

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

The Post Amerikan Project

4-1990

Volume 18, Number 6

Post Amerikan

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25¢

Vol. 18

No. 6

April/May 1990

Bloomington-Normal

POST AMERICAN

SPECIAL SECTION

CHILDREN / & PARENTS



Farmers

Community action

Earth Day

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Bloomington-Normal

POST AMERIKAN



From the heartlands.....



In this issue:

Contents

- Cover photos thanks to a great book The Family of Children edited & published by Jerry Mason (Ridge Press, Grosset & Dunlap, 1977).
- Page 2 stuff...but no cartoon! Fred '89 where are you?
- Glory: a burnin' film review by ISIS and she's hot after those fur wearers too
- 4-5. It's spring and those lefties are comin' to life in a social way so get out your calenders, and get ready for Earth Day 1990.
- Letters: the Post bag of pleas, tributes, and opinions.
- 7-12. The Post on children? No...oh yes siree! A special feature on kiddies and not a sick joke anywhere in sight.
- "Gay": does it include or exclude lesbians?
- Ms. Hippie sorts out those real life love slaves (?) and a selected look at Women's History Month.
- Farmers--you're on your own til disaster time: new financial aid news or not-financial aid!
- 16-17. Lambda news: custody rights for separated gay parents; NYU medical Center changes its AIDS admissions policies.
- 18-19. Activist network addresses and phone numbers; Nicaragua satelite TV; Romanovsky and Philips are coming to town.
20. ACT-UP Chicago takes to the streets against Prudential Insurance hotly followed by ACT-UP Central Illinois.

Meats

FRESH FROM THE CRIBS
EXTRA LEAN
GROUND BEEF
\$1.39 lb.

BEG YOUR PARDON?

OK, Kids, brace yourselves, because you're about to embark on the first ever Post Amerikan Children issue. That's right. Pages 7 through 12 are dedicated to that strange class of human beings known as children and that even stranger group known as parents.

Don't wince. We're not going to hit you with tasteless jokes. Every angle is here from gay parents, to children's rights, to circumcision.

Who Do We Think WE ARE?

This issue is brought to you by SCOTT and ANGELA (coordinators), JOE, SHADD, DEBORAH, SUSIE, PETE, VINCE, JANE, RALPH, and BUMPER. Not to mention all the people we forgot to mention, as well.

In the Oh-by-the-way category, we might mention that because of our emphasis on parenting issues this time around, we put the Feminist Primer on hold til next time.

Good numbers

- AIDS Hotline: National 1-800-AID-AIDS
- AIDS Hotline: Illinois 1-800-243-2437
- AIDS Hotline: Local (309) 827-4005
- Alcoholics Anonymous.... 828-5049
- American Civil Liberties Union.454-7223
- Bloomington Housing Authority.829-3360
- Childbirth and Parenting Information Exchange (CAPIE)...827-6672
- Clare House (Catholic workers).452-0310
- Community for Social Action...452-4035
- Connection House.....829-5711
- Countering Domestic Violence..827-4005
- Dept.Children/Family Services.828-0022
- Draft Counselling452-5046
- Gay & Lesbian Resource Phoneline (11-4 M-R).....438-2429
- HELP transportation for senior citizens, handicapped).....828-8301
- Ill. Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621
- Ill. Lawyer Referral.....800-252-8916
- Kaleidoscope.....828-7346
- McLean Co. Health Dept.....454-1161
- Mid Central Community Action..829-9691
- Mobile Meals.....828-8301
- McLean Co. Center for Human Services.....827-5351
- National Health Care Services-abortion assistance....1-800-322-1622
- Nuclear Freeze Coalition.....828-4195
- Occupational Development Center.....452-7324
- Operation Recycle.....829-0691
- Parents Anonymous.....827-4005
- PATH: Personal Assistance Telephone Help.....827-4005
- Or.....800-322-5015
- Phone Friends.....827-4008
- Planned Parenthood...medical.827-4014 bus/couns/educ...827-4368
- Post Amerikan.....828-7232
- Prairie State Legal Service...827-5021
- Prairie Alliance.....828-8249
- Project Oz.....827-0377
- Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005
- Sunnyside Neighborhood Center.827-5428
- TeleCare (senior citizens)....828-8301
- Unemployment comp/job service.827-6237
- United Farmworkers support....452-5046
- UPIC.....827-4026

Post sellers

- BLOOMINGTON**
- Amtrak Station, 1200 W. Front
 - The Back Porch, 402 N. Main
 - Bakery Banc, 901 N. Main
 - Bloomington Public Library (in front)
 - Bus Depot, 533 N. East
 - Common Ground, 516 N. Main
 - Convenient Mart, Emerson and Main
 - Front and Center Building
 - Hit Shed, 606 N Main
 - Hungry House, 103 W. Jefferson
 - Law and Justice Center, W. Front St. Lee St. (100 N.)
 - Main and Miller Streets
 - Medusa's Adult World, 420 N. Madison
 - Mike's Market, 1013 N. Park
 - Mr. Donut, 1310 N. Park
 - Pantagraph (in front), 301 W. Washington
 - The Park Store, Wood & Allin
 - People's Drugs, Oakland & Morrisey
 - Red Fox, 918 W. Market
 - Susie's Cafe, 602 N. Main
 - U.S. Post Office, 1511 E. Empire (at exit)
 - U.S. Post Office, Center & Monroe
 - Upper Cut, 409 N. Main
 - Wash House, 609 N. Clinton
 - Washing Well, E. Front St.
- NORMAL**
- Avanti's, 407 S. Main
 - Big Rudy's, 107 E. Beaufort
 - ISU University Union, 2nd floor
 - Hovey Hall, ISU (in front)
 - Midstate Truck Plaza, U.S. 51 north
 - Mother Murphy's, 111 North St.
 - North & Broadway, southeast corner
 - White Hen Pantry, 207 Broadway (in front)

When you move, be sure to send us your new address so your subscription gets to you. Your Post Amerikan will not be forwarded (it's like junk mail--no kidding!). Fill out this handy form with your new address and return it to us, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

About us

The Post Amerikan is an independent community newspaper providing information and analysis that is screened out of or down played by establishment news sources. We are a non-profit, worker-run collective that exists as an alternative to the corporate media.

We put out six issues a year. Staff members take turns as "coordinator." All writing, typing, editing, graphics photography, pasteup, and distribution are done on a volunteer basis. You are invited to volunteer your talents.

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. The Post Amerikan welcomes stories, graphics, photos, letters, and news tips from our readers. If you'd like to join us, call 828-7232 and leave a message on our answering machine. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Don't worry if it takes a while--we don't meet every week.

An alternative newspaper depends very directly on a community of concerned people for existence. We believe it is very important to keep a newspaper like this around. If you think so too, then please support us by telling your friends about the paper, donating money to the printing of the paper, and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in the Post Amerikan.

The next deadline for submitting Post material is Friday, May 25. Material submitted after the deadline will probably not get printed.

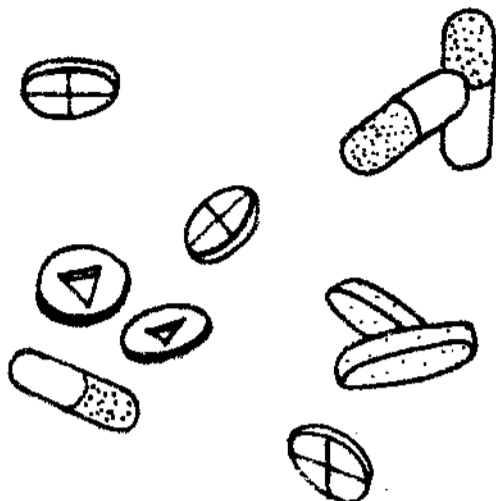
Uppers 'n' Downers

UPPERS . . . to The Rag, Peoria's alternative press (P.O. Box 3038, Peoria, IL 61614). They have come a long way in 13 issues from their original xeroxed 8 1/2 by 11 sheet format. They are now a full fledged tabloid. However, The Rag is still a graphically stimulating layout and a great political newspaper. And they gave the Post a great plug in their March 1990 issue. However, . . .

DOWNERS . . . to The Rag for part of their description of the Post. In their plug, they said, "While late issues have taken more of a gay/feminist slant, this is by no means detracting from their reputable concern in the political arena." Do the folks at The Rag really feel that gay and feminist issues are not political issues? Is concern for gay and feminist issues not reputable? Maybe the folks at The Rag need a better definition of "political," and a more comprehensive tour of "the arena."

DOWNERS . . .

As of November, 1989 the city of Irvine, in Southern California's Orange County, has on the books a city-wide ordinance permitting housing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Thanks to the so-called Family Values Coalition, a landlord can now refuse to rent to people whose "family values" strike him or her as "incorrect." In effect, gay or lesbian couples need not attempt to rent housing in Irvine.



DOWNERS . . . or better yet **CYANIDE** . . . to the Southern Illinois radio station that asked listeners to call in with the "Ethnic Joke of the Day." The Balrog relates the following tale: "I was driving south on 57 on business, near Salem, IL, desperately trying to find a radio station. I stumbled onto two good-ol'-boy radio jocks preparing their listeners for the 'Ethnic Joke of the Day.' Anyone could call in with an ethnic joke, but it couldn't be about blacks, Poles, or Chinese, since these groups had been used in previous days. If I had a cellular phone, I would have called in a frat boy joke, but a listener had called in by the time I reached the Denny's off the Salem exit. The caller was another good-ol'-boy, and his so-called 'joke' was this singularly unfunny tale of naked American Indian males using their penises to tell time and masturbating to--punch line--wind their watches." Let's just say that the First Amendment is not without cost.

DOWNERS . . . to Tom Clancy, author of Hunt for Red October. At a symposium on global affairs in Doylestown, Pa., Clancy said, "What can you say about a country that tolerates homosexuals but not smokers? I never gave anyone AIDS." His books are best sellers, and the film is making millions. What can we say about a country . . .

UPPERS . . .

As of March 21, 1990 the World Trade Center's management in New York City has asked that all employees recycle paper at their desks. Management estimates the Center disposes of 37 1/2 tons of paper *daily*. If 60% of the employees cooperate, as many as 95,000 trees a year could be saved.

Animal rights news

Animals Are Not Ours To Eat, Wear, Or Experiment On!

FUR IS DEAD! If you are interested in joining the growing numbers of anti-fur activists worldwide here are some things that you can do:

1. Let Vogue magazine know that it is time for them to eliminate fur fashion spreads from their magazine. Vogue published a large fur spread this winter. Write:

Anna Wintour, editor-in-chief,
350 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

2. Fur coats are often one of the prizes on the television game show "Wheel of Fortune". Write the producer and demand that they stop their "Wheel of Torture".

Nancy Jones
3400 Riverside Drive
Burbank, CA 91505
(818) 972-7931

3. Join PETA's American Express protest. Call American Express's toll-free number to voice your objections to their fur promotions: (800) 528-8000.

What L'Oreal Does To Animals Makes Us Sick!

PETA's Compassion Campaign is keeping the pressure on the L'Oreal cosmetic company--won't you help? PETA recently held a "Barf-IN" in front of L'Oreal headquarters in New York City. Celebrities from Saturday Night Live were on hand to show their response to L'Oreal animal testing by pretending to "barf" into a four-foot-tall papier mache toilet. L'Oreal continues to blind, poison and kill animals despite the increasing availability of non-animal test methods. Please let L'Oreal executives know why you will not purchase their products:

Lindsay Owen-Jones
(North American agent)
41 Rue Marie
92117 Clichy
France

Guy Peyrelongue, President Chairman Cosmair
575 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Film review

Glory: Whose Glory?

Edward Zwick's film Glory, the story of the 54th regiment of Massachusetts--the first black regiment to be recruited during the Civil War, suffers from the same problem that the films Cry Freedom, Mississippi Burning, and A Dry White Season did.

Based on the letters of Robert Gould Shaw, the white commanding officer, once again black history is revealed through the eyes of the white man. The creation and destruction of the 54th regiment is told from Shaw's point of view and becomes again a tale of the liberal white man helping the poor black people.

This decision is an unfortunate one because Matthew Broderick as Shaw proves to be a much less engaging character than the black soldiers in the film. Denzel Washington and Morgan Freeman among others command the audiences attention while on screen, while Broderick occasionally looks ridiculous due to Zwick's heavy-handed direction and the oppressive musical score. Simply compare any of Broderick's melodramatic speeches with the more real and engaging scenes among the black soldiers.

The film often shifts focus from the soldiers to Shaw's acts of altruism. This shift is revealed in

a scene in which the black soldiers are told that because they are black their pay will be less than the white soldiers. It is Tripp (Denzel Washington) who encourages the men to protest by refusing to accept their pay. Zwick shifts the focus here by giving us a close up of Shaw saying: "If you men will take no pay, we will take no pay". Easy for Shaw to say--he is the son of a wealthy Boston family.

This scene is representative of the problem with the film as a whole. One must remember also that this is a film about war--and it is titled Glory. Persons uncomfortable with the glorification of war, no matter which war, may find the film disturbing. While Zwick does critique the treatment of blacks in the United States and its army, he does not critique the overall racist ideology. He does not critique the system that offers black men as their only means of proving their humanity fighting and dying in the white man's army.

Glory, an important aspect of black history, would have made a better film--as well as better politics--if it had been seen through the eyes of the black soldiers.

--ISIS

EARTH DAY 1990

"change begins with
the individual"

Conceptually, what is Earth Day?

Twenty years ago, more than 20 million people in the United States demonstrated their concern for the environment in the event that gave birth to the modern environmental movement. It was the largest organized demonstration in history. Virtually every community took part in the original Earth Day on April 22, 1970. Ten thousand schools, two thousand colleges and universities, and millions of ordinary citizens demonstrated their desire to preserve our planet. Congress adjourned for the day, New York City's fifth Avenue was closed, and hundreds of ecology fairs were held.

Earth Day 1970 brought in new laws and policies such as the Clean Air and Water Acts, and the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency. Now it is time to organize another Earth Day, this time international in scope to overcome the sense of helplessness that we feel in the face of global warming, ozone depletion, and expanding deserts and shrinking rainforests.

Earth Day 1990 is much more than one day in April. It is a pro-active campaign to catalyze environmental awareness and action throughout the decade of the '90's and beyond. We must work together to promote long-lasting programs in every community that lead up to Earth Day and then continue from there. As community leaders, we have the ability to create positive change on the local, national, and international levels.

For Earth Day 1990 to be a success, community organizers must come together to develop and implement programs and activities that address their local environmental concerns. Several common "outreach" programs will unite these efforts to make Earth Day 1990 a truly national event.

