-ball game. Allison spends a lot of time

encouraging
a year ago. Sh
blogging afte
account last I
to Rambin’s p
the two of the
ing her site’s
when Allison
her readers s
surrogate for
And now, i

100 comments, Allison's site brought in more than 17,000 readers that day, a new record.

Don't worry. It wasn't over. The next day she followed up with a postscript: "I may have overreacted a bit." Three weeks later, she posted a video of herself lip-syncing 4 Non Blondes' "What's Up?" on a ski lift. And three months after that she officially resumed her regular blogging schedule.

BRAND YOUR Brand

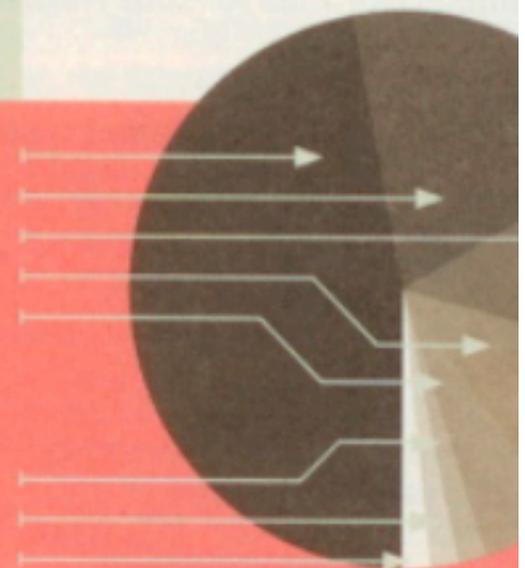
"I THOUGHT THAT GAWKER post about you today was very nice," Allison tells Ramin over lunch salads at a Greenwich Village café. She speaks soothingly, like a mother comforting a child after a deflating T-ball game. Allison spends a lot of time

blogging after signing her up account last December. She links to Ramin's posts and uploads the two of them together as a way of directing her site's visitors to Ramin when Allison went on hiatus. Her readers started following her as a surrogate for their Allison fix. And now, if Allison has her

HOW TO BUILD AN ARMY OF FOLLOWERS

Gary Vaynerchuk, the excitable host of Wine Library TV, has become a cult figure to the 80,000 "Vayniacs" who routinely tune into his vlog. How does he inspire such devotion? Simple: by spending more than twice as much time responding to emails as he does sleeping. Here's how Vaynerchuk allocated his time on April 29, 2008.

- 12 hours, 12 minutes responding to email
- 4 hours, 24 minutes sleeping
- 3 hours, 1 minute taking meetings
- 2 hours, 29 minutes commuting
- 1 hour, 14 minutes connecting to fans via Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Pownce, YouTube, Viddler, and winelibrarytv.com forums
- 25 minutes reading blogs
- 24 minutes eating
- 22 minutes producing vlog





Meet Julia Allison. She can't act. She can't sing. She's not rich. But thanks to a genius for self-promotion—plus Flickr, Twitter, and her blogs—she's become an Internet celebrity. How she did it—and how you can, too.

- HOW TO
- **Promote YOURSELF** P108
 - **Boost YOUR OZZE CRED** P114
 - **Be the HERO** P118
 - **Fake It TILL YOU MAKE IT** P122

