

STREET CRACKS

Allen taps life in B'ham for laughs

By Bob Sadler
special writer

Tim Allen is a First Amendment comic, and he's got the right to deliver any kind of material the performer feels comfortable with — blue or otherwise.

"I have defended the right to do blue material because I've always liked raunchy material," said Allen, another hometown comic making it on the national scene. "I never thought Bill Cosby was that funny. When I first saw George Carlin, I was amazed. Richard Pryor absolutely made me howl. I still like to do it (blue material) now and then."

When asked why such material is a palatable option for younger, less experienced comics, Allen offered an analogy: "If a rock band's music is lousy, they just turn up the amps louder when they play. In the same way, comics overcome a lousy act

with volume or blue material. I used it when I needed it. Back then, I didn't have much else."

The new material in Allen's arsenal reflects his growth as a comic. He's found some crazy things in his everyday life in Birmingham that have floored audiences across the country.

"I'm a homebody," said Allen, a 1971 graduate of Birmingham Seaborn High School. "I've parlayed that into material about suburban males being pigs. The only thing we're good for is lawn care and vehicle maintenance."

Allen's handiness around the house is unquestioned. He considers going to the Sears Craftsman tool department a major rite of manhood. When his vacuum wasn't working, he installed a Buick V6 engine to get it going again. He uses his McCullough leaf blower for dusting.

"I JUST DUCT tape the bigger things in the room down before," Allen said.

Saying he never did what he wanted to after getting a degree in communications from Western Michigan University, Allen was prompted by a writer friend to try a local open mike night about 10 years ago. He spent time in his basement coming up with 30 minutes of material for that first night, which resulted in his becoming a regular at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle.

By 1986, he had headlined for the first time — at the Punchline in Atlanta. He opened for bands like Kool & The Gang and The Spinners. Finally, he got some television credits, appearing on Showtime's Comedy Club Network, the Showtime Comedy All-Stars and a recent Rodney Dangerfield special on HBO.

His earlier image may have been

a reason why Allen was also included in a motion picture called "Comedy's Dirtiest Dozen," a film that is completed, but having trouble getting released.

"Some of the comics are stepping on some very fine lines," Allen said. "I think some people are reluctant to distribute it."

Allen hopes the future keeps him and Laura, his wife of five years, in the Detroit area. He hopes to balance his show business star, which is still climbing, with the hometown he loves.

There's been so many great comics that are from Detroit," Allen said. "I just wish I was one of them."

Tim Allen will appear Tuesday, June 27, through Friday, July 1, at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle, 2593 Woodward, Berkeley. For reservations, call 542-9900.



Comedian Tim Allen is at home with things like a power drill. He considers going to the Sears Craftsman tool department a major rite of manhood.

COMEDY CLUBS

Here are some listings of comedy clubs in our area. To let us know who is appearing at your club, send the information to: Comedy Listings, Observer & Eclectic Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

• BEA'S KITCHEN

Downtown Tony Brown will perform along with Skeeter Murray and Chris Franklin on Friday and Saturday, June 10 and July 1, at Bea's Comedy Kitchen, 541 Larned, Detroit. Showtimes are 9 p.m. and 11:15 p.m. For information, call 981-2581.

• CHAPLIN'S EAST

Randy Montgomery will appear Wednesday-Saturday, June 28 to July 1, at Chaplin's East, 34244 Groesbeck, Fraser. Showtimes are

8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 8:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 792-1002.

• CHAPLIN'S PLYMOUTH

Dave Dugan will appear Thursday-Saturday, June 29 to July 1, at Chaplin's Plymouth in the Plymouth Hilton, 14707 Northville Road, Plymouth. For information, call 454-4660.

• CHAPLIN'S WEST

Tom Anzalone will appear Tuesday-Saturday, June 27 to July 1, at Chaplin's West, 16890 Telegraph, south of Six Mile, Detroit. For information, call 533-8866.

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• COMEDY SPORTZ

Comedy Sportz at the Heidelberg will have improvisational comedy at 8:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday. The club is at 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. Showtimes are 8:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. For reservations, call 995-8888.

• HOLLY HOTEL

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• LOONEY BIN II

Leo DeFour will perform Friday-Saturday, June 30 and July 1, at The Looney Bin at The Roxy, I-94 and Haggerty. Showtimes are 9 p.m. Friday and 8 and 10 p.m. Saturday. There's a \$5 cover charge. For information, call 699-1829.

• MAINSTREET

Tim Allen will perform Friday through Sunday, June 30, July 1-2, at the Mainstreet Comedy Castle, 314 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Showtimes are 8:30 and 11 p.m. For reservations, call 998-9080.

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KEN SEVERA
JULY 6-8

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JUNE 27 - JULY 1
TOM ANZALONE
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16890 Telegraph • Detroit
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SHOW TIMES: TUES & WED 8:30
THURS & FRI 8:30 & 10:30

Chaplin's PLYMOUTH-Plymouth Hilton
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