"change begins with the individual"
EARTH WEEK 1990
Illinois State University/McLean County
Earth Day Committee

Preliminary Schedule For Earth Week 1990

APRIL 16 - RESOURCE RECOVERY DAY

1. Recycling - Problems and Process
2. The Waste Of Not Recycling
3. County Waste - Planning
4. How To Recycle In Your Home
5. Composting - The Process
6. Minimizing Your Resource Use
7. Recycling On Campus
8. Conservation Practices (heat, water)
9. Solar Energy
10. Energy Conservation - What Can We Do?
11. Alternative Energy Sources
12. Greenpeace

APRIL 17 - FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE DAY

1. Effects of Poaching On Wildlife
2. Wildlife and Man - Do We Need Each Other?
3. Effect of Forest On Climate
4. Species Loss and Protection
5. Effects of Deforestation
6. The Use of Our Wildlands
7. Current Legislation Affecting Our Wildlands
8. What Can We Do To Save Endangered Species?
9. Importance of Forest and Parks For Wildlife
10. The Need For Additional Wildland
11. Current Legislation Affecting Our Wildlife

APRIL 18 - AIR QUALITY DAY

1. Problems and Solutions
2. The Ozone Layer - How Important Is It?
3. Quality of Air In Illinois
4. Air and Our Ecosystem
5. Effects of Radon
6. Effects of Chemical Farming
7. Acid Rain - Cause and Effect

APRIL 19 - SOIL AND WATER QUALITY DAY

1. Effects of Farming On Our Water
2. Farming Practices - Their Effect
3. Water Recycling
4. Effect of Landfills On Water Supply
5. Effect of Erosion
6. Effects of Herbicide On Our Water
7. Lawn Care - Effects and Alternatives
8. Organic Farming
9. Waste Water Management

APRIL 20 - WORLD POPULATION DAY

1. Overpopulation - Cause and Effect
2. What Can The Individual Do?
3. Population - Present and Future
4. World Hunger
5. Disease/Death in Undeveloped Countries

APRIL 21 - ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS DAY

1. Accepted Practices In Backcountry Travel
2. Environmental Ethic In Business
3. Environmental Ethics - What Do We Teach Our Children?
4. The Need For Environmental Education
5. Change, The Governmental Process
6. The Council of Beliefs
7. Youth March
8. Youth Environmental Education Tent

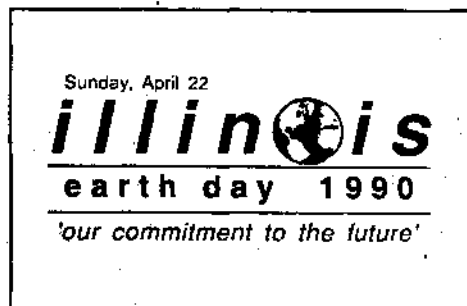
APRIL 22 - EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

1. Non-denominational Church Service Relating To Our Environmental Responsibility
2. Environmental Appreciation
3. Earth Day Picnic
4. Where Do We Go From Here?

News from the central committee

We are on the verge of something big! Earth Week 1990 will be a major event around the world, across the nation, and for us here on the Illinois State University campus.

One of the biggest pieces of news is that ISU President, Thomas Wallace has proclaimed Earth Week 1990 a university program. We are now an official registered student organization, this will help us to cut the costs and open the door to a variety of free services on campus. The Illinois State University/McLean County Earth Day Committee is now affiliated with the National Earth Day Committee in California and the Chicago Earth Day 1990 project. We are receiving information concerning other Earth Day programs in the Illinois area, and are working to coordinate our efforts with these programs.



Fundraising

The projected budget for Earth Week 1990 is \$16,000. To date \$6,576 has been raised from Student Environmental Health Association and Recreation Services. We are currently working to get corporate sponsorship from area businesses and we will have an area fund drive in March.

Planned activities for B/N

- The Student Environmental Health Association will conduct Campus Environmental Health Audit.
- A globe center for the quad will be built by an Art class to display the amount of waste the average American produces annually.



- Home economics classes will display environmentally friendly home products.
- A puppet show pertaining to environmental issues, and environmental skits will be performed by a Theater class.
- A dance class is choreographing several routines with an environmental flair.
- Mary Campbell and a sociology class plan to develop a youth project for Saturday. This will include a youth environmental march and an environmental education tent with the possible involvement of all area schools.

The main purpose of the Earth Day 1990 Green Pledge is to help people to recognize the environmental problems facing the world and to get people involved in helping the environment. By signing this Green Pledge, you are acknowledging that environmental problems exist and promoting environmental action and awareness in your community.

The ISU/McLean County Earth Day Committee would appreciate any donation to support the Earth Week 1990 program. This community-wide event will take place in the Illinois State University campus from April 16-22.

EARTH DAY 1990 GREEN PLEDGE

"BECAUSE... our planet today faces severe environmental crises such as global warming, rain forest devastation, growing world population, and water and air pollution..."



"BECAUSE... the planet's future depends on the commitment of every nation, as well as every individual..."

I PLEDGE TO DO MY SHARE IN SAVING THE PLANET
BY LETTING MY CONCERN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SHAPE HOW I:

- ACT:** I pledge to do my utmost to recycle, conserve energy, save water, use efficient transportation, and try to adopt a lifestyle as if every day were Earth Day.
- PURCHASE:** I pledge to buy and use only those products least harmful to the environment. Moreover, I will only do business with corporations that promote global environmental responsibility.
- VOTE:** I pledge to vote and support those candidates who demonstrate an abiding concern for the environment.
- SUPPORT:** I pledge to support the passage of local, state and federal laws and international treaties that protect the environment.

Earth Day 1990 -- April 22, 1990

(Return This Portion)

LET EARTH DAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE JOINED THOUSANDS OF OTHERS
IN TAKING THE GREEN PLEDGE!

Signature _____
Name (please print) _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

If you would like to support the local Illinois State University/McLean County Earth Day Program, which will be held April 16-22, please check the appropriate box(es) below. Someone from the Committee will be in touch with you in the near future.

- Cash Donation Program Development Provide Manpower

Please return this form to the solicitor or mail to: ISU/McLean County Earth Day Committee
The Outdoor Program
Illinois State University
220 N. Main Street
Normal, IL 61791



Community News

News from RRAN, RCC, and VFC



STD Clinic schedule

Sexually transmitted diseases can be controlled through prevention, early detection, and proper treatment. The McLean County Health Department's Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic provides confidential testing, treatment, and follow-up for gonorrhea, Syphilis, and NGU.

To serve you better, the STD Clinic services are available by appointment on the third Tuesday of every month from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Additional hours include:
Tuesday and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Mon., Wed., and Thurs., 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For further information concerning the STD Clinic and its related services, contact the Health Department at (309) 888-5435.

News from McLean County AIDS Task Force

The McLean County AIDS Task Force has successfully completed their first volunteer phoneline training session. Trained peer counselors are now available to offer information, support and referrals to persons with questions concerning HIV infection and AIDS.

Counselors are available 24 hours a day and all calls are completely confidential. If you have a question about HIV infection or AIDS call 827-4005 and ask for the McLean County AIDS Task Force.

MCATF is having a garage sale on Saturday, May 19th from 9am to 5pm at 805 Broadway, Normal. It's spring cleaning time--so clean out that closet / attic / basement / garage. Persons interested in donating sale items can call the Task Force at 827-4005.



**P.O. Box 304
Bloomington, IL
61702**

**309-827-4005
24 hours a day**

**HOTLINES
National: 1-800-AID-AIDS
Illinois: 1-800-243-2437**

Confirmed speakers

Dr. Franz Camenzind will provide a slideshow and talk on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem which highlights the recovery of the wolf in this region. He will also discuss environmental abuse and ethics.

Craig Tufts, Director of the National Urban Wildlife Federation will discuss methods which individuals can apply in their own yards to assist migratory birds.

Tim Lovain, President of the Zero Population Growth Institute will present a lively discussion on the consequences of over populating our planet.

Bruce Ehrich, McLean County Regional Planning, will talk on waste management strategies for McLean County.

Tentative Speakers include:

Richard Faucet, Agricultural Consultant, on problems and controls concerning pesticide use.

Don James, Operation Recycle, community recycling awareness, fraternity/sorority contest.
Mike Callahan, Bloomington/Normal Sanitary District, on the water treatment process.

Dr. Whitacre, ISU Agriculture Dept., will present composting strategies for municipal purposes.

Tom Bierma, ISU Health Science Dept., on Radon in our homes.

Heinz Russelman, ISU Health Science Dept., on regenerating our water supplies.

Dr. Johnson, ISU Geology Dept., on alternative energy sources.

Northern Illinois Gas, on energy conservation.
Department of Nuclear Energy, on waste strategies and safety precautions.

For further information contact:

Tim Moore or Jim Rogers
"Earth Week 1990"
220 N. Main St.
Normal,
IL 61761

(309) 438-8333

Human Rights Day Ice Cream Social
May 1, 1990 at 6pm
Ewing Park.

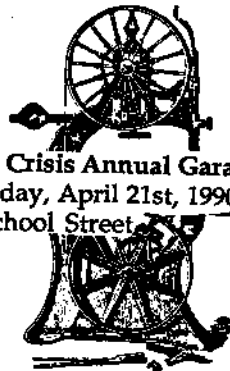
Bring some ice cream and cake and come socialize with the rest of the left as well as representatives of other social service groups. Sponsored by McLean County Voice For Choice and Reproduction Rights Action Network. We will begin plans for the October Human Rights March.

First Human Rights Day Maypole Ceremony
May 1, 1990 at noon.

For more information call:
Nancy 452-8897
or
Linda 828-3108 or 829-3630

For a complete list of Anti-Choice businesses and doctors to be boycotted send a SASE to:

McLean County Voice for Choice
P.O. Box 905
Bloomington
IL 61701



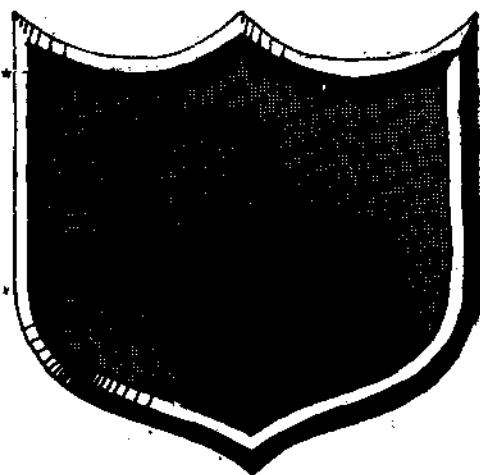
Rape Crisis Annual Garage Sale
Saturday, April 21st, 1990.
N. School Street

Women's Peace Picnic
Sunday, 22nd April, 1990
Franklin Park.
Sponsored by Rape Crisis Center of McLean County and Countering Domestic Violence.



Diesel Dick's

we specialize in
GM diesel car repair



complete automotive
and truck service

gas and diesel

foreign and domestic

508 N. Madison
9:00 am-5:30 pm
828-1714

Letters:

Prisoners and AIDS

(The following letter appeared in the Gay Community News in their July 9-15, 1989 issue. The author, Billy D. Cates, founder of the Prisoners AIDS Awareness Project, asked the Post to run his letter in hopes that our readership may respond)

Dear Friends,

When I first entered this institution in 1986, I was shocked to see that the gay brothers cared not so much about sticking together, but rather more about some handsome stud graced with muscles! Things have started to change though, and for the better.

My friend and I have begun to build the foundation of a project here within the institution to help educate the entire prison population about AIDS. We have named it Prisoners AIDS Awareness Project. Little by little the gay brothers are telling my friend and I that they want to help. I strongly feel this project will be a success in helping save lives, and uniting our community in this prison.

Our project's most important goal is to educate as many people as want to be educated about AIDS prevention. We need the help of those in the free world to make this project work. We need all types of AIDS education and prevention publications to distribute so we may learn and teach from them.

Your advice, questions, comments, and thoughts are very much welcomed, and will be responded to.

This silence must not continue. We must unite and survive.

Billy D. Cates-864126
Post Office Box 41
Michigan City, Indiana
USA 46360-0440

A plea for Iranian refugees

Dear Supporters of the Human Rights:

Below you will find a letter addressing a new treaty signed by the Iranian and Pakistani governments. We feel very concerned about the lives of Iranian political refugees who, as a result of this treaty, may be returned to the Islamic Republic of Iran with grave consequences in their future.

Please express your concern to the Pakistani government and ask your friends to do the same. Your response could save lives of many innocent Iranians.

Outreach Committee
Iranian Student Association
P. O. Box 937
Riverdale, MD 20737

Ambassador
Embassy of Pakistan
2351 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, D. C. 20008

Dear Ambassador:

Reports indicate that the governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have recently signed a treaty which is bound to endanger the lives of many Iranian refugees in Pakistan. According to this treaty, Pakistan will arrest and return all who have been "condemned" as "anti-revolution" by Iranian courts.

As you know, the conduct of the Iranian government with regards to human rights and treatment of prisoners, indeed, the entire justice system, has been widely condemned by many world organizations, notable Amnesty International. Hence, I am very concerned about this latest treaty between your government and the Iranian authorities.

In a land where there is no law it is easy to brand any human being with the mark of "anti-revolution." In Iran an individual demanding any basic right is often sentenced to death, all in the name of "revolution." I therefore demand that your government nullify this treaty and not return any Iranian refugees to Iran, as their destiny will be nothing but torture and death.

I am hopeful that you will relay immediately this concern that I, together with thousands of other concerned people, have on the well being of Iranian refugees residing in your country.

Sincerely,



Tribute to Mushroom, Skylore, and Mark Johnson

The colored haired woman walked into your life and changed it for the better.

You took her hand and shared everything you had . . . The perfect match.

Together you struggled to keep "electric coffee" alive. At least we know Mantra Mash will survive.

You're leaving us now and you'll be missed. I'll tip my hat as you drive off into the sunset. Thank you for showing Bloomington/Normal the time of its life.

You will be missed my friends by everyone who has had the pleasure to meet you. Take care, my friends--keep peace in mind with everything you do.

I can truly say I love you!

P.S. Magic Mushroom kitty you are my inspiration.

In peace,
Karen Elliott

P.S.S. See you at the National Gathering in Minn. (Rainbow) HO!

A reader on abortion

Dear Post Amerikan,

Once in a great while an opportunity presents itself which I simply cannot refuse. One such opportunity came my way when, the other day, I was asked to jot a few thoughts down for Post Amerikan. I thought to myself, "Ror, what to write, what to write?" Then it came to me. I need something timely, important, and interesting. So I picked a topic that was none of these . . . ABORTION.

The abortion argument has been going on for years, so it is not timely. Abortion in itself is not a government decision, so it has never really been important. And, so far as interesting goes, nobody gives a damn anymore.

However, those of us who consider ourselves PRO-CHOICE don't bicker about abortion, we advocate freedom of choice. And, freedom is always timely, important, and interesting. At least that is the way most compassionate, intelligent people see it.

But for the moment, let's talk about the heartless, stupid people out there who do not see this freedom as timely, important, or interesting. Those people who defeat their own purpose (god only knows what their true purpose might be) by opposing abortion, but at the same time opposing birth control and sex education.

Anyone with the intellect of Gerald Ford could reasonably fathom that the more one knows about sex, the more one knows about ways of preventing pregnancy, the less likely one is to find oneself in the predicament of having to make this critical decision. What this says about those audacious enough to consider themselves "pro-life" is that they must not be.

If indeed they are "pro-life," why do they oppose the use of fetal tissue to save lives? If indeed they are "pro-life," why do they bomb abortion clinics with doctors and nurses inside whom, I am sure, are quite alive? There are many questions such as these which the "pro-lifers" should consider before they continue to practice their blatant ignorance.

