

# Aaaaanywaaaaaay

by Daniel W. Duffy

With the stale state of stand-up comedy today, a comic like Fred Stoller is a welcome breath of fresh air.

Stoller is a comic who lives life on the edge. At least he likes to think so. With a wit as dry as a mouth full of saltines, he says he's controversial. "Like Geraldo." Anyway.

According to Stoller's stand-up act, "anyway" can be colloquially translated as "go to hell." Stoller says to remember that next time you're talking on the phone to a member of the opposite sex and mid-conversation they throw an "anyway" your way.

Fresh from an appearance on "The Tonight Show," Stoller performed recently as part of the MSU Student Program Council's "Laughter Central" to a typically feeble UNLV showing. At least the few students who took advantage of the free yucks were loud and boisterous and were generally into the show itself which also featured comics Margaret Cho and the local talent of Mark Phister.

Stoller, who was featured on HBO's 1989 "Young Comedian" special, has been in the business of seriously funny comedy for nearly 12 years.

He got his start in comedy in his home state of New York after he saw then unknown comics Richard Lewis and Billy Crystal perform at a club in the '70s. He started hanging out at the Improv in Manhattan at



Fred Stoller looks skyward for divine inspiration.

17 and started professional comedy at age 20. Following high school, he tried his hand at higher education

for a couple of years at a nearby college, but knew comedy was his true calling. "I wasn't too into college,"

he said.

With jokes from his stand-up act on topics ranging from dating to parents to college, this Brooklyn-bred comic is a reality-based "lonely guy" comedian with mass appeal.

"I try to be myself," Stoller said following his performance.

After growing up in New York and now living in L.A., Stoller said he's "never known normal," and it supplements his unique style even more.

Stoller recently starred in the short-lived Fox comedy, "Vinny and Bobby."

In his act, he said he'll be on TV again in a few months. He jokingly said the Vegas audience can say, "Yeah, I saw that guy before he killed those eight people."

With the onset of mediocre comics and TV comedy channels, Stoller said "it's not so special to be on TV as a comic." His forecast for comedy clubs in general is fairly bleak as well. He said a lot of clubs are going to close due to this comedy overkill. "There are too many clubs, too many comedy shows on TV," he said.

He said he would like to switch gears and get back into TV sitcoms on "some stupid show" or possibly even do movies.

After Stoller learned such interesting facts about Las Vegas from the crowd like the UNLV campus is 1.5 miles from the strip, he concluded his show by saying "Wow. I feel like Rain Man."

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