

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

The Post Amerikan Project

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Post Amerikan

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POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

VOLUME 20

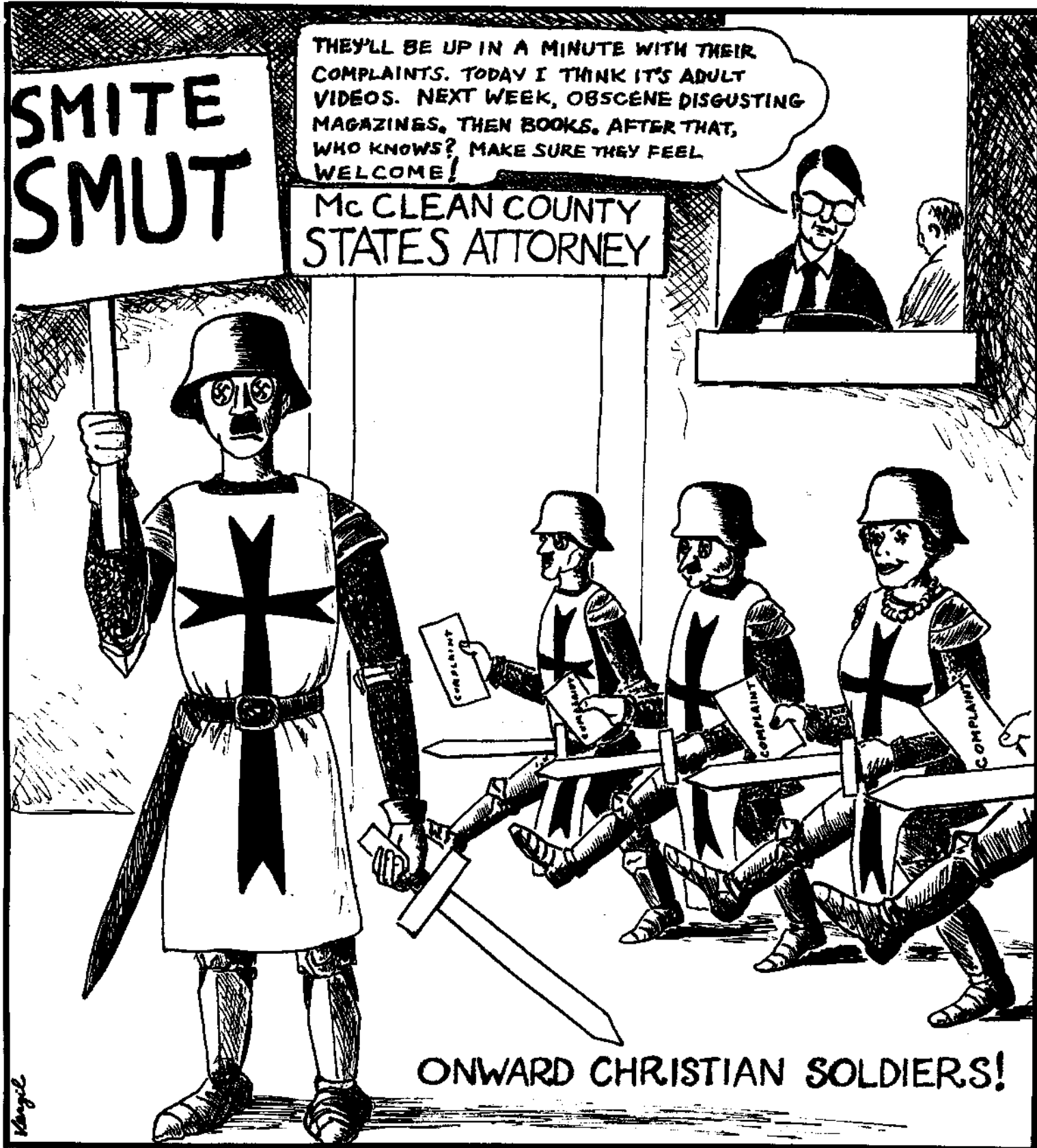
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NUMBER 1

JUNE/JULY 1991

■ FASCIST ANTI-PORNOGRAPHY GROUP ■

■ WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? ■



■ AND THE STATES ATTORNEY SET ■

■ TO TRAMPLE FREEDOM OF SPEECH. ■

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PAIGE 2



Bloomington Normal

Volume 20, Number 1

June/July 1991

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- 4-5 Animal rights: by the year 2000, they'll rule the earth once more; you'll never guess with whom us progressive leftie types found ourselves in bed.
- 6-7 Voice For Choice: gag us with a gavel; new agers are looking for a few truly good men.
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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 new 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 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 *Post Amerikan*.