The thing which separates those of us who are Pro-Choice and those who are not is a fundamental ideological perception of government. America was built on the idea that the least government was the best government. The "pro-lifers" have apparently rejected this notion since they feel that it is perfectly fine for the government to be so intrusive as to go into your bedroom. They feel that it is perfectly fine for the government to tell you when to have children and under what circumstances to raise those children. How the hell does George Bush know when I should become a father?

Obviously, Georgie's "vision thing" does not envision impoverished, abused, unwanted children. Georgie must be unable to comprehend that an unwanted pregnancy, if carried to term, can only result in an unwanted child.

The question at hand in this "war" is "Who decides?" And, while abortion itself may not be political, the question of "Who decides?" is very political. This question will determine how much power our government has in the future.

What the "pro-life" side refuses to understand is that once we give this decision over to the government, it will be extremely difficult to get back. Once the government can tell us when we can have children, doesn't it also make sense that they would be able to tell us when we can't? The thought of a government forcing a woman to have an abortion is just as repulsive as the thought of a government forcing a woman to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term. For someday, that woman might be my girlfriend, my wife, or my daughter.

--ROR



Mail from a new fan

Dear People at the Post Amerikan,

I read about you in the Peoria Rag. Your paper seems like just the type of thing I'm interested in. Please send me a copy.

Dyanna Omkin
Morton, IL

Sometimes I feel like a childless mother

My friend Susie likes to say that she is childfree. By her verbal gesture she intends, I suppose, to "accentuate the positive," to emphasize that whether or not have children at all can be, should be, ought to be a socially sanctioned option. Both Susie and I would say that birth control, in all its medically safe and reasonably effective varieties, should be readily available to anyone who is sexually active. Abortion, though obviously a last resort, we would both say must remain available on demand to any woman of any age or circumstance who wants one.

But if we teach people that they have the prerogative, not to mention the right, to limit the number of children they have, we should also teach them that they have the prerogative, indeed the right, not to have children at all. Remaining childfree, Susie would say, should be presented to children and adolescents and as yet childless adults as a viable option, an attractive choice. I disagree. We can none of us ever become or remain childfree.

My dispute with Susie would not be over our mutual though entirely independent decisions not to have children. As did Susie, I long ago sorted out my desires and goals from the immense cultural apparatus designed to make women reproduce, regardless of their personal desires. Cultural wisdom has it that people—especially women—who never have children remain in some sad, even tragic, way "unfulfilled": read "bitter," "unhappy," "selfish." The childless woman in all her terrible incarnations remains an ever present cultural icon: to name two idiosyncratic examples, a nasty old woman in the movie "Birdy" delights in keeping the baseballs that accidentally roll into her yard; the heroine of Kate Chopin's ambiguous, powerful short story, "Regret," mourns profoundly never having had children.

In short, society commonly regards the woman who has never had children as socially, morally, even sexually suspect. As I am as much a product of my culture as the next person, I had to wrestle long and hard with those social suspicions before making my decision, my decision to remain childless.

Unlike Susie, I embrace that term childless because I believe that though I will never have children myself, I can never become childfree. Children are always present in my life and seldom so by my choice. Frequently, their presence annoys and exasperates me. Not infrequently, I encounter whiny, or screaming, or tantrum-throwing children when I'm in line at the grocery store, or trying to eat in a restaurant. Sometimes I encounter such children on airplanes, as I did last December on a mercifully short flight to Washington D.C. Whether their behavior is due to illness, overtiredness or even sheer brattiness makes little difference to me.

Such encounters serve only to affirm for me once again the wisdom of my remaining childless. Mothers of small children must have access to a patience and fortitude which I readily admit I don't care to develop. On the other hand, I encounter with equal frequency well-behaved, intelligent, even charming children in public situations, and I enjoy our brief little meetings enormously. Whether pleasant or obnoxious, children are always present, and it is only under the most proscribed circumstances I can expect not to meet them. I never know when or how I might have to deal with children.

Several of my closest friends do have children, and over the years I have spent a great deal of time with Laurie and Terrell's 3-year old, Nicole (whose picture rests on my desk as I write this), and with Judy and Rick's children Amy (who's 5) and Sam (who's—God help us—2 1/2). I've become very fond of all three children, and have learned a great deal about the extraordinary patience it takes to raise them, how to attend their physical needs, how to amuse them, how to set limits appropriately when they get in my face.

I've learned much about myself too, and all of what I've learned makes me thankful that I had the courage to dismiss cultural imperatives and refuse to reproduce.

I learned, for example, that I—and I suspect all of us—have the capacity to abuse others who are dependent, helpless and demanding. Once when I was babysitting Nicole, who was then a bit under a year old, she became especially obstreperous about my changing her very dirty diaper. I tried gentle persuasion. I tried cozening. Finally, I had to be firm and insistent. My temper grew shorter and she became more obnoxious. Suddenly, quite consciously, I felt the urge to strike her, to slap her as hard as I could. I didn't slap her, of course. I didn't even raise my voice. I was especially careful not to be too rough.

But as I fought and won this (to me if not to Nicole) tiny battle, I saw with horrible clarity that dark, that terrible, yes, that evil place where irrationality and abusive impulses mate.

Yet I loved Nicole then and I love her now. Perhaps love became the restraining force for me, perhaps it was just reason. In any event, just as I have learned that I have the capacity to be abusive, I have learned that I have the capacity to control those impulses. I'm glad of these lessons; I don't regret them. And I don't mind discovering new permutations to them, such as when I babysat for Judy a couple of times during my New Year's visit with her and her family.

Mothering is an acquired skill; I could develop it if I chose to. But I have chosen not to. I have chosen to remain childless for a variety of reasons, the most salient that raising children as a vocation simply doesn't—and never did—interest me. But even if I could become childfree—that is, never encounter children, never spend time with them, under any circumstances, whether casual or familial—I wouldn't. I love the few I do know well, and I take as much delight as any sentimental pronatalist in encountering the pleasanter ones. Frequently, I learn things of importance about myself or the human condition, as I have with Nicole, from being around them. But what I like best about all the children I've encountered is that they are my responsibility only in the most abstract sense. I am most happy to be childless.

—Deborah Wilson



4) In addition to teaching, encouraging, and supporting the children, we would let them know that they were unconditionally loved. In this regard, it was important for us to train ourselves to listen to know their concerns and to hear the messages that lay behind and between the words. We resolved never to punish in anger; and when punishment was required, to make it reasonable, and to make sure the children understood its purpose. Similarly, we resolved to praise them when they accomplished something worthy of praise.

5) We would be sure to supplement the education they received in school and to encourage their creativity so that no one could snuff it out.

6) We would establish boundaries for behavior, but within these boundaries foster as much freedom and self-determination as possible.

7) It would be important to have fun together, to laugh and play and enjoy each other as people.

We did the best we could according to these guidelines. In deciding priorities, we found it useful to ask ourselves, "What will it matter a year from now?" We have survived, and the children seem to have survived also. As a family, we remain friends.

--Marilyn and Bob Sutherland

On being

Our two children are now 25 and 27 respectively, and the major phase of our role as parents is over. From here on out, our relationship with them will be as friends and equals, hopefully with a warm bond of interest, support, and affection. The rearing of children was something that we took seriously: a responsibility which entailed a 20-year commitment of time, energy, and creative learning. At the end of the process, it seems to us that the rearing of children is the ultimate in creative experiences.

Our aim as parents was to assist our children in developing themselves to become independent and functioning adults with good self-concepts. This goal required that we encourage them in their development, support them in their experiments and explorations, provide them with useful tools and opportunity to gain confidence in using them—in short, train them in survival skills.

To accomplish this, we worked as a parental team, sharing our observations and thoughts with each other, combining our efforts to provide a stable consistency which our children could rely on.

We saw it important to set the following guidelines and rigorously observe them:

1) There had to be honesty in the family relationships: we would be honest with the children, and let them know that they could be honest with us (and were expected to be). There were to be no lies, evasions, or manipulations, no messing with people's heads or laying-on of guilt trips.



parents

2) We would respect the children as people, as individuals in their own right, born with personalities, and having hopes and desires of their own. We felt that while it was important for us as parents to make the decisions necessary until the children were able to handle making their own decisions, the aim would be to allow the children freedom to make their own decisions when they were ready to do so. They would have to know that decisions have consequences and that they would have to live with those consequences. Respecting the children as people also meant respecting their privacy and involving them in family decision making.

3) It would be necessary for us to serve as adult role models—setting an example for honesty, open-mindedness, humor, strength of character, having concern for others, a sense of justice and fair play, courage, the willingness to stand firm and, if occasion demanded, to fight for principles.

an interview with a lesbian mother and a gay father



How to bring up your parents gay!!!

Laurie and Terrell are parents of a daughter, Nicole, who will be four this coming April. Laurie, who is Caucasian, is also lesbian; Terrell, who is an African-American man, is gay. They have to deal with three "isms" as parents and partners: sexism, heterosexism and racism (not necessarily in that order). They live together as a family, sharing a household in Laguna Beach, California. Laurie and Terrell are not, however, a couple, as we define that term in traditional and heterosexual terms. The *Post-Amerikan* recently interviewed them on the subject of gay and lesbian parenting.

Post-Amerikan: What is the same about being gay parents and straight parents?

Terrell: Well, whether parents are gay or straight, you're still responsible for a human life—raising and nurturing that life unites you as people, no matter what your sexual orientation.

Laurie: People, no matter whether they're gay or straight, want to have children for the same basic reasons: to pass on a piece of yourself to the world, you want to share your knowledge and experience with your child. You want too to be able to provide a nurturing environment for the child to develop fully. I've always thought of children as the hope for the future because they are the future.

P-A: What are the special problems of gay parents?

T: There's not a lot of support from the gay and lesbian community because that community promotes a predominantly single lifestyle. Dating is harder for gay and lesbian people because we have no space for family life. What I mean is that most gays are not in touch with their families—they've been re-jected, ostracized, in some cases disowned. Consequently, many gays are leery of family life.

L: Not only does straight society assume that you can't have a lasting relationship with your same sex partner, but both communities assume you can't raise children. Too many gays and lesbians have assimilated the prejudices and myths of straight society, like those African Americans who have accepted and internalized the racism of Caucasian society. Like other minorities too, I suppose. Gays and lesbians too seldom expect to see children in our "gay ghettos." Then too, there are legal ramifications. For example, in divorce, the courts usually favor heterosexual parents when determining custody. But the gay and lesbian community needs to re-evaluate its own attitudes. What I've always liked about many feminist organizations is that they provided child care at their functions. ECCO (a gay and lesbian rights organization in California, of which Laurie is an active member) doesn't. When I've suggested that we provide child care so more lesbian/gay parents can attend a dance or other event, they always say, "It's too expensive; there's not enough need."

Too many lesbian organizations fail to provide child care for the same reasons. That's one reason why I was so excited to find the Lesbian Mothers Group in Long Beach. They always provide child care—and on the rare occasions when they don't—like for this dinner we're going to at the Alcapulco restaurant—they notify you well in advance so you can make other arrangements.

Dating's a real problem too—"Hi, my name is Laurie; do you like children?" is not a good opening line with too many lesbian women. I get so tired of seeing lesbians run screaming from the room when I tell them I have a kid. Not really, of course, but many women can't handle it. They're shocked, even though Terrell's gay. It's as though I've slept with the "enemy." That's another reason why I'm thrilled to be active in the Lesbian Mothers' Group; I meet other lesbian mothers. Besides,

it's very good for Nicole too. She has an opportunity, as young as she is, to meet other children from lesbian and/or gay households. She'll have some sense that ours isn't the *only* one.

P-A: What are the special joys of being gay parents?

T: Your life is more rounded; it has more meaning. It makes you more open to trying new things—like finding healthy, alternative means of raising children. Oddly enough, so many gays are service oriented—health care professionals, like nurses and doctors; teachers; people whose corporate jobs involve trouble-shooting. I think it may be—unconsciously—a way of offering nurturance, giving and getting nurturant strokes.

P-A: And you think that many gays and lesbians choose "helping professions" because they think that family life—however redefined—is closed to them?

T: Yes, and it doesn't have to be.

L: As a lesbian/feminist mother, I try harder to let Nicole become what she would become without sex-role typing and other interferences. But the special joys, I think, would be the same for all parents. Having your children say "I love you." Having them put their arms around you. Those things really do make it all worth it. Even when they're being brats! I'd like to give some advice to childfree/less lesbian women: When I met the woman I'm dating now, Hepzibah, she introduced herself by saying "Nice to meet you. I hear you have a daughter. Need a babysitter?" What a great opening line! *Learn it, girls.*

P-A: How does Nicole show her awareness (or lack of awareness) of her family's difference from others?

T: She's aware that Laurie and I lead separate lives. We date other people. We have separate bedrooms. Nicole sees that as natural. She's becoming aware that people live together in all kinds of circumstances and that it works. Most gay and/or lesbian people raise children alone. She sees from our example that people can make other kinds of arrangements, make different kinds of families.

L: She can see that our situation isn't that much different. We all live in the same house, even though Terrell and I have separate bedrooms, date other people and generally lead separate lives. Terrell and I have each other for support, as her parents. We try to have at least one meal a week together—even if it's just breakfast. On the other hand, Nicole asked me the other day when I was going to get married. I told her "Maybe I'll marry Hepzibah." "You can't do that, Mommy; girls don't get married." So we talked a little bit about that. She insists that she and Jeffrey Barnes, her friend from preschool, will get married soon, though. But Nicole knows and likes Hepzibah. She knows that when Hepzibah stays here, she sleeps in my bed. I kiss and hug Hepzibah in front of her.

Were I to hide it [Laurie's sexuality] that would cause really serious problems. Once she's old enough to understand what homosexuality is, and that it's different from heterosexuality, how she handles it is her business. I'll be there for her to talk about it, as she tries to work it out, but I can't work it out for her.

P-A: Does Nicole have to fit in with straight society very much? How does she make the adjustment?

T: Nicole's too young to see our difference from other families in a profound way. She does see Laurie with a lot of women; she sees me with a lot of men. She did ask me the other day, though: "Daddy, you going to go out and play with the boys?" Then of course there's the racial difference. Ours is an interracial household. She

doesn't see that much difference now, though I'm sure she will as she gets older.

L: Continually. All her friends from preschool—as far as I know—come from "traditional" families. My parents don't really know, though they must suspect from my behavior. I don't think people at her school know. Our social circle is very mixed; our straight friends know and are accepting. It will likely become more of an issue when she gets older. Though it's not as if her job were on the line!

P-A: As Nicole gets older, do you see fewer or more problems with her family situation coming up?

T: That remains to be seen, though certainly outside pressure will come into play. Then there will likely be more problems.

L: I'm sure it will. Not only will she have the usual traumas of adolescence, but she'll have to deal with heterosexism. That's why I think it's important to make contact with other gay and lesbian parents over the years. She can talk to other kids from families more similar to hers. I won't insist that she go to Gay and Lesbian Pride Week parades with me when she's old enough to choose for herself.

P-A: What do your parents think of your family arrangements?

T: My mother thinks it's great, that we're doing the mature, adult thing. For her, our sexualities are not an issue or a hindrance. She's envious that because of my living arrangements I can have such a close relationship with my daughter.



