

## Cathy by Cathy Guisewite

The comics page wasn't home to many distinctly female voice in 1976, when Cathy Guisewite's eponymous strip made its debut. But for the next 34 years, *Cathy* gave voice to its creator's – and much of its readership's – familial, professional and social concerns and preoccupations. On October 3, 2010 Guisewite retired her strip after 34 years.

The Cathy Guisewite interview, **Hoogan's Alley**, Apr 24 2012

"A big problem at that time was you had to be in one camp or the other. There wasn't a camp for ambivalence. You were a liberated woman or you were a traditionalist. To even voice vulnerability if you were a feminist was wrong and to voice interest in liberation if you were a more traditional woman was wrong... So I believe the women I was speaking to in the early years of my strip were women like me, who were at that age in our 20s where we were kind of launched into adulthood with a foot in both worlds and to way to really express it".

Cathy Guisewite as quoted in **The New York Times**, August 15, 2010

*Cathy*, Cathy Guisewite's autobiographical diary of her ambitions and insecurities provided a running social commentary for a group that often felt misunderstood and maligned.

Jeremy W. Peters, **The New York Times**, August 15, 2010



## VOCABULARY

Single's bar: a bar whose customers are mainly unmarried people of both sexes.

Wild: dissolute, lacking social or moral restraint.

Carefree: free from anxiety.

Reckless: not caring about danger.

Diet Pepsi: a low-calory type of soft drink.

## TRUE or FALSE (justify your answers)

- 1) Cathy patronizes this bar (i.e. is a regular customer of).
- 2) Andrea thinks Cathy belongs here (has her proper place here)
- 3) Cathy is fed up with her former life.
- 4) She wants to get drunk.
- 5) The bartender thinks she has had too much to drink.

## UNDERSTANDING THE STRIP

- 1) Try to imagine Cathy's social background and personality ( use such structures as: She may/might be ..., she must be ... , she could be ..., perhaps she is ..., she certainly is ..., I wonder if ...)
- 2) Cathy claims she is sick of being intelligent. What else is she sick of? (think of the opposite of wild, carefree, to live with reckless abandon, to lose control ...)
- 3) Analyze the punch line (the last panel/frame). What makes it particularly effective?
- 4) What can we infer from Andrea's statement: "I was afraid I'd find you here"?
- 5) Look at the cartoonist's name. What does it imply?