What's your new address?

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.

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- Mother Murphy's, 111 North
- North and Broadway
- White Hen, 207 Broadway
- Subway, 115 E. Beaufort
- Zorba's, Main St.

This issue of *Post Amerikan* is brought to you by . . .

Angela, Vince, Scott, Pete (all coordinators in one capacity or another), Lisa, Christine, Deborah, John, Sue, Dino, Matt, Bill, Bumper, Ralph, and the many others who keep us going with their endless support.

Good numbers

- ACLU 454-7223
- ACT UP/CI 827-4005
- AIDS Hotlines:
 - National 1-800-AID-AIDS
 - Illinois 1-800-243-2437
 - Local (309) 827-4005
- Alcoholics Anonymous 828-5049
- 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. of Children/Family Services 828-0022
- Draft Counselling, 452-5046
- Gay & Lesbian Resource Phonenumber 438-2429
- HELP (transportation for senior citizens, handicapped) 828-8301
- Ill. Dept. of Public Aid 827-4621
- Ill. Lawyer Referral 1-800-252-8916
- Kaleidoscope 828-7346
- McLean Co. Center for Human Services 827-5351
- McLean Co. Health Dept. 454-1161
- Mid Central Community Action 829-0691
- Mobile Meals 828-8301
- Narcotics Anonymous 827-3898
- 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

Deadline

The next deadline for submitting *Post* material is

Monday, July 29, 1991

Material submitted after the deadline will probably not get printed in the next issue.



Community News

BSU protests threats

ISU's Black Student Union occupied a South Campus dining center Wednesday, May 1 to protest threats made against BSU Vice Chairperson Alecea Evans. The threats, by a group calling itself the Coalition to Uplift Whites, appear to be related to BSU's decision to boycott "Hands Across Campus," an anti-racism event held earlier in April.

The day after "Hands," Evans, a resident of Hamilton Hall, received an unsigned note on a message board posted on her door. The note included drawings of knives and guns and a warning to Evans to "keep quiet or else." Evans filed reports with the Office of Residential Life, the Student Judicial Office and the ISU police.

On Friday, April 26, Evans discovered a computer-printed note. The note contained several threats against Evans, including threats of physical violence and murder. The note also threatened members of Evans' family.

In response, approximately 300 African-American students peacefully occupied the Feeney Dining Center to protest the threats and to demonstrate a strong African-American presence at ISU. About 200 students obtained meal transfers for the action, which involved filling the cafeteria to capacity with African-American diners. After the meal, protesters gathered to discuss the threats.

As of this writing, no persons have been identified as the author or authors of the threats.

New phonenumber at McLean County AIDS Task Force

The McLean County AIDS Task Force has changed the number for its telephone hotline. The new number for the MCATF phonenumber is 827-2437 (827-AIDS). Previously, calls were forwarded to MCATF volunteers through PATH.

Under the new system, calls for AIDS information, referrals and support will be received directly by MCATF phonenumber volunteers at the following times: Monday through Thursday, 7:00-10:00 pm. Callers at other times will hear a recorded message announcing times when volunteers may be reached. Requests for speakers, information

and/or meeting times may be left on the answering machine. A MCATF member will respond to all such requests daily. For emergency or crisis situations, callers are still encouraged to contact PATH at 827-4005.

MCATF encourages anyone to call its phonenumber for information about AIDS and HIV, to arrange a speaker for your organization or for information about meetings and activities of MCATF. MCATF is a non-profit group of concerned citizens and professionals seeking to educate and inform the people of McLean County about all aspects of AIDS and HIV.