You know you're a parent when . . .

You know you're a parent when . . .

- you eat packaged macaroni and cheese and actually like it.
- you discuss Sesame Street in earnest.
- you find your home stocked with Cheerios, peanut butter, and spaghettiios.
- getting slimed by a sticky kid's fingers is an hourly occurrence.
- you develop a reflex of wiping anyone's runny nose.
- your kids are dressed better than you are.
- the schedule of kids' TV shows is etched in your brain.
- you find yourself humming "Head and shoulders, knees and toes."
- birthday parties are major stress-outs.
- Dr. Seuss is featured on your living room bookshelf.
- "pee-pee and poop" become part of your everyday vocabulary.

Bye-bye babies



L: I don't know. I think they're relieved that Terrell and I live together. I think they think that a male presence is good for her; they're very glad that her father provides that presence. Somewhere in the back of their minds, they hope this [Laurie and Terrell's relationship] will become "normal." But then, I've never really thought about what they think.

P-A: How do you feel that the area you live in affects how comfortable you are with your family situation? Do you feel that your lifestyle limits where you might live?

T: So many people live alternative lifestyles in Southern California. So many of those people are divorced parents, who of necessity make more liberal living arrangements. We are a nonconventional couple, but we live in a nonconventional area. I wouldn't want to raise Nicole in the South, unless it were in a large city, preferably near a university, or a smaller community, unless it too was near a university. Educational institutions tend to foster more tolerance.

L: I'm sure I gravitated towards Laguna Beach because it's the most comfortable place for us behind the "Orange Curtain" [residents with any awareness refer to Orange County as the "Orange Curtain" because of the county's notoriously conservative politics, cultural and otherwise]. My God—you actually see women walking down the street holding hands! There's a dyke bookstore in town—"A Different Drummer"—and I like to go there a lot, sometimes with Nicole. The woman who co-owns it likes kids; there's a good children's section. There's also an AIDS Benefit Thriftstore, run by the Laguna Friends [an organization which benefits people with AIDS]. Everywhere you go in Laguna, there are gay and lesbian people.

We're a little "gay ghetto town," though overwhelmingly middle-class and white. That might be more of a problem with Nicole, because she's biracial. We hope the gay community's political correctness will encourage them to confront racism more directly; and that should help her too. If we had to move, I'd like to move to Northern California, precisely because there are more progressive communities there.

—Deborah Wilson

I hung up the phone with the news that my brother and sister-in-law were expecting. I told them we'd been holding on to maternity and baby clothes, high chair and other baby essentials to pass on to them, and we were thrilled to know they could put them to good use. I was happy for them. At the same time, I felt a slight twist in the pit of my stomach. I realized that as a door was opening for Mitch and Beth, it was closing for me. My passing on the baby things felt like a symbolic act, passing the torch to the new mommy and daddy. My husband and I and our two lovely children are now a comfy suburban family.

Reflecting on the last six years, I remember it filled with the pregnancy, birthing, and nurturing of two terrific babies, a daughter, now five, and a son, now two. What an exhilarating moment when we learned we were expecting our first. We were incredulous! Us? A baby? Wow!!!

The anticipation involved devouring a library of books on prenatal and infant care and attending childbirth education classes. I had a fetal development chart which I checked weekly. After only a few weeks of pregnancy, I noted that the baby was the size of a grape. And, I remember, the first time my husband and I heard the fetal heartbeat in the o.b.'s office, my tummy gooped up with ultrasonic gel. The quick-paced boing-boing-boing sent a shiver up my spine. How awesome.

Both pregnancies were uncomplicated. I felt fit, healthy, and worked right up to delivery. My biggest complaint was constant heartburn resulting from my expanding uterus squashing my stomach. Childbirth solved that problem.

The news that our second baby was on the way was no big surprise. I had accurately calculated my cycles so that I could pinpoint conception. I

knew when we were making this baby. The news was delightful confirmation of a plan I knew we had already set in motion.

Pregnancy was a special time. I felt super special. People would look at me with my protruding middle and smile, ask when I was due, inquire how I felt, and compliment how good I looked.

Childbirth was something I had just to get through. Amy was born after more than 22 hours of unprogressive, posterior labor which ended with the tug of forceps and a stiff epidural. Forget Lamaze, I said. Samuel, in contrast, emerged four hours after I was admitted to the hospital. It was a precipitous labor, but I got through it with mild epidural and a lot of guts. This baby I pushed out. It was the hardest physical labor I ever did.

Having a new baby feels extraordinary. The intimacy formed with a tiny, soft, demanding, precious infant is profound. Despite the sleepless nights, colic, and stress of figuring out how to calm a fussy baby, these little creatures can be intoxicating. My husband and I were mesmerized by every baby milestone—grasping an object, rolling over, smiling, laughing, creeping, crawling.

Today, after all the attention focused on the creation, birthing, and nurturing of our babies, we barely remember that stage of our lives. Everyone tells you it's gone in a blink. While in the midst of it, we couldn't see past it. Now, as our children are rapidly growing and maturing, we can't recapture it. Thrilling as it is to witness our babies evolving into fascinating little people, we still feel a nostalgic pull of the baby years. And yet, we are not planning to have any more children.

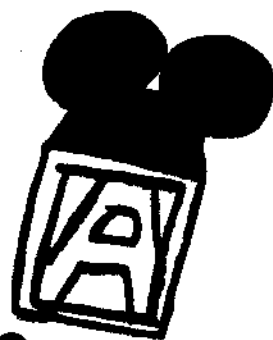
I have mixed feelings about being "finished." We're done having babies. Our family is complete. Most of the time, this feels okay. Other times, I feel a twinge, a little sadness, that the specialness of the baby era is past. I admire other babies, coo and make faces at them, hold them, and can't believe my children were ever that small. I hear myself saying things like, "If I had started a family when I was younger, or if we had more money, or if my husband wanted more children, I would have more." My next thought is remembering the discomforts of pregnancy, our expectations of our lifestyle, the one-on-one relationship we have with our children, and the disruption a new baby would bring to our lives. I'm thinking ahead to my career, sketching plans in my head and exploring options. And I'm really enjoying my relationship with my children as they grow.

I realize the pleasures and challenges of parenting are not ending. But still, there is a part of me that has a hard time saying goodbye to the baby era. It felt so special and unique.

—Judith Slutsky Schiller



The Kiddie Kollege



Kurriculum

According to a confidential source, President George Bust (oops, now that's a Freudian typo) is "seriously studying" the theory that people learn everything they need to know in kindergarten. Bush officials are in the process of developing a new kindergarten curriculum which would replace all existing public education. The new program is known as the Kiddie Kollege Kurriculum, or KiKoKu. KiKoKu courses currently include:

Religion 100, Plastic Idol Worship for Beginners. Basic instruction in worship to a wide diversity of popular icons, including Mickey Mouse, Big Bird, and Bugs Bunny. Learn to drool on, over, or in assorted paraphernalia decorated with these and other popular plastic idols. This course is a must for those who plan on worshipping less believable deities like God and the Almighty Dollar.

Sociology 161, Introduction to Gender Roles. This course surveys the variety of methods used to learn proper gender roles: Pink-and-blue colorcoding of clothes, rooms, and diapers. Role-playing games with Barbies and GIJoes. The GIGO theory of professional wrestling, superhero cartoons, and Junior Star Search. The PeeWee Herman/Miss Yvonne model of heterosexual relationships. Soc 161 is a laboratory course—concurrent enrollment in a laboratory section is required.

Economics 240, Mine! Mine! Mine! Learn behavioral techniques for manipulating people in authority into granting you your every desire. Techniques studied include: screaming at the top of your lungs until you hyperventilate and you puke; holding your breath until your face turns blue and you puke; thrashing on the ground and kicking like mad until you puke. Excellent preparation for future fraternity boys, sorority girls, and savings and loan presidents.

Health and Recreation 430, Advanced Unsupervised Play. Extend the obnoxiousness of your unsupervised play to its absolute limits! This course offers many well-designed activities guaranteed to drive adults absolutely crazy. Learn to stare down cars which attempt to interrupt your in-street play. Learn to relocate activities so that the number of decibels produced is maximized. Learn to throw flotation devices at guests swimming in the hotel pool. Learn to roam restaurants and start monosyllabic conversations with total strangers. Prerequisite: HRec 230, Introduction to Unsupervised Play, or consent of the instructor.

Political Science 333, Introduction to the Vice Presidency. This course has been updated especially for the children of the 90s. Vice President Dan Quayle provides the curriculum for the future leaders of Amerika. Learn how to speak Latin so you can talk to the Latin Americans. Learn the mystic customs of the happy campers of Samoa. Learn the secret location of that mysterious Pacific village known only as Pogo Pogo. Learn that a mind is a terrible thing to lose. Learn about the importance of bondage between parents and children. Learn to play golf—lots and lots of golf. Learn how to pass college—and we do mean pass. (You know, this is almost too much learning for potential vice-presidents.)

—The Balrog

Male infant circumcision is seemingly simple. Clamp. Peel. Snip. And the foreskin is quickly removed from the little boy's penis. For one million boys born in the United States each year, circumcision is a routine medical procedure.

Expectant parents rarely discuss the choice they will make about circumcision if they have a male child. In fact, many will not have ever mentioned circumcision until the mother is ready to give birth. Often embedded in the stacks of forms to sign when she enters the hospital is the release to perform circumcision. Or maybe after the mother has been through 13 hours of hard labor, the doctor asks her, "You do want to have your boy circumcised, don't you?"

Because the majority of American men are circumcised, the majority of American men and women see the circumcised penis as "normal." It has the appearance of what they are accustomed to seeing, while the intact, uncircumcised penis is a bit bizarre. Considering how the penis is represented, this really isn't too surprising. Anatomy and sex education books rarely depict the uncircumcised penis. Most modern day male nudes are circumcised. And understandably, the creative souls who take pen to lavatory walls rarely graffitied the penis with the foreskin still intact.

However, I wish to argue that the topic of routine male circumcision is worthy of serious questioning and consideration. In fact, what for years has been considered normal medical procedure for infant boys is really not so "normal."

The medical profession

Circumcision is the most common yet unnecessary form of surgery performed in the United States today. In the 1970's, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists both issued statements claiming that there existed no valid medical reasons for circumcising infant boys. The AAP stated further that routine infant circumcision "cannot be considered an essential component of adequate total health care."

It would appear that the AAP's and the ACOG's statements were influential in the decline of routine circumcision performed today. According to popular news sources, *Science News* and *Newsweek*, 95% of all boys were circumcised in the 1960's. In 1978, 68% of all boys were circumcised, and by 1985, this had dropped to 59%.

Circumcision: The drawbacks of circumcision

However, according to an article in *Sociology and Social Research* entitled, "American Circumcision Practices and Social Reality," 80% of all infant boys still undergo routine circumcision.

Furthermore, circumcision is costing parents (or supplementing the income of the medical profession, depending how you want to look at it) an average of \$135 million per year. Many insurance companies and state Medicaid programs are refusing to pay for the operation that has little proven value.

Regardless of the decline in routine male infant circumcision in the past three decades, in 1989, the AAP issued another statement which might have a significant influence on parents who are faced with the decision of circumcision. The AAP stated that incidence of urinary tract infection during the first year of life in uncircumcised boys is 10 times that of boys who are not circumcised.

At the same time, though, a significant amount of physicians, and parents alike, will clearly argue that in the prevention of infection, urinary tract and other penile infections, hygiene is key and as equally effective as removing the foreskin. However, the AAP is a powerful voice in the medical field; unfortunately, their report made little effort to focus on hygiene (also, most are "grossed out" by smegma, the build up of dead skin cells and dirt underneath the foreskin. But this is the same type of dirt that builds up between the toes, behind the ears, around the back of the neck, etc.).

The medical profession has also supplied its share of misinformation about circumcision. Dr. Aaron J. Fink of Mountain View Hospital, California, is one such physician. A strong advocate of circumcision, Fink has made claims that uncircumcised men are more susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. He believes that viruses can easily penetrate the thin membrane of the foreskin (actually, the head of the penis is just if not more thin). But his "medical" statements are far from being proven, and obviously dangerous.

Are you "for skin" or "not for skin"

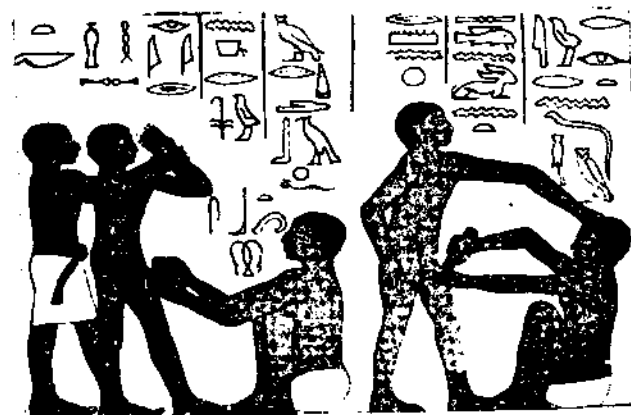


FIG. 27. EGYPTIAN CIRCUMCISION (ancient relief)

We live in a time when the public is desperate to discover more assured ways of not contracting the AIDS virus and is quick to listen to the words which follow the title "Doctor." One must wonder whether or not Fink condones safe sex practices or if he realizes the implications of his statement being interpreted that if you are a circumcised male, you are less susceptible to AIDS.

Do they really just cut it off?

Of course, any discussion of routine male infant circumcision should not be isolated from mention of the actual medical procedure itself. If the child is born in the hospital, circumcision usually takes place before the mother and child are released. Today that means that the child is likely to be circumcised within the first 24-48 hours of his life.

The child is restrained on a surgical table, arms and legs strapped down. Most of the time, in order to avoid complications, no anesthesia is used. Medical professionals will rattle off in layperson's terms that the nerve ending of a newborn are not fully developed, and therefore, they do not feel the pain that we as adults are likely to imagine the child is encountering. And they say that the boy will feel a slight discomfort which will end after about an hour. And they that the boy will not remember the procedure ever taking place.

Deciding against motherhood

April/May 1990

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Post American

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Nobody will ever send me a Mother's Day card—one of those Crayola creations made by dedicated small hands. I will never search my newborn's face for hints of my khaki eyes or my husband's, aquamarine ones, or sing a lullaby. No child of mine will ever smile at me, or graduate, or marry. I will leave no heir when I die.

Now that infertility has reached epidemic proportions this is an increasingly familiar litany. But there is a difference in my case: I chose this fate. I have made a conscious decision not to have a child.

Most major life decisions have come easily to me—I picked my profession as a psychoanalyst at age 10. But not this one. I have always been ambivalent about motherhood. I never categorically ruled it out (sterilization would have foreclosed the possibility of changing my mind), but I never felt a longing for children either. My husband knew my doubts when we married. Since I am not the kind of person to leave something so momentous to chance, a child would have to be planned. In my mid-30s, when I was finally in the position to give it serious consideration, I found myself postponing pregnancy every time I contemplated it. I'll try after we get back from Bali, I thought, or next semester when I don't have to teach at 8 a.m.

