

► Your dog's dead." I pissed in the domestic science scales at school when I was eight. But, typically, I did so in front of the entire class including, unbeknownst to me, my form teacher. This was certainly an example of sexually warped exhibitionism – but, again, everybody knew about it at the time. I once masturbated in technical drawing class when I was 15 – but, an entire row of boys was doing the same thing, similarly bored. We were having a sort of race, as I remember.

While working as a researcher for the Labour front bench in the Eighties, I carried out an experiment on members of the shadow cabinet. I would situate myself in the House of Commons toilets – either hidden in a cubicle and peering through a crack or pretending to urinate or wash my hands. The aim of the experiment was to discover what proportion of shadow ministers would wash their hands after defecating or urinating when a) they knew they were watched and b) when they thought they were alone. I can reveal that of the 16 shadow ministers, only Gordon Brown washed his hands when he thought that he was unobserved. And he only washed his hands after he'd done a poo, rather than a wee. When they knew I was watching, they all washed their hands, of course. That kind of unapologetic duplicity is perhaps why Margaret Thatcher, rather than Neil Kinnock, won the 1987 General Election. The public can sense that sort of stuff. I bet Norman Tebbit, for example, washed his hands every time. And probably with a scrubbing brush, too. But it's difficult to go back and apologise after all these years. The problem with me is I am incapable of scheming. Not because I am too lollytally moral a beast, but because I do not possess the ability to do it. I would connive, if I could. I just don't have the foresight.

I once cheated on an episode of *Call My Bluff*. I was a team captain and I only cheated (in one game, I should stress) because I thought my opposite number, Alan Coren, was cheating. I had no evidence for this, just a suspicion. Anyway, I had my girlfriend standing by with a copy of the *Oxford English Dictionary* in a branch of Waterstone's, mobile telephone in hand. I won the game six-nil, as I remember. It was also the first time that my girlfriend visibly lost faith in me as a human being. If he would cheat at *Call My Bluff*, what wouldn't he do? I was so appalled by my own behaviour that I threw the next game, out of deep and abiding shame. I suppose I could apologise to Alan, but I don't think he'd care. The problem for the programme makers is that real life is not like *My Name Is Earl*. We may be moderately wicked, but usually people know when we're being so. And those who are surreptitiously wicked will not agree to do a programme such as *My Name Is Earl*. ☹

LUXURY

SUMMIT OF STYLE

He may be new to Savile Row, but Timothy Everest has represented the pinnacle of fine tailoring for decades

BY NICK FOULKES



A conversation overheard at

Timothy Everest:

Customer No.1 "Please could you alter this suit."

Timothy Everest [Inspecting the label sewn inside the breast pocket] "My word, this suit is 11 years old, we made it for you in 1996."

Customer No.2 [Overhearing] "That's nothing, mine is 12 years old."

Well, sorry to have to break it to you, guys, but I have just checked the in-breast pocket of a navy-blue, single-breasted, low-buttoning, hopsack suit with slanted pockets

Above Unstuffy and stylish, Timothy Everest is a welcome addition to the Savile Row stable

true – old clothes are the best clothes. I do have a pair of Everest velvet trousers that are even older – but they are so old they would probably require carbon dating.

I think it was the pop and TV star turned film auteur Richard Jobson who put me onto "fit the best, fit Everest", as he was known. I liked the feel of the operation: unstuffy, unpretentious, unglitzy and very stylish, yet out of the mainstream. In those days having an Everest suit was a bit like

OWNING AN EVEREST SUIT WAS LIKE BELONGING TO A SECRET SOCIETY

that Tim made for me, and the ticket, which locates him on Princelet Street, London E1, shows a date of December 1993. What your swooning fashionista would probably call "vintage" is, in my view, a well-made serviceable navy-blue suit that has been my companion for almost 14 years. Tedious but

belonging to a secret society. I tended to steer away from the gimmickry of velvet collars on lounge suits and four-button or more front coats that were in vogue, but I liked spending time in the Princelet Street workrooms – one usually bumped into interesting people. And Tim was always on hand to give a superior ►