Immunization clinic scheduled

The McLean County Health Department is encouraging parents to have their children immunized early to avoid the end of summer rush. Immunization clinics for those who need MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and Td (Tetanus, diphtheria) immunizations have been scheduled.

All students entering the 5th or 9th grade for the first time and all college students born in 1957 or later attending an Illinois college for the first time are required to show proof of two doses of live measles vaccine or proof of past measles disease.

The clinics will be held at the McLean County Health Department, 905 N. Main Street, Normal. The clinics are scheduled Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-11:30 am and 1:00 pm-3:30 pm. An additional evening clinic has been scheduled for Tuesday June 25, 4:00 pm-6:00 pm.

A parent or legal guardian must accompany any minor under the age of 18 and must bring previous immunization records to the clinic. Clinic services are restricted to permanent McLean County residents. For more information contact the Department at 888-5450.

Post Amerikan is looking for collective members

Subscription Coordinator--organize new subscriptions and renewals, coordinate subscription distribution. Responsibilities at this time do not include managing computer database or printing subscription labels. *Post Amerikan* has 200 subscribers.

Advertisement Coordinator--communicate with approximately eight existing advertisers. Manage bi-monthly billing. Approach potential advertisers.

Proofreaders/editors, graphic artists, emotional support, illustrators, writers, comic relief, layout artists.

If you would like to help *Post Amerikan* make it to its 20th anniversary and would like to contribute to a great non-profit organization in our community, please contact us.

Post Amerikan
PO Box 3542
Bloomington, IL 61702
(PA answering machine)
309-828-7232
(Ask for Scott)
309-827-6841

Life-cil nutrition workshop

LIFE-Center for Independent Living is providing a Nutrition Workshop on Tuesday, June 18, 1991, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. for people with disabilities. Information about the four basic food groups will be presented and discussed. The participants will write two daily menus, using the four basic food groups as a guide. An interpreter will be provided. Enrollment is free and limited to 20.

LIFE-CIL is a non-profit, community-based organization serving people with disabilities in McLean, Ford, DeWitt and Livingston counties.

If you are interested in attending this nutrition workshop, please contact:
Dorothy Callies
Coordinator of Deaf Services
LIFE-CIL (309) 663-5433



Exhibitions:

Local Aesthetic 3: Champaign-Urbana

Nineteen artists from the Champaign-Urbana area will exhibit a wide variety of artworks in Local Aesthetic 3: Champaign-Urbana, which will open in University Galleries' Gallery I on June 11, and continue through July 28. An opening reception will take place on Saturday, June 15, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. All members of the public are cordially invited to attend the reception, at which many of the artists will be present. As always, University Galleries' exhibitions and receptions are free. Summer hours are Tuesday, 12:00-7:00 p.m. and Wednesday through Saturday, 12:00-4:00 p.m.

Continuing a three-year old tradition of hosting a major summer exhibition devoted to the work of regional artists, curator Peter F. Spooner states that "Local Aesthetic 3 is made up of over sixty works, produced by scores of artists in the Champaign-Urbana area. It is certainly not a definitive survey of all the artists there who deserve to be exhibited, but rather a sampling."

Artists participating in the exhibition are Norman Akers, Christopher Berti, Glen Davies, Gerald Guthrie, Brad Hudson, Barbara Kendrick, Sarah Krepp, Peter Kursel, Tim Van Laar, Olen Perkins, Linda Robbennolt, Jerry Savage, Rosalyn Schwartz, Peggy Shaw, Dan Socha, Char Teters, Joseph Vitone, Kerry Yates and Patrick Young. Among this group are University of Illinois faculty members and graduate students, resident artists of the area and Parkland College faculty.

Local Aesthetic 3 will be complemented by a similar exhibition of Bloomington-Normal area artists, which will be organized and hosted by a contingent from Champaign-Urbana in the summer of 1992.

Works from the Collection and Recent Acquisitions

From June 11 until July 28, University Galleries will be featuring 20th-century works from its permanent collection of contemporary art.