Pregnancy itself never appealed to me, but I knew I would tolerate it if necessary. The biggest obstacle turned out to be how I felt about such an enormous upheaval in my life, and the intrusion and interference it represented. On the most overt level, I dreaded the ordeal of moving, reorganizing my complex schedule, interviewing housekeepers. No more midnight suppers, I thought, or spontaneous jaunts, or concert series without elaborate planning, for 20 years. My time would never again be fully my own. My resistance to all the necessary changes and conditions a child would bring always seemed more compelling than any gratification I could anticipate.

I thrive on being able to do what I want when I want unimpeded. I saw that it simply would not be possible to continue to live my way and be a responsible parent—or a happy one. I spent years making my life the way it is, and I knew I wanted to keep it. Despite what the women's magazines say, I couldn't really see a way to have it all.

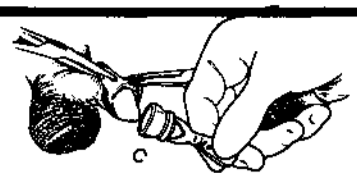
Probably the hardest thing about making the decision not to have a child is that biology precludes reconsidering it; very soon the opportunity will be lost forever. If I find at 50 that something fundamental is missing from my life because of my choice, I can't fix it. I couldn't even adopt then. In my experience

nothing has ever felt as final, as irrevocable, as this. You can get divorced, change professions, or leave town, but not having children takes you down a road where you can see that there's no going back.

Making a will (as I did recently) with no child to leave your possessions to is a graphic reminder of mortality. My life, my world, everything I value ends with me. I will never have as direct an impact on anyone as a parent has on a child; my patients, if I do my job right, go their own way. Without the rationalization or the consolation of a biological legacy, whatever I achieve is solely my responsibility.

Every time I watch the sidewalk parade of Snugglys and strollers I feel like an outsider to the main preoccupation of my generation. People my age seem obsessed with the accoutrements and activities of parenthood, and my life seems radically different from theirs. There are times when I feel painfully alienated from even my dearest friends, who now as parents inhabit a world I do not want to share. They don't appear to be oppressed by its constraints, or they deny or suppress it. They get up early and go to bed early, and of necessity have less time for me.

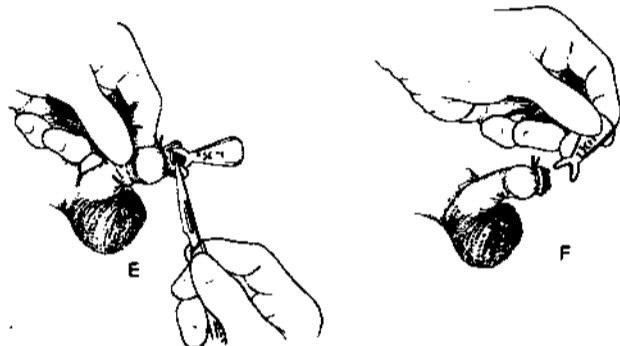
In my own as well as other people's eyes, my action brands me as different, forces me into a particularly threatening form of nonconformity, which derives not from a wish to rebel but from a realization that my prerequisites for happiness are outside the norm.



Fran Porter, a research psychologist at Washington University Medical Center in St. Louis, presents a different side of the story. She says, "Doctors have assumed that a baby's nervous system is so immature that he doesn't feel the pain. But my study shows that clearly may not be the case." Porter's research included tape recording babies' cries as they were undergoing circumcision. As she recorded the cries from the time that the baby was strapped to the table to the time when the circumcision was performed, she noticed that the high pitched cries of the child resembled the same voice patterns of children born with severe emotional disorders.

Another interesting study was conducted, this one involving expectant parents. In 1982, doctors made aggressive attempts to educate a group of parents against having their infant sons circumcised. These parents were informed of the AAP's recommendation that circumcision was medically unnecessary (and in 1982, this was firmly the AAP's position). 98% of those parents opted to have their son circumcised.

If parents are informed about the implications of the medical aspects of circumcision, and they are persuaded by medical professionals NOT to have their sons circumcised, why are 80% of all male children born still subjected to unnecessary surgery which removes a physically natural part



of their anatomy? It is clear that social motives for circumcising male children play a big part in what little exists of the decision making process.

Father, son, and the other boys

Religion plays a significant role in the decision to circumcise. The first written account of circumcision is found in the Bible in the book of Genesis with Abraham's covenant with God.

God says to Abraham, "This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you." Jewish parents will cite religion as a reason for circumcision more than Christian parents will. Unitarians have the lowest rate of circumcision among religious denominations.

But it seems that good old Dad is the "father" who plays the most significant role in the circumcision decision. In fact, the reasoning is simple for him—he wants his boy to look just like him. He also wants his boy to look like the other boys. One father in a study said, "We did not want our son to be different. We felt he will have enough problems in Jr. High and being different in that way would just add one more problem."

The parents' rationale

Rosemary Romberg is a mother of three boys. Her book, *Circumcision: The Painful Dilemma*, is 455 pages of stories, information, statistics, photos, and interviews about circumcision. And what she discovered is fascinating—and a bit frightening.

Romberg, a childbirth educator, and her husband had their three sons circumcised (Romberg's husband is also circumcised). She tells an interesting account of her own story and the choice she made to have her boys circumcised.

Romberg had her first two sons circumcised when they were still in the hospital. She gave birth to her third son, though, in a birth room in their home with a midwife. Seven days later, she took her son to the doctor to be circumcised. It was this contradiction between natural childbirth and circumcision that sent Romberg on her pursuit of information about circumcision.

Romberg asked, "Why was it so important to me to have his birth be totally peaceful in so many ways, with dim lights, soft voices, and not silver nitrate, and then turn around and do this? Why, when I had been a childbirth educator for several year, when I have gone out of my way to educate and inform myself about so many things concerning birth and babies, when I am probably more knowledgeable about most of these matters than 99% of all parents, did I still know virtually *nothing* about circumcision?"

Other parents Romberg talked to had similar stories:

"I stood outside the door while they were doing it to him and listened to him scream and cry. That's the first time I really began to wonder what the hell I had let them do to my baby. Since then, I have asked myself that a million times."

"They strapped him down which I hated. My husband said it was the most awful thing he'd ever seen or done. It was gross! How and why did this barbaric custom have to start?"

"Circumcision is so painful that a grown man cannot take it, so inflict it on a helpless newborn baby instead?"

What do parents know?

Unfortunately, not much. But it's not their fault if they are not informed. Consider the following from Romberg's book:

--Usually expectant mothers are simply asked whether or not they want the baby circumcised--without discussion. Some have called this a "conspiracy of silence." But in fact, childbirth educators and even doctors have rarely known any more than parents about this matter.

--Today's mother does not make an intelligent decision to have her son's foreskin amputated any more than she make an intelligent, rational decision to have her own pubic hair shaved, an I. V. stuck in her arm, a fetal heart monitor wired to her body, or to be confined to a labor bed, to deliver on a delivery table, or to have her baby separated from her after birth. Circumcision is but one more routine, questionable hospital procedure to which she passively, unthinkingly agrees.

--36% to 38% of female patients questioned in one study did not understand the term "circumcision" or did not know the circumcision status of their husbands (I don't find this surprising. When talking about this with a male friend, he asked me, "I'm probably circumcised, too, huh?").

What does it all mean?

Has the natural become the unnatural? Has the altered become the common? Indeed, it's not the first case when we as human being are repulsed, confused, or succumb to societal pressures to be repulsed or confused, by something natural about our bodies--and we go to great lengths to change it: shaving, anti-perspirants and colognes, liposuction.

But in this case, we are opting for surgery which results in barbaric mutilation and disfigurement of an infant male's penis within the first days of his life. Why? Because the uncircumcised penis doesn't look quite like we are used to. Or we just don't know any better.

And considering the issue of choice, the marginalized voice in this case has no choice because he is only hours old.

I am definitely anti-routine male infant circumcision, as is Rosemary Romberg. I don't feel that parents have the right to make the choice to have their sons circumcised based on tradition, views of normality, or societal pressures. And although I wish everyone held the same views, I think what is more important is for expectant parents to realize that the reality of the situation is that they are going to be confronted with making a choice for their son.

If you read Romberg's book, you will see that the choice is not all that simple. This choice should not be made in haste, nor should it be pressured. Instead, the choice should be one that is informed.

--Skeet Floyd

Romberg, Rosemary. *Circumcision: The Painful Dilemma*. Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc. 1985.

Childlessness naturally affects a woman more than a man. A man can eschew fatherhood without any threat to his masculinity, but motherhood has always defined a woman's purpose and value. There is no male equivalent of the word "barren," with its connotations of empty lifelessness.

More than my personal psychology is involved here. The current baby boom that I am declining to join in part reflects a backlash from the more confident and expansive 70s, when women seemed finally to be disencumbering themselves of sex-role stereotypes. In this more conservative era, an untraditional life once again becomes harder to justify and sustain.

Still, despite feminism and common sense, I find it difficult not to feel defective and ashamed about not wanting to be a mother, or to feel fully feminine just as I am. What real woman voluntarily turns her back on reproduction or does not naturally want to take care of a baby? How can she put her own life first? I struggle to accept as valid and sufficient alternative ways of nurturing outside the literal maternal role--the relationships with my husband, my friends, my students, and the suffering children within my patients. Only slowly do I see that I feel relief that only one of them actually lives with me.

The deciding factor is that my history and personality make me require (for my own well-being) a certain freedom from constraint. Being my own mother's daughter has made this inevitable. I was the focus of her ambition and energy, the bearer of her destiny. She could not consistently tolerate my emotional autonomy. Fundamental needs of mine conflicted with hers, so that along with all the gifts for living that I received from her came an extreme

sensitivity to intrusion, virtually instinctive now.

I don't feel--and I spend most of my waking hours helping others realize--that a woman is doomed to repeat her mother's life or her own childhood, or that parents are to blame for one's fate. I also know that family relationships have effects that cannot always be undone. Because of who I am, I must forgo certain experiences to assure that I have what I need most. This means that things others tolerate I do not, that I would be too bothered by constant arrangements and impingements, by the responses demanded by a child, things that would seem less disruptive to someone with a different past.

Many people gain maturity by becoming parents; I hope to achieve it by choosing not to. This demands self-reliance; when there is no one to live through you must seek meaning within yourself. I won't have the excuse of parenthood as a substitute for personal accomplishment. I know everything depends on me. It really does for everybody, but children can permit parents to avoid this awareness for long stretches.

I wish I could say with confidence that all my doubts are resolved and that I live serenely with my choice--or even that I am sure I won't change my mind. Will my house someday feel too terribly quiet, or my interests insufficient? Perhaps full acceptance of this choice is impossible now. It may be only in retrospect that I will finally attain a sense of peace about it and know as much as one ever can that what I did was right for me, that I succeeded in having an empty womb but a full life.

--Roberta Joseph: thanks to Utne Reader and Z Days.

Teach your children well

They're not allowed to live on their own. If they get out of line, their "owners" are allowed to smack them silly and will not get arrested. They're told never to speak "out of line," and are rarely taken seriously.

I am not speaking of the plight of woman in our stifling patriarchy, nor am I recounting the treatment of blacks in our racist culture. I am talking about our kids.

That's right. I figured that if this is really a children's issue, I'd better do a piece on agism and the rights of "underaged" human beings.

In a recent talk in Bloomington-Normal, civil rights activist Diane Nash said that one of the reasons our society might be so screwed up is our treatments of children.

"If you're in a supermarket and see a person slap another person, you would call the police," she said. "But if you see a parent slap a child, you wouldn't think twice about it."

Its true. In this country, children are not considered people, and do not share the same fundamental human rights that someone ten years older has. In fact, for the most part, young people are treated by both the law and their parents as property until they are eighteen years old.

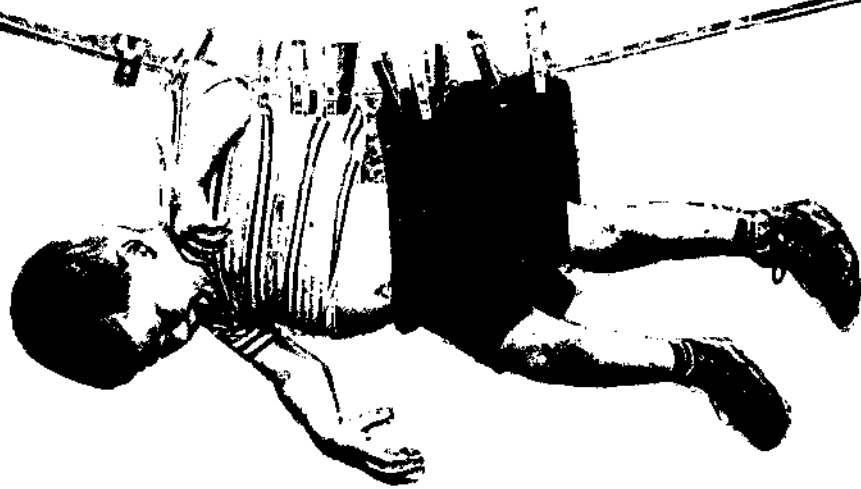
The way I see it, based solely on their age, children are denied the right not to have physical pain inflicted upon them by others.

I am not talking about cigarette-burns-on-the-shoulder or hot-iron-on-the-back child abuse cases, which schools and social workers are finally attempting to bring to justice and prevent. I'm speaking of the very same violence-the slapping, paddling, grabbing, whipping, and spanking- that the schools themselves use to "keep the peace" and that "every parent has to do."

Besides the fact that hitting someone is against all codes of morality using physical violence to "teach" children is, psychologically speaking, really stupid.

It is generally accepted that one's personality and patterns of behavior are based both on genetics and one's life experiences during the crucial learning stages of one's life.

When are these learning stages? During early childhood. When is the only time a person can be legally whipped without prior consent in this country? During early childhood.



What the Hell kind of psychological effects do you think this exposure to violence at such an early age has?

Look at the way we teach our kids. We teach them football, show them G.I. Joe on T.V., give them plastic guns, hit them if they misbehave, then tell them to "be nice." Parents can preach love and respect to their children as much as they want, but if the young person sees that she or he gets slapped for doing something wrong, she or he is bound to learn this behavior.

Furthermore, hitting children breeds submissiveness and passivity, teaching them that they know nothing and should blindly follow the leader's rules, while, at the same time, instilling anger, frustration, and fear, which will soon manifest itself into violence, deep inside the children.

Parents think that because they are biologically responsible for creating the child that they have some right to override its right not to be hit. I don't see how this argument works. Parents certainly do not claim the right to kill a five year old, just because she or he was a product of their conception.

Even those who are not biological parents like to join in on the fun of hitting the defenseless. Legendary pain perverts like school teachers, sisters in Catholic schools, and - the most twisted of all the domination-craving paddle toters - the assistant principals all assume the right to take out their frustrations on the buttoxes of students.

No court order, no trial before your peers, just whipping away because they are older. Even in liberal schools, rather than outlawing physical punishment, most simply have the parents sign a few forms releasing the rights to beat the kid into shape to the school.

Does the person being hit have any say? Isn't that the way things work in this country? One person's right to swing a paddle ends when another person's backside begins? Why are children the only type of human beings who a person can legally and proudly hit?