Almost Famous

by Jason Tanz

PHOTOGRAPH BY PLATON

PSALMS 72

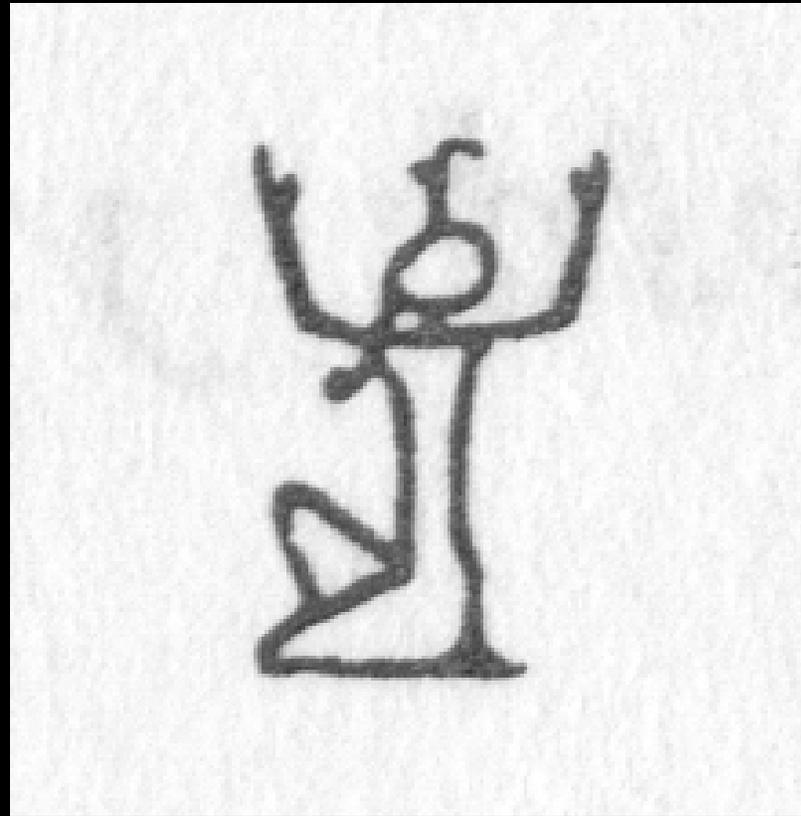


PSALMS 72



a prayer for fame power & influence

¹Endow the king with your justice, O God,
the royal son with your righteousness.



²He will judge your people in righteousness,
your afflicted ones with justice.

³The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.



⁴He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.

⁵He will endure as long as the sun, as long
as the moon, through all generations.



⁶He will be like rain falling on a mown
field, like showers watering the earth

⁷In his days the righteous will flourish;
prosperity will abound till the moon is no
more.



⁸He will rule from sea to sea and from the
River to the ends of the earth.

9 The desert tribes will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust.



10 The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him; the kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts.

¹¹All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him.



¹²For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help.



¹³He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death.

¹⁴He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

¹⁵Long may he live! May gold from Sheba
be given him. May people ever pray for
him and bless him all day long.

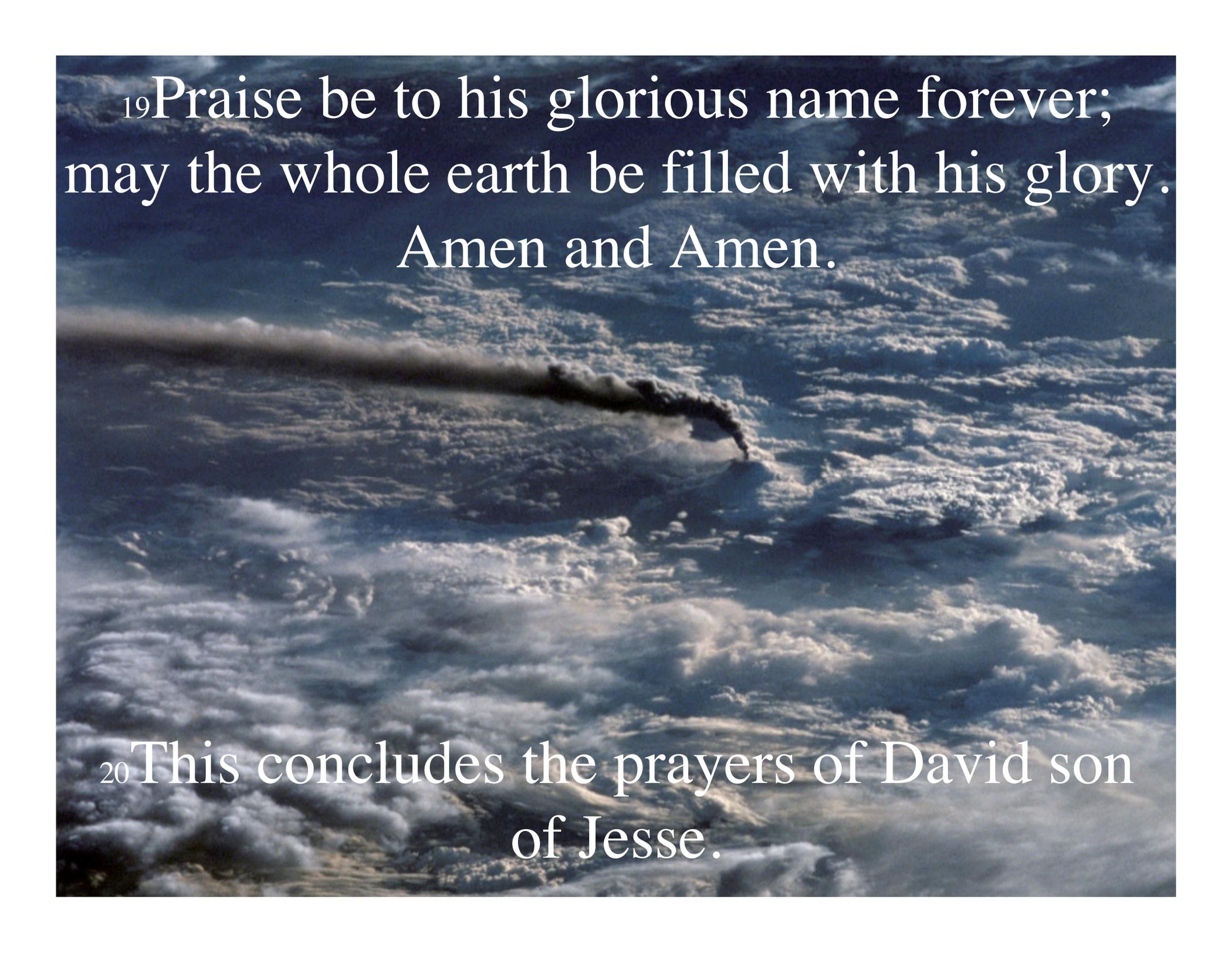
¹⁶Let grain abound
throughout the land;
on the tops of the hills
may it sway. Let its fruit
flourish like Lebanon; let it
thrive like the grass of the field.