Consisting of many works added to the collection over the past year, the exhibit will display works by Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Nathan Olivera, Gene Davis, Robert Motherwell, Mark Tobey, Jack Tworokov and Alexander Calder. Also included in the exhibition are several works by the abstract painter Richard Cramer; two lithographs created at ISU by artist David Wojnarowicz; "Head 2," a photograph by Chicago artist Jeanne Dunning; "Swingset," a painting by Normal resident Mark Forth; and an untitled landscape by former ISU student Michael Dubina.

Installed in Gallery II, the exhibition will run concurrently with Local Aesthetic 3: Champaign-Urbana. An opening reception for both exhibitions will be held on June 15, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. University Galleries' summer hours are Tuesday 12:00-7:00 p.m. and Wednesday through Saturday, 12:00-4:00 p.m. All exhibitions, programs and receptions are free and open to the public.



Animal magnetism

Illinois group targets NU professors

Concerned Citizens for Ethical Research (CCER) of Evanston, Illinois is campaigning against two Northwestern University professors, claiming that both professors engage in cruel experiments of questionable scientific value at the expense of taxpayers.

Dr. Christina Enroth-Cugell's vision experiments, in progress for 28 years, have cost the lives of at least 1,000 cats and over two million federal tax dollars. Meanwhile, Dr. Enroth-Cugell admits that "the extent to which one can reason from cat to human remains an open question."

Dr. Charles Larson has been studying neurological disorders affecting vocalization since 1978. His methods of study include food deprivation, implanting electrodes and repeated painful surgery on at least eight monkeys a year.

Outraged readers are encouraged to write to the following members of the National Institutes of Health Appropriations Sub-committee requesting the termination of funding for these experiments:

Senator Tom Harkin, Chairman
Senate Sub-committee on Labor, Health and Human Services
SD-186 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20150

Rep. William H. Natcher, Chairman
House Sub-committee on Labor, Health and Human Services
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20150

For more information from CCER, write them at PO Box 1334, Evanston, IL, 60204-1334.

--A-V News

Animal Legislation in California and Maryland

In California, Assembly Bill 110, sponsored by Assemblyman Jack O'Connell, would ban irritancy tests, such as the painful Draize test, in California for cosmetic and household products.

California Senate Bill 15, sponsored by Senator Alan Robbins, would tighten existing laws concerning animal theft. The bill would expand the existing law to protect all animals—currently only dogs are protected—from being stolen or obtained fraudulently for research or commercial purposes.

Send letters of support to Mr. O'Connell and Senator Robbins at the State Capitol, Sacramento, CA, 95814.

Two bills in the Maryland State Assembly would ban testing on animals for cosmetic and household products. HB 455 would ban toxicity testing, including the LD50 test. HB 749 would ban eye irritancy tests, including the Draize test.

Letters of support should be addressed to:

John Arnick, Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401-1991

--A-V News

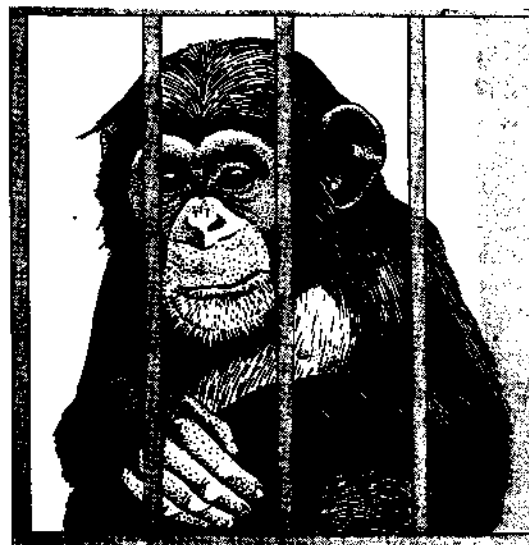
More Gulf war casualties

The animals of Kuwait, both in the wild and at the Kuwait City Zoo, are suffering greatly as a result of the Gulf war.

Stories had been circulating about the cruelties being inflicted on zoo animals by Iraqi troops. According to John Walsh of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), most of those stories were true. Some animals had been eaten by the troops. Others were shot "for fun." Still others were exported to the Baghdad Zoo; their survival is doubtful considering the intensity of Allied bombing of that city.

