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ARTS DEVO

by JASON CASSIDY • jasonc@newsreview.com



Taca-taca-Taco Bell

TAO OF BELL One of Arts DEVO's standby sayings is, "We all have our shit." It's very comforting to me. I'll often say it to remind myself that I'm not alone in dealing with whatever I'm dealing with, as well as when I'm trying to empathize with others as they go through problems. It's an especially helpful mantra when someone is being a jerk (often via social media, as is the way of the world today). If you can imagine that there must be some shit the jerk has in his or her life that's at the root of things, sometimes an empathetic response can defuse a situation so that no one has to add any more shit to their lives.

We're all made up of the same stuff, just in different combos. Kind of like the menu at **Taco Bell**. (Please, let me think outside the bun for a minute.) It's not only that I was super hungry as I started writing this column, I really think there might be some value to be found at the Bell beyond just the **Cravings Menu**. There are 39 Taco Bell foods (not counting drinks) that are all basically the same. The same meats, beans, cheeses, tomatoes, onions and sauces appear in the tacos, burritos, nachos, tostadas, Mexican pizzas and **Crunchwraps**. The differences are mainly matters of architecture—or how things look. Inside, they all bleed the same red sauce.

Sure, some items might seem like deep-fried abominations that exist only to cause us harm. But realize that their natural state has been mutated by extreme circumstances, and even with a monster like the **double Chalupa**, if you peel back the hardened layer of skin, you're left with the gooey, unspoiled insides of a harmless soft taco supreme.

We are Taco Bell?

DAMN! BURGER! OK, maybe I am just hungry. A trip to my hometown of Redding for a doctor's appointment this week and a brain that was still fixated on fast food meant I'd be stopping for lunch at a treasure from my childhood—**Damburger**. The place has been in the same hole in the wall since 1962, and has been in existence since 1938. The original owner, **Bud Pennington**, got his start—and the name for his restaurant—when, at the age of 18, he set up a grill in a tent next to the building where men were hired to work on the **Shasta Dam**. He sold a damburger, plus a piece of pie and cup of coffee, for 25 cents.

Nostalgia aside, the real appeal of Damburger is the way they prepare the meat—flat and crispy. These are not like the trendy smashburgers of cooking shows; these patties are flattened super-thin with a tortilla press and fried until almost crunchy. (Where my Maillard-reaction people at?) The "original" rendition adds just mustard, lettuce and onion to the bun and meat, and the perfect burger also includes a second patty with a slice of cheese in between. Add mayo and pickle if you have to, but not tomato, because it's not allowed. (But why not try going OG for your first visit?) Take a Redding day trip this fall and plan a lunch at the downtown icon.

NO-SHAVE NOVEMBER Attention, beardslies, beardmeisters and all other fuzzy-faces. The **Novembeard** beard-growing contest kicks off at 6 p.m. Friday (Nov. 1) with **Clean-Shaven Day** at **Secret Trail Brewing Co.** Contestants show up with all facial hair removed (even sideburns!) and then let it grow while collecting pledges for the rest of the month (funds go to the **Paradise High School** music and arts programs). Visit facebook.com/chico beardcollective for more details.



Damburger