¹⁷May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.



¹⁸Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds.



¹⁹Praise be to his glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with his glory.
Amen and Amen.

²⁰This concludes the prayers of David son
of Jesse.



here. I'm searchable
the cat is out of the bag,
the back that control is
the presence, have an
represents you."

public figures now—
he goes, for 15 people.
og and using Twitter
al network profiles, I
ays Ian Schafer, CEO
et marketing firm in
e not for the general
are less, but for the
re about me and are
ving attention."

ple to pay attention
n the week after her
eactions will pop up
rnet. One typically
he tableaux as "sub-

She was given a nickname—the Medstitute—
which she chose to interpret as affection-
ate. At the end of the school year, during
graduation ceremonies, her photo popped
up in a slide show retrospective. It was all
very flattering.

In late 2004, Allison moved to New York to
break into the Manhattan media world and—
as she wrote on a list of goals she brought
with her at the time—"become a cult figure."

It wouldn't take long, and she would accom-
plish it using the same strategy she employed
to become the Medstitute: Discover a niche,
position herself at its choke point, and stay
there until people start to notice.

For Allison, that choke point was Gawker,
Nick Denton's media-gossip site that pulls
in millions of readers every month, many of
them fellow journalists. It was the equiva-
lent of the medical school library—the place

share his c

Move fast.

When the g
against put
video online
24 hours to
ger and it w
copying him
friend, and I
dancing to "
Hot" by Mim
clip that eve

Become a r

If voters see
ple have wat
you look mo
out a catchy
bebomb.com
my YouTube
up all over ca
people didn't
for the clip; t
the name an

THE OREO FACTOR: HOW TO TAME YOUR APPETITE

Psychology Today

FOR A HEALTHIER LIFE

CHANGE YOUR NATURE

PERSONALITY
JOURNAL

BUILD COURAGE, PASSION, JOY, AND OPTIMISM



**DESPERATE
LOVE**
WHEN
NEEDINESS
STRIKES

**THE
OBSESSIVE'S
REVENGE**
MAKING
QUIRKS WORK

**A+
OR BUST**
HOW
PERFECTIONISM
UNDERMINES
SUCCESS

**A BILLION
COINCIDENCES**
THE ALLURE OF
MAGICAL
THINKING

**PLUS: WHY ADOLESCENCE
LASTS FOREVER...
9 WAYS WE DISTORT TIME**

This philosophy of life is closely related to the concept of "intrinsic motivation," or an internal drive.