Water and food were scarce during the war and only a few Kuwaitis took the time, effort and risk to provide any care for the animals. Efforts are now underway to clean habitats and provide health care for the survivors.

Volunteers from several conservation groups have been gathering and treating wild birds soaked with oil by the massive spill. Approximately 800 birds have been brought in for treatment; only half survived. Autopsies have revealed hard balls of oil, sand and feathers in the birds' stomachs, a result of their trying to clean themselves.



The oily soot and black rain generated by the Kuwaiti oil well fires are killing thousands of birds. The birds are ingesting toxins directly from the thick clouds spewing from the wells, and the cause of death is either suffocation or other pollution-related traumas. Smoke from the fires now covers most of Kuwait and parts of southern and eastern Iraq.

For more information on WSPA's rescue efforts, write the group at PO Box 190, 29 Perkins Street, Boston, MA 02130-9904.

--A-V News

Bird's top 10 reasons for supporting animal rights

10. Jesse Helms opposes animal rights.
9. 60-100 million animals are used in research, testing and education every year.
8. It's chic to wear fake fur in summer.
7. Animal experiments are cruel and unnecessary.
6. Tofu tastes better without the meat.
5. There are cruelty-free alternatives to animal research.
4. Jesse Helms opposes animal rights.
3. It's politically correct.
2. PeTA says so.
1. It's the right thing to do, dammit!

For your information

The Draize eye irritancy test is a procedure which tests cosmetic and household chemicals by placing the substance directly on the eyes of albino rabbits, who have inadequate tear ducts to flush out the painful chemicals.

The LD50 or Lethal Dose: 50 is defined as the amount of a substance which, when administered in a single dose, will kill half the animals in a test population within a specified period of time.

Penn professor sanctioned

Professor Jorge Ferrer of the University of Pennsylvania has been officially sanctioned for "lapses of judgment" whereby hundreds of students, staff, preschool children and parents were exposed to lambs inoculated with a leukemia-causing virus.

In April 1990, Ferrer inoculated 14 newborn lambs with HTLV-1, a virus which is related to and transmitted like HIV. He then failed to quarantine the lambs from the general population of sheep used for research and teaching. Routine castration and tail-bobbing exposed veterinary staff and students to potential transmission of the virus. Additionally, at least 100 preschoolers and 30 parents were potentially exposed during field trips in May 1990.

Thus far no one who has been tested for HTLV-1 has tested positive, but the virus has a latency period of as long as 30 years.

--A-V News

From the desk of George Bernard Shaw

On vivisection: "Vivisection is a social evil because if it advances human knowledge, it does so at the expense of human character."

On being vegetarian: "Animals are my friends. I don't eat my friends."

For more information about any of these stories or the animal rights movement, contact:

The American Anti-Vivisection Society
801 Old York Road, Suite 204
Jenkintown, PA 19046-1685

This is a blatant plug.

--compiled by The Bird



Torricelli bill reintroduced

Congressperson Robert G. Torricelli (D-NJ) has reintroduced the Research Accountability Act as HR 1389 in the 102nd Congress. The bill seeks to create a National Center for Research Accountability as part of the National Library of Medicine to conduct full-text literature searches prior to government funding of any animal research grant proposals. If a proposed experiment were found to be redundant no grant would be awarded.

While creating such a facility would be of some cost to taxpayers, it would save countless lives and millions of federal dollars which would have been otherwise wasted on duplicate experiments. Letters of support should be sent to Mr. Torricelli at the United States Senate, Washington D.C. 20510.

—A-V News

Military intelligence?

Elephants carried Hannibal's army; horses carried the conquistadores. In World War II, the British military drafted pet dogs to sniff out air raid survivors. Incendiary bombs were strapped onto bats in a plan to burn Tokyo to the ground. The military machine of every age has exploited animals as tools of war, and today's Amerikan military is no different.

In this country, countless animals are sacrificed each year in the military's teaching and research. The number of animals abused in this way is literally countless because of the secrecy and sheer numbers of experiments conducted under the cloak of the Department of Defense. An analysis of some published results, however, reveals that these experiments are often cruel, redundant and totally unjustifiable. The Army is responsible for most of the carnage in its studies of radiation, airblast, traumatic blood loss, rifle shots, poison and temperature extremes.