The best explanation I've heard for this is that children, especially very young children, are unable to grasp indirect or abstract forms of punishment. A parent or teacher feels obligated to make a child understand that her or his behavior was inappropriate, so, assuming the child won't comprehend or respond to reason or a spoken appeal to not repeat the behavior, feel that they must resort to punishment.

Now, the argument follows, a child, unlike an adult, is unable to grasp punishment like pay cuts or bad grades, so the most effective form of reason is the most basic - simple pain.

However, I will not concede that this justifies physical punishment. Dogs are trained by being hit, but children are not dogs. They understand communication. Physical abuse may change their surface behavior for the better, but it also screws them up psychologically.

If you think about specific circumstances, the problem becomes even more grotesquely ironic. Think about it, why do we usually whip children? What crime do they commit which makes a parent feel the need to "teach them a lesson," eh?

The only reason I can think of for most physical punishment is that the child was being violent and hurt another child.

So I ask you, what "lesson" are we then teaching our young people?

Some logic. You hit a kid enough times and he'll "learn" that hitting other people is wrong.

--Shadd





Dear Ms. Hippie:

Dear Ms. Hippie:

I am concerned about some friends of mine. Actually, I am more concerned about them than they are about themselves. Listen to this story and tell me what you think.

Debbie and Linda (their real names) have been roommates since college. Craig (his real name, too) is a friend of theirs from college. There has always existed a hot chemistry between Debbie and Craig—purely sexual. But throughout college, they were both involved in relationships with others, so they never did anything about their burning desires.

Last year, Craig married his college girlfriend. But two weeks before the wedding, Craig and Debbie could no longer refrain, and they extinguished their 4 year old fire for one another, if you know what I mean. Both said they felt better getting that out of their system.

But it didn't end there for Craig, and in turn, it hasn't ended there for Debbie. One week after his marriage, Craig wrote Debbie and told her that his burning desire had not ended after their evening together. Instead, it had only grown stronger. He then told her that when he was with her, he felt like he was with Michelle Pfeifer (Debbie does look somewhat like Michelle).

Then more letters came—long letters. And inside were pictures of Michelle Pfeifer cut from magazines and newspapers—lots of pictures.

And now Craig is writing and calling Linda, Debbie's roommate, wanting advice about what he should do about his desire for Debbie in light of coming upon his first year wedding anniversary.

So what do you think, Ms. Hippie? Is this something that I should be concerned about? Or should I sit back and watch their young and restless lives spin as the world turns?

Waiting for your wise words.

N. Parker

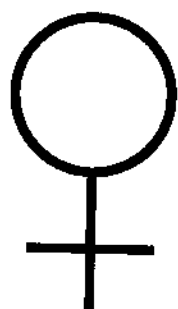
Dear Parker,

Craig's courtship is a masterpiece of poor timing, as well as bad style. Though one always enjoys flattering comparisons with movie stars, one doesn't like to feel that she's a sub for the real thing.

His obsession seems to border on the pathological, and if Ms. Hippie were Abby she'd advise counseling for him. But it's Debbie and Linda that you can help. They need to use an answering machine to screen their calls, simply refusing to speak to Craig. They also need to return, unopened, the mail they get from him. Though his antics are rather fascinating, the women must refuse him an audience. They should also get safety chains for their doors or deadbolts and eye peepers, in case he escalates his struggle to communicate. Women should also always have locks on their bedroom doors and a telephone extension by the bed.

Ms. Hippie would probably not give such dire advice had she herself not once been torn from her apartment door, dragged into the dark, rainy street in her nightgown, and beaten by a petulant suitor. This is not a dignified experience, and Ms. Hippie hates to see such things happen to anyone. (Ms. Hippie has heard, however, that the experience is preferable, though similar, to obtaining a Ph.D.) It's difficult to recover one's sunny view of humanity afterwards.

Women's History Month



Women's History Month . . . March 1990

Of course no one really saw ISU students carousing on the quad for the affair, but that's understandable—after all, why bother? They're probably waiting for Men's History Month (not to essentialize ISU students), gee, um, did you check your calendar?

Regardless, there were some on-campus events.

Performance and conceptual artist and philosopher Adrian Piper was in town March 2 and 3. Piper's multi-media artwork centers on issues of racism, sexism and xenophobia. Piper gave two presentations at ISU: a rather numbing monotone philosophy colloquium paper and an overview of her artwork.

Much of her artwork focuses on the sociological ramifications of her own mixed racial heritage. She discussed the paradoxes of her own life—as someone who is regarded as "technically" black, yet conditioned with the values of elitist private schools.

One of her pieces "Self-Portrait Exaggerating My Negroid Features" works on magnifying the features of her Black ancestry. In a video piece, Piper dramatically delivers a reading which explores the effects of blacks "passing" for white. The piece confronts the racist fears of white people: "If someone can look and sound like me and still be black, who is safely white?"

Defying the "loathsome" possibility that everyone is "tainted" by black ancestry is part of Piper's agenda. Yet during one of her readings an interesting audience dynamic arose and slipped by unaddressed concerning Piper's anecdote about reactions to her work and the oh-so-interested (and primarily white) audience.

Piper commented on the "types" who react to her work. She quoted the comments of some of these "types" in relation to her exhibits containing large portraits of black men. The reactions were those of white people and followed along the lines of "I think Black equality is wonderful and I wouldn't do anything to get in the way of Black liberation . . . but I wouldn't want my daughter marrying a Black man." Of course the Bloomington/Normal audience chuckled: "Ho, ho! Aren't other white people just so stupid/but that's not me . . . ho! ho! . . ."

One of Piper's most brilliant works, *My Calling (Card) #1* is a printed card which reads: "Dear Friend, I am Black. I am sure you didn't realize this when you made/laughed at/agreed with that racist remark." Piper, who prefers to avoid verbal confrontation with her oppressor hands out the card at social gatherings. "That way" says Piper "only two evenings are ruined: mine and the person's who made the remark."

Piper has another card for use in bars which reads: "I am not here to pick anyone up, or to be picked up. I am here alone because I want to be here, ALONE. Thank-you for respecting my privacy."

Even in excerpt form Piper's work is outstanding. Yet her two presentations seemed to directly contradict each other. The philosophy paper was bound in academic jargon and as such was only narrowly accessible (a vocabulary list was handed out at the door to those in attendance). The room reeked of the scent of the academic hegemony and elitism, and Piper didn't do much to confront the setting. She let herself slip right into it.

--l.c.

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The farmers' fight



Do you know that McLean County is one of Illinois' largest crop-producing counties?

Do you know that President Bush and Congress are trying to eliminate Federal Crop Insurance?

Do you know that the majority of our population has no idea what I'm talking about?

President Bush has decided that our government cannot handle the cost of the two current government financial aids to farmers: Federal Crop Insurance and Disaster Payments. He though long and hard (?) and made a decision: eliminate Federal Crop Insurance. Luckily our government has a system of checks and balances so that one branch cannot make a decision like this and have it effective immediately. Bush has made this proposal in his 1991 budget, and it is now up to Congress to make the final decision: eliminate Federal Crop Insurance or Federal Disaster Assistance?

Federal Disaster Assistance works much like other types of disaster assistance: a natural disaster occurs, causing the majority of its residents to lose items of great worth: homes, businesses, crops, and so on. Government officials visit the area and, based on their findings, advise the government to give financial aid to the residents. Last year the nation saw tow large-scale disaster areas: the south-east coast devastated by Hurricane Hugo and San Francisco after the earthquake. In both of these instances nearly 100% of the population received disaster assistance in one form or another.

Crop disaster assistance is different in that it is more selective of its recipients. Those who are involved in farming or who follow weather patterns know that weather can be selective. A farm can be wiped out in one ten-minute hail storm, yet the farm down the road may not have been hit at all, or may have non-disaster level damage. Although the 1988 crop year is an exception, drought can be selective, as can flooding, excessive rain, frost, freeze, excessive heat, disease, insects, fire wind, and wildlife destruction of crops (all of which are covered under a crop insurance policy). If any of these natural causes has not destroyed enough of the crops in an area to meet disaster criteria, the area will be ignored by the government, and those farmers will be out of luck if they have little or no crop to sell.

Insure to Assure

The only way for farmers to assure that they will have some form of income at harvest is to insure. Federal Crop Insurance works like other types of insurance in that a consumer pays the premium on a policy in order to be reimbursed should that item be damaged or destroyed. The policies are written by private insurance industries and are reinsured by the government, specifically Federal Drop Insurance Corporation (FCIC). The only difference between FCIC and FDIC is that one insures crops and one insures money deposits.

Nearly all crops grown in the nation are eligible for insurance, and the rates and premiums are based according to many factors, including location (for example, land that easily floods every year), crop practice (irrigated versus non-irrigated), and past records of the individual farmer.

Crop insurance offers something that disaster does not: the opportunity for the farmer to have an active part in planning the farming operation. Farmers are able to choose the amount of harvested bushels to guarantee. Yes, a farmer can guarantee some form of a crop and income. There are no guarantees with weather or Disaster Assistance. If the production falls below that guarantee, FCIC settles the loss based on the policy liability and pays accordingly and swiftly. Disaster Assistance cannot do these things. It cannot let the farmer have an active part, it cannot treat each farmer as an individual, and it usually cannot make swift settlements.

The issue in Congress is not whether or not one program is better than the other. It is money—always money. From 1981 through 1987, FCIC paid out \$3.8 billion in indemnities to farmers. In 1988, FCIC paid out \$900 million. While one side of the government was paying for FCIC, the other side was paying for disaster assistance. The Disaster Program cost the government \$3.1 billion in 1988 alone.

Since the issue is money, why are some not seeing the obvious solution provided by crop insurance? With crop insurance, the farmer pays part of the cost by paying a premium. Disaster payments are free to the farmer. That sounds good to the farmer, but not to the non-farming taxpayer.

Americans do not like to pay for the idleness of others, which has recently been proved here in Illinois. Jim Edgar was successful in getting legislation passed to assure that all drivers be insured. In order to assure our safety, he forced us to insure. Why should those who do pay for those who don't? The same with farmers: Why should one receive free money when the neighbor doesn't? The government cannot pay all farmers every year, so why should they go through the stress of the selection process? Let each farmer take responsibility as a business person. Many of us forget that point and do not treat farmers with the respect they deserve.

Speak Up!

Congress has not voted on this issue yet, but is expected to do so this summer because the deadline to take out policies on some crops for the 1991 season is the summer and/or fall of 1990. Now is the time to contact the legislators and voice your opinion. The Senators and Representatives from Illinois are especially responsive, as they have a lot to gain or lose by listening to their own farmers.

It is not only farmers that are heard on this issue. The percentage of farming as an occupation in this country is incredibly small, but in Central Illinois it is easy to know or be related to a farmer. Better yet—who doesn't depend on the American farmer for daily living? The elimination of the insurance program could cause some farmers to leave the business, leaving the nation to rely on foreign sources. And farmers who leave the occupation of farming will be out competing with you in the job market, which is already overcrowded.

Please remind a congressperson that if there has to be a choice between Disaster Assistance and Federal Crop Insurance, let it be Insurance.

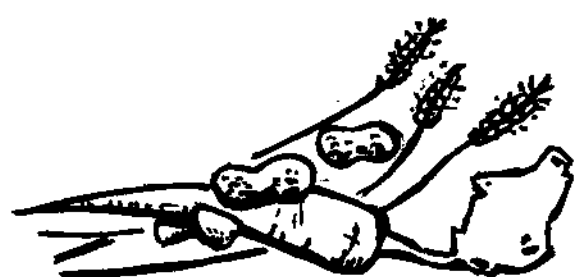
--Jules


Illinois U.S. Senators


Alan J. Dixon
Paul Simon
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510


Local US Representative

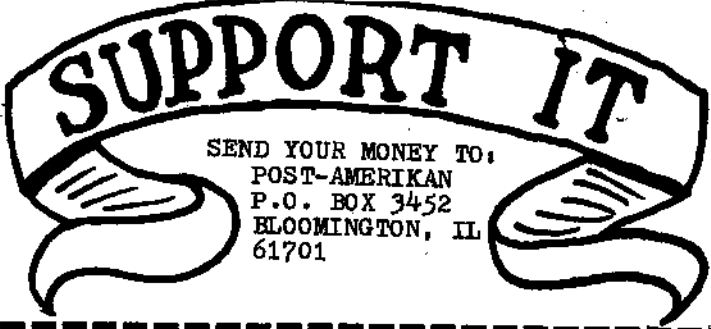
Edward R. Madigan
United States House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515









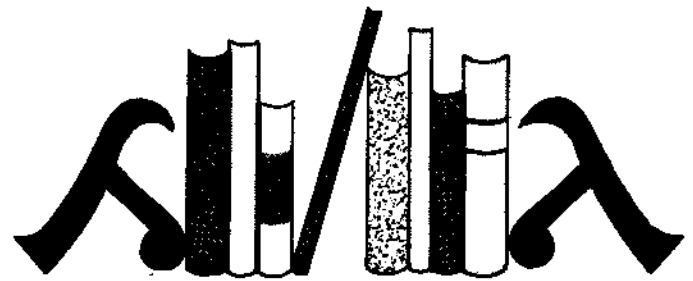


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News from Lambda



Court refuses to recognize lesbian as parent

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund today announced a recent New York Appellate Division ruling that a lesbian who had parented a child with her ex-lover has no legal right to seek visitation after the couple split up. In a 3-1 opinion, the court held that a prior decision of New York's highest court, where a non-biological father lost his claim for visitation, bound them to rule against the lesbian non-biological parent. A strong dissent to the court's ruling was filed by a fourth judge.

Lambda represents Alison D. who became involved in a romantic relationship with Virginia M. in 1977. The two women decided that they wanted to raise children together. Virginia was inseminated with the sperm of an unknown donor, and gave birth to their son in she and the respondent lived together as a family unit, planned the respondent's pregnancy by artificial insemination, and agreed to participate equally in the support of the child as "co-parents," the petitioner has established that she possesses standing to seek visitation, despite the absence of a legal biological relationship with the child."

The dissenting judge further wrote, "Clearly, a child's love for, and attachment to, a person who has assumed the role of parent is no less merely because that person is not biologically related to the child."

July 1981. Three years later, Alison gave birth to a girl, whom they also intended to raise together. However, the couple separated shortly after the birth of their daughter.

Throughout the next four years, Alison had regular visitation with their son, which Virginia agreed to and encouraged. Alison took the child on vacations, on visits with his grandparents, to school, to the doctor, and continued to care for his emotional and financial needs. In 1986, Virginia started to limit Alison's time with the child, finally cutting off visitation altogether in 1987. Though Virginia never attempted to maintain a relationship with her daughter after the break up, Alison had developed a close parental relationship with their son in the 6 1/2 years before Virginia refused further contact between them.

When negotiations for visitation failed, Lambda's Legal Director Paula Ettelbrick filed a petition for visitation in state court in Poughkeepsie, claiming that Alison is a parent under state law. After the trial court ruled that Alison was not a parent under state law because she was not biologically related to the boy, Lambda took the case to the appellate court.