Researchers who study happiness have found that organizing your life around intrinsic aspirations—often goals such as fostering community, connecting to family, or creative engagement—tends to make people happier.

Extrinsic goals such as professional success, wealth, and fame do not.

--Psychology Today Magazine, Jul/Aug 2008.

Article ID 4613



**Get
Internet
Famous!**
(Even If
You're
Nobody)

Julia
Allison
and the
Secrets
of Self-
Promotion

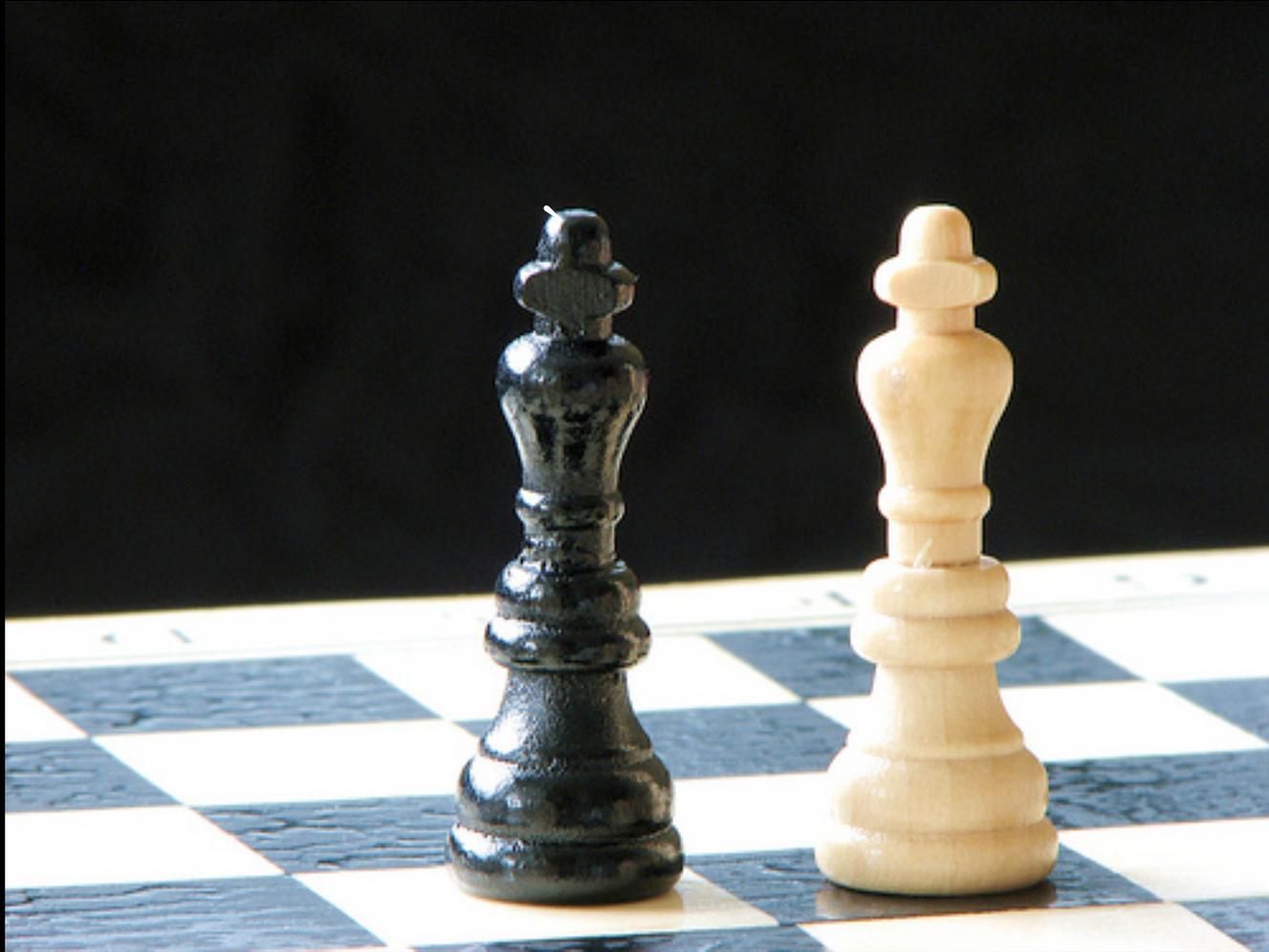


by Jason Tanz

PSALMS 72



a prayer for fame power & influence



¹²For he will deliver the needy who cry out,
the afflicted who have no one to help.