Studies in radiation have revealed such valuable insights as radiation lowers blood sugar levels in dogs while increasing it in rats. Studies of gunshot wounds routinely involve the cold-blooded shooting of an unanesthetized animal, typically a pig. The animal is then used in practice surgery or dissected to examine the wounds. In one such study, an unanesthetized swine was shot five times in order to evaluate the injury potential of a new Soviet AK-74 Assault Rifle. Researchers concluded that the weapon performed exactly like you'd expect it to.

The Air Force, too, studies the effects of radiation as well as the effects of centrifugal force. In one classic experiment, researchers surgically implanted electronic monitoring devices in the chests of dogs and pigs. The animals were then strapped to a centrifuge and subjected to stress-producing speeds. After collecting the data from the measuring devices, the animals were killed and spun again. The researchers concluded that dead animals spun at high speeds were more prone to chest wall injuries. Whoa, that's good to know.

In yet another important study, the Air Force Aerospace Medical Research Laboratory wanted to know the effects of simulated spaceflight on the jawbone. Twelve rhesus monkeys were strapped to a rotational device and rotated 90 degrees every 30 minutes for 14 days. After killing the monkeys and examining their jawbones, researchers concluded that immobilization and rotation did not produce abnormal jawbones. Whew!

Finally, the Navy contributes loads of knowledge to the military complex in such studies as the Crashing Rhesus Experiment of 1983. Eight unanesthetized rhesus monkeys were each restrained on a crash sled and subjected to 19 crashes. The researchers brilliantly concluded that monkeys act startled when strapped to a sled which is about to crash. In a similar study of rhesus monkeys, researchers were able to discover that bigger crashes cause more damage.

In short, peaceful creatures are routinely abused by the military in cruel and unnecessary experiments in order to further the war machine. Kids, this world is far from sane. Each innocent animal life lost, each sadistic experimenter, each unjustifiable experiment reads as testimony to the bitter absurdity of war.

For more information on military experiments, contact the National Anti-Vivisection Society, 100 East Ohio, Chicago IL, 60611 and ask for their booklet, "Military Madness."

—The Bird

Sources: *Life Sciences Journal* 34; *The Journal of Trauma* 24; *Aviation, Space and Environmental Magazine* 54-56.

Politicizing Your Answering Machine

Save the Animals! 101 Easy Things You Can Do, by Ingrid Newkirk, gives suggestions for messages you can leave on your answering machine:

- The meat and dairy industries kill 14 million animals a day.
- A chicken-process plant can waste 100 million gallons of water in a single day.
- There are 55 acres of rain forest in a quarter-pound hamburger.
- The water used to produce a quarter-pound hamburger is equal to the amount used by a family of four in one month.
- The best thing you can do for the environment today is to quit eating animals. At the tone, let me know you've gone vegetarian and I'll call you back within the hour.
- I can't come to the phone— I'm shopping for cruelty-free products. I would be happy to send you a list of companies that don't test on animals if you leave your name and address at the tone.
- After leaving a message for John or Sue, please call your legislators to get their support for (insert a piece of local legislation).
- Do you know where your companion animals are? Don't let them roam unsupervised—they may be stolen for animal research. And when you hang up, go give them a hug.

Issue of the issue

You read the *Post Amerikan*, and that in itself proves that you're smarter than the average resident of Bloomington-Normal, because you can not only spell "personal liberty," you can define it as well.

That being said, we are at a loss as to why none of you have taken this opportunity to dazzle us all with your genius by responding to last paper's "issue of the issue."

If you'll recall, we asked you to write to us about the ethics of keeping a pet/animal companion which consumes meat or kills its own food. We thought there would be at least a few frustrated Peta types lurking about who would set refillable pen to recycled paper, but alas, it seems our hopes were in vain.

We are not quite ready to abandon the concept. We are going to try it one more time, and then we'll see what we will see. We will still be accepting submissions on the animal companion issue, but we will be asking a new question this issue as well. This one's a two-parter. Ready? Here goes.