"This ruling is a tragic reminder to all lesbian mothers, particularly those with no biological link with their children, of our vulnerability as parents in a world which refuses to validate our families," said Ettelbrick. "Though we know we are charting new legal territory with this case, I am amazed that the court never attempted to consider the child's well-being and interest in retaining contact with his other mother, but ruled coldly as a matter of law that if there is no biological relationship visitation is not allowed."

One judge of the four judge panel did attempt to look at the child's relationship with Alison, and wrote a stinging dissent. In it, she said, "[w]here the petitioner has alleged without dispute that

Lambda intends to seek an appeal to the Court of Appeals, New York's highest state court. Ettelbrick further stated, "This case is similar to the early lesbian custody cases, which we seemed to lose initially. We must keep pressing the courts and keep educating judges until they see that lesbian families have every bit the same rights to be recognized by the law as other families."

Lambda is also co-counsel with the National Center for Lesbian Rights in a similar case in California. Briefs were filed this week in the California Court of Appeal on behalf of a lesbian co-parent, though it will be many months before a decision will be handed down in that case.

Medical center modifies admission policies for PWA's

After discussions with Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and Gay Men's Health Crisis, New York University Medical Center has established new admissions policies giving patients with AIDS access to semi-private rooms and creating a team of senior physicians to review emergency room charts on a daily basis to "prioritize" admissions, according to a letter released today.

The center had previously restricted people with AIDS to private rooms, intensive care units or the special Cooperative Care facility.

In a letter dated February 22nd to Thomas B. Stoddard, Lambda's Executive Director, the Medical Center stated: "This institution assigns in-patient beds without regard to diagnosis. The sole criteria that would prohibit any one patient being cohorted with another in a semi-private or other multi-bed room is the medical determination of the patient or the other occupant(s) of the available room."

In the same letter, the Center also disclosed the designation of the team to review emergency room charts. The purpose of the new procedure is, in the words of the Center, "to assure even-handed implementation of our practice of assigning in-patient beds without regard to any consideration other than the well being of the patient."

The previous restrictive policy had spawned a number of complaints against the institution by people with AIDS, including allegations that it had caused unnecessary delays in transferring patients with AIDS and HIV from the emergency room to in-patient beds. Of the 140 general medical beds at NYU, 119 are in semi-private rooms, and were therefore inaccessible

to people with AIDS until the promulgation of the new policy.

"Admission to a hospital is a critical period in the health-care needs of people with AIDS," said Catherine Daly, Ombudsman [sic] for Gay Men's Health Crisis. "The hospital must be ready to continue the same quality of care the patient has been receiving from his or her physician. Any interruptions in that quality of care could put patients in considerable danger, particularly for infections."

In one instance, Ron James, a man severely ill with AIDS, spent ten days in November in the Center's emergency room before his transfer to a private room. He died several days after the transfer. A complaint on his behalf is pending before the New York Commission on Human Rights.

Representatives from Lambda and Gay Men's Health Crisis met with officials from the Medical Center in December in an effort to alter the previous policy of exclusion from semi-private rooms. The center instituted its new policy several weeks later.

"The Medical Center acted responsibly and fairly, and we are grateful," said Mr. Stoddard. "Any hospital policy excluding or segregating people with AIDS violates state, city and federal laws forbidding discrimination on account of a person's disability, as well as the recommendations of the American Hospital Association, for it irrationally restricts the range of care available to them. Patients with AIDS pose no danger to patients with other illnesses, since the virus cannot be transmitted casually. We hope that other medical facilities will learn from NYU's example."

Lambda last year sued Howard University Hospital in Washington, D.C., over a similar policy. That suit, conducted in conjunction with the Washington law firm of Bernabei & Katz, resulted in an out-of-court settlement under which Howard agreed to permit patients with AIDS to be treated in all available wards and rooms.

NYU Medical Center is among the nations leading institutions studying and treating AIDS. At any one time, 20% or more of its in-patients beds are occupied by people with AIDS. Its medical staff also provides the care for New York City's Bellevue Hospital Center and its AIDS population.

Lambda, founded in 1973, is the national legal organization dedicated to the rights of lesbians, gay men and people with AIDS. Gay Men's Health Crisis, also located in New York City, is the nation's leading AIDS organization in education, services and advocacy.



T.O. SYLVESTER

You always wanted a Jewish doctor in the family, Mom ... and here she is.

New Jersey ends undercover entrapment

New York City--Following massive publicity in both the gay and non-gay news media of Lambda's criticism of new Jersey State Police abuses, the newly-appointed Police Superintendent, Col. Justin J. Dintino, announced the termination of Vince Lombardi Service Area undercover operation. This operation led to the entrapment and arrest of hundreds of men on "lewdness" charges. Dintino agreed with Lambda that "It's kind of repulsive ...that the state police should be involved in undercover activity to arrest people for [allegedly] lewd behavior." He announced that only uniformed troopers would be assigned to patrol where necessary.

Lambda Legal Defense and Education fund led a coalition of gay and civil rights activists and groups protesting the undercover operation. Teams of plainclothes officers, who were paid overtime, were stationed in the restroom, engaged in flirtatious behavior, pretending to masturbate, and then arresting men who indicated any reciprocal interest. The expensive operations took place over the last three years, and resulted in hundreds of arrests. Most of the men arrested were too intimidated or embarrassed to fight the charges.

While extremely pleased with the new administration's repudiation of such undercover entrapment techniques, Lambda staff attorney Evan Wolfson, who is coordinating coalition actions, said that the State Police needed to take additional steps. "Although the operation at Vince Lombardi was one of the worst, it was not unique," Wolfson remarked. "We have received complaints about similar police activities in such localities as Bloomfield, Montavale, and Sayreville, to name just a few." Wolfson notes complaints of local police abuses against gay people in parks, bars, and even bookstores, calling upon the Florio administration to end all undercover entrapment of gay people throughout New Jersey.

In addition, Lambda is urging the State Police to implement a program of basic sensitivity training for state troopers, designed to counteract ignorance and prejudice about the extensive gay and lesbian community in New Jersey. Police in New York and Massachusetts, among other forces, have instituted successful programs without difficulty.

The Lambda-led coalition includes such groups as the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, the Anti-Violence Project of the New Jersey Gay & lesbian Coalition, and the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project, as well as local attorneys and other activists. The coalition filed a brief documenting many of the abuses, as well as the constitutional and legal issues in two individual cases on appeal in Superior Court in Bergen County, New Jersey.

Declared Wolfson, "Police operations like this waste valuable resources, lead to serious abuses, and destroy the gay and non-gay public confidence in law enforcement. We will all benefit from Attorney General Del Tufo's and Col. Dintino's willingness to open a new page in police community relations. Gay men and lesbians in New Jersey deserve protection, not victimization, by their police."

You're in luck, sir. We're having a special today on Tom Selleck look-alikes.

GAY DATING SERVICE



PACKAGE FROM YOUR MOM. MUST BE YOUR MONTHLY SUPPLY OF RUBBERS.

Court rules for gay father

NEW YORK--In an important ruling, the Iowa Supreme Court recently rejected a trial court's order that a gay father was restricted to visitation with his children only so long as "no unrelated adult" is present. In lifting the restriction, the court stated that "[It] his unusual provision was obviously imposed on account of Michael's homosexual lifestyle."

The case, *Walsh vs. Walsh*, involved a gay father's efforts to retain visitation with his two children upon the dissolution of his marriage. Though his former wife conceded that Michael Walsh is a good and loving father who should have frequent visitation, she claimed to be concerned for the children because of Michael's "gay lifestyle." In a ruling that was clearly intended to keep Michael's children away from his current live-in partner, the trial court imposed the much more sweeping restriction that no unrelated adult be present when Michael sees his children.

Two national lesbian and gay legal organizations, the New York based Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and the San Francisco based National Center for Lesbian Rights filed a joint court brief arguing that the trial court penalized Mr. Walsh simply because he is gay and lives with a man. The two groups urged the Iowa Supreme Court to overturn the lower court's restriction and treat the father like any other parent entitled under Iowa law to liberal visitation rights unless specific harm to the children is proven. The Court issued its decision February 21, 1990.

"In rejecting the restriction, the court seemed to recognize that children who spend time with gay parents and their partners are no more 'exposed' to their [parents'] 'private sex life' than they would be to that of a non-gay couple," stated Evan Wolfson, Lambda Staff Attorney. "Being gay is not just about sex."

"Though the court dealt only with the visitation restriction, the court's implicit recognition that a parent's sexual orientation is not a relevant factor in a visitation case should offer some assurance to lesbian and gay parents in Iowa," said Roberta Achtenberg, Executive Director of NCLR. "This is in line with the growing number of cases in other states."

Courts as diverse as South Carolina, Alaska, California and New Jersey have acknowledged that gay or lesbian parents have a right to custody and visitation. The trend is clearly in favor of gay parents. However, it is still not unusual for trial courts to impose restrictions that the children not be exposed to other lesbians or gay men. Courts have prevented lesbian and gay parents from having overnight visitation when a lover or partner is present and from bringing the children to gay events. In extreme cases, courts withheld custody or visitation until the lesbian or gay partner moves out of the family home, stating their concern about the children being exposed to a gay lifestyle.

"Clearly, these kinds of restrictions cruelly punish lesbian and gay parents by making them choose between their domestic partner and their children," according to Paula Eitelbrick, Lambda's Legal Director. "Both Lambda and NCLR are committed to fighting those ludicrous restrictions on the lives of gay and lesbian families."

A large part of the Lambda-NCLR brief was devoted to a survey of scientific research on gay parenting and child rearing. It included studies showing that there are anywhere from eight to fifteen million lesbian and gay parents in the United States, with fourteen million children. The brief also gathered the voluminous evidence repudiating false stereotypes regarding lesbians and gay men, supporting the legal position that sexual orientation by itself should not be a factor considered in custody and visitation determinations.

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CENTRAL ILLINOIS**
733 S. W. Adams, Peoria, IL,
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Sun-Wed: 10-3:00 a.m.
Thur: 9-3:00 a.m., Show night
Fri-Sat: 9-4:00 a.m.

Present this ad at the bar for a drink.
One per customer per night

ACTION ACCESS



The following excerpts are taken from Greenpeace magazine. To subscribe to the bi-monthly publication, send \$20 to GREENPEACE, 1436 U Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20009. Allow 8 weeks for the first issue.

WASTE ALERT

The NUCLEAR REGULATORY Commission will soon reclassify certain low-level radioactive wastes. They will be listed as "Below Regulatory Concern," allowing the industry to dispose of them like everyday garbage. Write to your national representatives and urge them to protect people from radioactive trash. For information on local ordinances, contact the Nuclear Information and Resource Service at 1424 16th Street, NW, Suite 601, Washington, D.C. 20036; 202-328-0002.

GREENPEACE ON PAPER

For a brochure that discusses the environmental impact of the papermaking process and gives consumers instruction in responsible home and workplace paper use, send \$3.00 to Greenpeace, 4649 Sunnyside Avenue N., Seattle, WA 98103; Ask for "The Greenpeace Guide to Paper."

TEST SITE ACTION

The American Peace Test (APT) is planning a peace encampment and nonviolent direct action to stop nuclear weapons testing and production at the Nevada Test Site from March 29 to April 2, 1990. For information write: APT, P.O. Box 26725, Las Vegas, NV 89126.

KEEPING ECO SCORE

Can you distinguish between the hypocrites and the real environmentalists in Congress? To know how your representatives voted on planet-saving issues in 1989, send \$5.00 for the National Environmental Scorecard to League of Conservation Voters, 1150 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 201, Washington, D.C. 20036.

HOME COMPOSTING

Everyone can help solve the problem of overflowing landfills by composting. Some 20 percent of household garbage is made up of materials that can be composted. For a free pamphlet on how to start a compost pile, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Five Steps to Quick Compost, Organic Gardening, 33 E. Minor Street, Emmaus, PA 18098.

PROTEST VELSICOL

The Chicago-based volunteer organization Terra has joined Greenpeace to stop Velsicol Chemical from producing chlordane and heptachlor. Terra welcomes new members to participate in its subway poster campaign, lectures and videos on alternatives to pesticide abuse, and legislative campaign to support upcoming Congressional restrictions on pesticide exports. Contact Terra: 3751 N. Sawyer, Chicago, IL 60618, 312-509-1808.



EARTHDAY - APRIL 22, 1990

Greenpeace will be sponsoring a Spring Slide Show at Illinois State University on April 16, 1990 at 7PM. The location for this event has not yet been selected. Keep posted to local sources for more details.

SEE DOLPHINS

On April 22, the DISCOVERY channel will screen a new documentary titled, "Where Have All The Dolphins Gone," narrated by George C. Scott, 1 and 9PM everywhere.

EARTH DAY TEACHES...

...RECYCLE, eat low on the food chain, plant trees to shade your home, save water, don't buy products made of tropical hardwoods, use public transport, bike or walk, avoid plastics, use mugs, not disposable cups, know how your representatives vote, mend rather than discard and replace..

MOBILIZE AGAINST POLLUTION

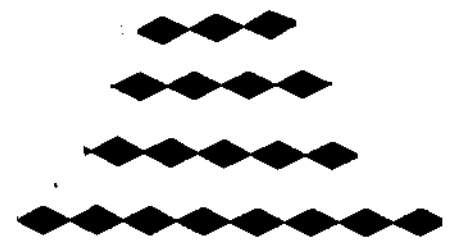
There's a new tool for community activist groups working on pollution issues developed by Greenpeace, National Toxics Campaign, U.S. Public Interest Research Group, Citizen's Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste and Clean Water Action Project. The Pollution Prevention Action Plan highlights four areas- toxics, garbage, pesticides and ozone destruction-and describes potential solutions, specific demands activists can make on local governments and polluters, and a timeline of coordinated action. Earth Day 1990 will be used for grassroots demands. For more information, contact the group nearest you, or Greenpeace, 1436 U Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009, Attn: Pollution Prevention Action plan.

STUDENTS, TOO

Creating our future, a group of California students working with environmental and social activists, offers a manual entitled, "How to Organize Earth Day Observations at Your School." The manual includes information on recycling, tree planting, boycotts, and celebrations and is available for \$5 (less in bulk) from Creating Our Future, 398 North Ferndale, Mill Valley, CA 94941.



"We don't bother buying pesticides anymore. We just spray the crops with our groundwater."



OPERATION RECYCLE

We recycle:

- Newspapers
- Corrugated cardboard
- Non-glossy office paper
- Container glass
- Beverage and food cans
- Plastic milk jugs

**Make a difference for our environment.
Call 829-0691
(Community Action)
and find out how!**

McLean County's only not-for-profit community recycling center

829-0691

923 E. Grove

Bloomington, IL

- Drop offs
- Buyback
- Recycle drives

If you're wondering what you can do to help clean up the environment, "50 Simple Things you can do to Save the Earth" is an excellent source for information. The book is available at Crossroad Global Handcrafts in Bloomington or you can write to: Earthworks Press Box 25 - 1400 Shattuck Ave Berkeley, CA 94709 (415) 841-5860.

STOP THE JUNK MAIL

Background. We don't usually think of junk mail as an environmental hazard-just a nuisance. But if you saved up all the unwanted paper you'll receive in the mail this year, you'd have the equivalent of 1-1/2 trees.. And so would each of your neighbors. And that adds up to about 100 million trees every year.