¹³He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death.

¹⁴He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.



MATTHEW 24:23



1 Then Jesus said to the
crowds and to his
disciples:

5 "Everything [the
teachers of the law and
the Pharisees] do is
done for men to see:

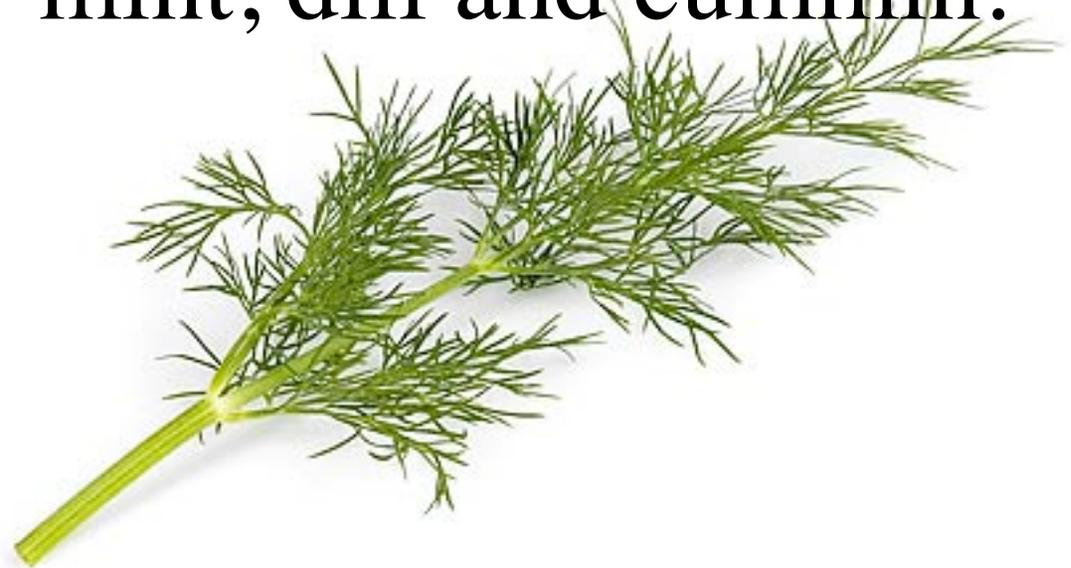


7they love to be greeted in the marketplaces
and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'





²³ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin.



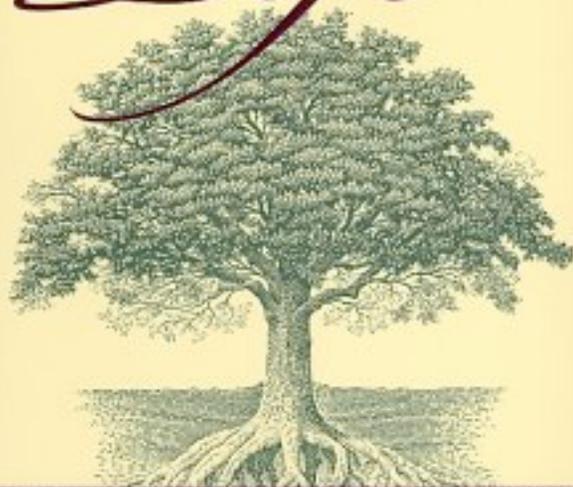
But you have neglected the more important matters of the law — justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.



RICK WARREN

THE
PURPOSE
DRIVEN®

Life



WHAT ON EARTH AM I HERE FOR?



Seekers of Fame

- Motives



Non Seekers of Fame

- Apathy