Did you know . . .

*Americans receive almost 2 million tons of junk mail every year.

*About 44% of the junk mail is never opened or read.

*If only 100,000 people stopped their junk mail, we could save about 150,000 trees every year. If a million people did, we could save some 1.5 million trees.

Simple things to do . . .

*Write to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, 11 West 42nd St. PO Box 3861, New York, NY 10163-3861. They'll stop

your name from being sold to most large mailing list companies. This will reduce your junk mail up to 75%.

*Recycle the junk mail you already get: If it's printed on newsprint, toss it in with your newspapers. If it's quality paper, make a separate pile for it- many recycling centers accept both white and colored paper. Envelopes are recyclable, too- as long as they don't have plastic windows in them.



Romanovsky and Phillips

to rock B/N!

On Saturday, April 21, the Gay People's Alliance will be featuring the musical duo of Romanovsky and Phillips at Hayden Auditorium, Metcalf School. I'm too lazy to come up with a personal and clever critique of R & P, so the following is verbatim (well, sort of word for word description) from the Romanovsky & Phillips press packet that was given to me by the GPA:

Romanovsky & Phillips have attracted thousands of devoted fans nationwide with their entertaining and affirming performances. By singing about their lives as gay men with unprecedented honesty and outrageous sense of humor, they have carved out a niche for themselves in the alternative music industry.

R & P have recorded three albums on their own label, Fresh Fruit Records. They just released their latest album, *Emotional Rollercoaster*, in June of 1988 (looks like it's time to update that press package).

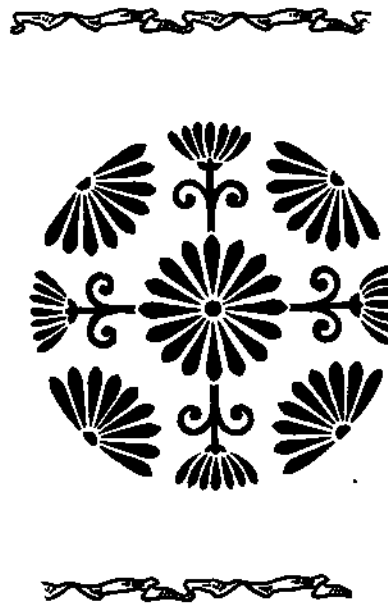
The concert should be a good time, with song titles like "Don't Use Your Penis for a Brain," and "The Sodomy Song" which comments on the Supreme Court sodomy ruling ("Only an a**hole would care what's in your a**holes and who put it there.") The duo is politically right on, and I'm sure will be entertaining to gay and straight alike.

Once again, the concert is Saturday, April 21 at 8:00 p.m. at Hayden Auditorium, Metcalf School on the ISU campus. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door and are available from the GPA. Call 438-2429 or write the GPA at 146 Braden, Bone Student Center, Normal IL 61761.

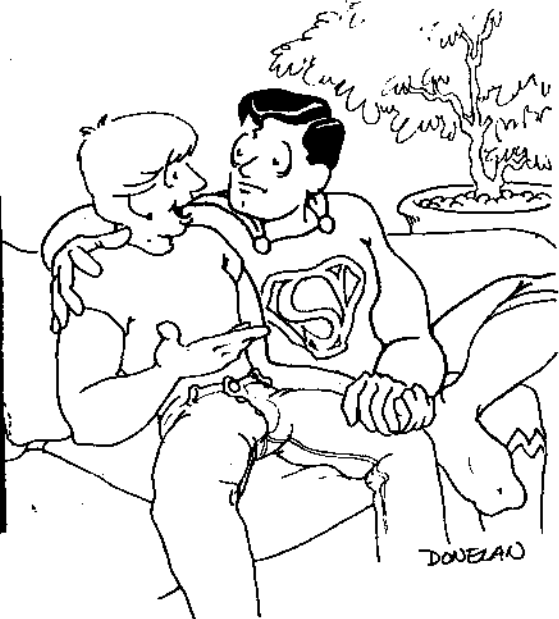
--Peter Doubt



ROMANOVSKY & PHILLIPS
FRESH FRUIT RECORDS



No, I'm not kidding! If you came out publicly, do you know what that would do for our image?



Turn the channel to Deep Dish



New York, NY--On March 3, 1990, Deep Dish TV, the nation's first public access satellite network, began its new season with a special program on the Nicaraguan elections--transmitted *live from Managua!* Following the live broadcast was a series of twenty half-hour programs by community producers, available free to public access cable stations and home satellite viewers nationwide.

The Deep Dish TV Network consists of more than 300 cable systems serving in excess of 12 million households. The programming can also be picked up by the more than 2 million home satellite dish owners in North America.

The season started with an hour-long special--"Let Nicaragua Speak!"--featuring a live speech by President Daniel Ortega as well as interviews with voters and election observers discussing results of the Nicaraguan elections. The program was presented in cooperation with the Nicaragua Network.

Deep Dish continues with a ten-part focus on the First Amendment and use of public access cable channels by white hate organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan in Kansas City, Missouri. The programs contain tapes produced around the country examining free speech, racism and the resurgence of right-wing ideology and violence.

Also included in the spring series are program highlights of the 1990 International Women's Day Video Festival, featuring tapes from around the world on the theme "Where Do We Go From Here? Women's Agenda for the 90's." Also scheduled are documentaries on AIDS activism, an expose of TV Marti (the US government broadcast aimed at Cuba), and a sampler of new Cuban television.

Deep Dish TV is a non-profit, non-commercial satellite service supported by grants and donations to promote public access and distribute the best programming available from community television and independent producers.

The Deep Dish TV Network developed out of a successful 10 show pilot series in 1986. It played on more than 250 cable systems, featuring the work of 200 producers from 30 states. In 1987 and 1989, Deep Dish was recognized for excellence in programming by the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers, with "Hometown USA" awards for most innovative series.

The most recent Deep Dish season featured 20 programs on such varied themes as the farm crisis, AIDS, aging, militarism, children's programming, affordable housing, and Central America. Deep Dish is committed to presenting the public with an alternative view of current events by distributing "hand-made" media--television made by community producers.

To see Deep Dish programming, contact your local public access cable channel for the local schedule. Network transmissions began March 3, 1990. Many cable systems record the shows for delayed broadcast. All that is required for direct reception of Deep Dish programming is a satellite dish capable of receiving Satcom 4 transponder 22. The transmissions are free of charge and unscrambled, giving home dish owners unrestricted access to the shows as well.



Rape Crisis Center of McLean County

WE'RE A NON-PROFIT VOLUNTEER GROUP WHOSE MAIN PURPOSE IS TO OFFER ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND THEIR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES.

FEMALE VOLUNTEERS ANSWER OUR CALLS, BUT BOTH MALE AND FEMALE VOLUNTEERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR CRISIS ASSISTANCE, INFORMATION AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS.

If you want to talk to one of us

Call PATH 827-4005

and ask for the

Rape Crisis Center

Women and AIDS

Page 20

"Just What Are All Of You Women Doing Here Anyway?"

I was at the organizational meeting of the Central-Illinois chapter of ACT-UP-The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power--when a man looked around the room and asked: "Just what are all of you women doing here anyway?"

I think that this question reveals an attitude that is prevalent in our society--certainly in our community. And that is that AIDS is a disease that predominantly affects gay males. If one looks at certain statistics they would seem to support this theory. Of the 119,590 AIDS cases reported in the United States, 72,153 (60%) are among homosexual or bisexual males--11,052 (9%) are among women.

So what were all of those women doing at that meeting? Well for one reason those 72,153 men are our fathers, sons, brothers, husbands, lovers and friends. And if that isn't enough of a reason: the numbers that I mentioned are beginning to change. There are different ways to look at statistics and they can give us a variety of information. Perhaps instead of comparing the number of AIDS cases among homosexuals with the number of AIDS cases among women we can look at some different statistics.

For example: in May 1987, 2,447 women in the United States had AIDS. By January 1990--less than 32 months later--that number had risen to 11,052. The number of women with AIDS in the United States had quintupled in less than 32 months.

The most common modes of transmission of AIDS among women are IV drug use and heterosexual contact. Of the 11,052 women with

AIDS, 5,711 (52%) contracted the virus from IV drug use, 3,454 (31%) through heterosexual contact.

In 1987 *Cosmopolitan* magazine published an article by Dr. Robert Gould which contained irresponsible and deadly information. Dr. Gould claimed that heterosexual women were not at risk for acquiring AIDS through vaginal intercourse with infected partners. Contrary to Dr. Gould's claims, women are contracting AIDS from heterosexual contact, and in greater numbers than men are. 2,399 men have contracted the virus from heterosexual contact--3,454 women.

These statistics seem to indicate that women are at a greater risk than men for acquiring AIDS through heterosexual contact. So, once again--as with unwanted pregnancies--women are suffering devastating consequences from heterosexual sex more frequently than men. Traditionally women are also left with the responsibility for negotiating the use of birth control. Now they are left with the responsibility of negotiating safer sex practices as well.

Talking about sex isn't easy. As a matter of fact many of us find it easier to have sex than to talk about it. However we can develop our self esteem, our assertiveness and our power. We can learn to effectively communicate and negotiate for safer sex. While women do need to take responsibility for their own bodies and health, the time has come to insist that men begin to behave sexually responsibly. The use of birth control and the practice of safer sex are not only women's concerns. They are men's responsibility as well and it is time that men realize that.

Another issue that must be addressed when discussing women and AIDS is the fact that AIDS is disproportionately affecting women of color. 75-80% of women with AIDS in the

United States are black or latina. The reasons for this large number are racist social conditions such as poverty and inadequate access to health care and education within the minority community, as well as the use of IV drugs among black and latina women. These conditions probably also account for the fact that many women with AIDS are getting sicker and dying more quickly than men.

I've talked briefly about the effect that AIDS has had upon heterosexual women and women of color. What I have not yet talked about is the effect that AIDS has had upon the lesbian community. Although lesbians are considered to be at low risk for AIDS the disease has adversely affected their lives as well.

The incorrect belief that AIDS is a "gay disease" has caused lesbians to be discriminated against along with gay men. Lesbians have been prevented from donating blood, they have been denied visitation rights with their children because they are believed to be at a high risk for acquiring AIDS. The low incidence of AIDS among lesbians can be used to counteract the homophobic belief that AIDS is God's punishment for homosexuality.

It is essential for us to recognize the diversity among women when talking about women and AIDS. We must acknowledge the particular conditions of women of color, of lesbians. In order to be effective with both assisting women already infected and with providing education to all women we must consider issues of race, class and sexual orientation. If we can use diversity to unite rather than divide us in our struggle against AIDS we will be more effective in halting the spread of the disease--for it truly is everyone's concern.

--ISIS

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THERE IS A NATIONAL HEALTH CARE CRISIS

Government and corporate priorities have created a national health care crisis in the US.

- * In 1989 nearly 80 hospitals closed nationwide, more than half of them in inner cities.
- * In Chicago, 11 hospitals have closed since 1984.
- * In Los Angeles, 7 medical centers serving primarily the indigent have closed in recent years.

PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Chicago's Cook County Hospital is a symbol of public health care throughout the US. It stands in need of millions of dollars for immediate renovations and has been cited for hundreds of health violations that recently led the federal government to threaten withholding its funding. Today, AIDS is the leading cause of nontraumatic deaths in adults at Cook County Hospital, and 100 to 150 individuals come each week with various manifestations of HIV disease, yet only 16 beds are available on the AIDS ward due to inadequate staffing.

Women are not permitted on the AIDS ward; women with AIDS are isolated in various wards and receive no

* In Texas, 11 hospitals closed in 1989 alone.

What hospitals remain to serve low-income people, including a disproportionate number of people of color, are understaffed, poorly equipped, without supplies of needed medicines, and not adequately organized for dealing with a whole range of traditional medical problems, let alone for the growing AIDS crisis.

coordinated treatment. This sexist practice echoes the conservative bias of the Cook County Board of Commissioners: the hospital has not provided abortions for the last 10 years.

Emergency room visits and needle-related heart valve infections are skyrocketing. The medical consequences of IV drug abuse are placing more burden on the already crowded facilities in hospitals in every US city. Only recently has Cook County Hospital begun to develop any chemical dependency program, but even this program is not comprehensive. It will be limited to those already infected with HIV or who are pregnant.

AIDS INSURANCE DISCRIMINATION

Insurance companies are forcing more and more people to turn to the already overburdened public health care system. Increasingly, they are making it impossible for many people to obtain health, disability and life insurance by demanding HIV tests, denying coverage to single men in gay neighborhoods, and jacking up premiums for -- or even cancelling -- group insurance for broadly stereotypical "gay occupations" (now including commercial and fine artists). Even for those who remain covered, insurance companies are denying payment for many legitimate AIDS drugs and therapies, requiring doctors to follow absurdly narrow guidelines for treatment. Insurance companies are trying to cut costs at the expense of PWAs, even though AIDS health care costs are less than one percent of the nation's overall health bill. These

policies hurt people with AIDS and rip off everyone else.

* Anyone working in certain occupations or living in certain neighborhoods, or just being single, will have a more difficult time acquiring affordable insurance.

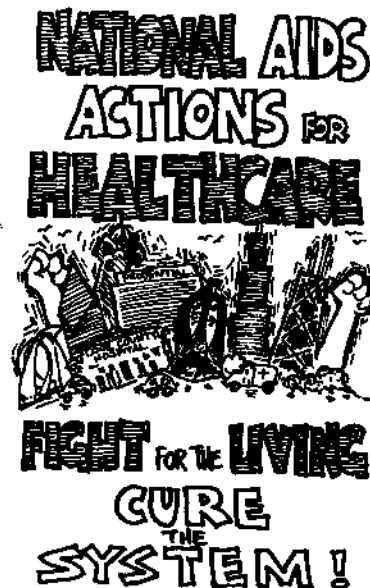
* Requiring HIV tests as a precondition for insurance coverage sets a precedent to exclude people with other medical conditions. With biotechnology, predictive medical testing is now possible. Already doctors report requests from insurance companies for liver, glucose, and cholesterol tests of individuals applying for insurance.

By excluding more and more people from insurance, these corporations are turning the medical system into a luxury for the well and well-to-do, and refusing to pay for those who are sick.

Already AIDS activist groups around the country are fighting for health care for the poor and against insurance discrimination. The April 21-23 Chicago National Action is a concentration of those efforts in a powerful statement to those in the Midwest who are complacently assuming that AIDS is not their problem. And these actions are a special opportunity for this movement to directly address, on a national level, the needs of men and women of color who are forced to rely on county hospitals throughout this country. Show your anger. Join us to ACT UP!

NATIONAL AIDS ACTIONS FOR HEALTH CARE

Chicago, Illinois April 21-23, 1990



ACT UP/ CI
AIDS Coalition to
Unleash Power
Central Illinois

If you are interested in joining or
corresponding with
ACT UP/CI, write:

ACT UP/CI
c/o Post American
P. O. Box 3452
Bloomington, IL 61702

Local demonstration
to coincide with
ACT UP/Chicago

23 April 1990

Watch for further
details!