A large part of this issue is devoted to the military's practice of discriminating against non-heterosexual servicemembers and ROTC recruits. Should progressives play a role in expanding the number of people available for military service and if so, what should that role be? Assume that the military's policy was abandoned tomorrow, but all other aspects of the military were unchanged. Should non-heterosexuals involve themselves in the military mission of maintaining the status quo?

Send your responses to the *Post Amerikan* and we'll use them as the basis for an article in the next issue. You may remain anonymous if you so choose.

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News from Voice for Choice

On May 23, 1991, the Supreme Court, by a 5-4 majority, upheld the Reagan/Bush administration's "gag rule." The rule applies to family planning clinics and hospitals that receive Title X Family Planning funding. Under the gag rule, such facilities will be banned from even mentioning abortion to a woman, even if the pregnancy poses a threat to her health or life. In fact, they can't even mention that it is legal, an option, where to go for information, or hand the woman the phone book to look up abortion services. The court essentially held that whoever pays the piper calls the tune—a frightening precedent for federally funded programs of all sorts.

What this means locally is that Planned Parenthood will be forced to make a difficult decision: Refuse federal monies and lose 70% of their funding, or accept the federal money and refuse to offer abortion information to women.

George's kinder and gentler society is screwing us all, but especially low-income women who use federally funded family planning services because they cannot access other services.

Is it rational to prohibit a doctor from telling a woman that due to her high blood pressure, she could have a stroke should she carry her pregnancy to term, that there are other options? Is it a kinder and gentler nation that tells women, oops... if you're poor, you don't deserve access to health care information in the same way that other women do. The Supreme Court decision further exacerbates the already prevalent two-tiered system of health care in this country.



The federal government has forgotten that the money they wish to control is not theirs—it is ours. Voice for Choice encourages you to write your federal legislators regarding Title X. House Rule 392 would revise the Title X Family Planning Act, removing the gag rule and thereby making the Supreme Court decision moot.

The precedent set by this decision opens the door for censorship on university campuses, counseling programs, STD clinics, HIV and AIDS education, testing and counseling programs, and ultimately someday of contraceptives. If we allow women to be denied information and healthcare workers to be censored, where will the right stop? Who will fight for you when your rights are threatened?

* * * * *

On March 19, 1991, a top Federal official told a House panel that the Bush Administration was preparing to take steps to steer pregnant women away from clinics and hospitals where abortion is "pervasive."

In his first appearance before Congress, the official, Dr. William R. Archer III, the new Deputy Assistant Secretary for Population Affairs at the Department of Health and Human Services said that the government was preparing to draw up a list of family planning clinics and hospitals with "acceptable" anti-abortion approaches.

* * * * *

Where have all the Democrats gone?

The Democratic Party of McLean Co. has turned its back on women and the National Democratic Party Platform. Gerald Bradley, a conservative local business man who more closely resembles a Republican than many Republicans, was the party's choice in the primary.

Bradley is vehemently anti-choice (as is Republican Ewing). In a telephone conversation with Bradley, a Voice for Choice member was told, "Well, if you're with the pro-choice group, you won't get nothin' from me."

Bradley ignored requests from VFC for information on his stance on various issues. Bradley also ignored an invitation from the College Democrats of ISU to speak.

Our theory is that Bradley was afraid to debate Tim Hall, his challenger in the primary. Hall was more closely aligned with the Democratic Party Platform.

It is unfortunate that the McLean County Democratic Party chose to ignore the issues of women and back a candidate that opposes reproductive rights for women. Bradley is a Republican in sheep's clothing.

VFC encourages people to go to the polls on July 2, 1991, get your ballot, and make a vote for "none of the above" by just punching the last hole on the ballot.

Send the message to the Democratic party that we expect to get screwed by the Republicans, but not by the Democratic Party! Forced labor is as important as any other labor issue!

* * * * *

"We need to make population and family planning household words. We need to take the sensationalism out of this topic so that it can no longer be used by militants who have no real knowledge of the voluntary nature of the program, but rather, are using it as a political stepping stone. If family planning is anything, it is a public health matter."

George Bush
Floor statement, House of Representatives
February 24, 1969

"As we amended the Social Security Act in 1967, I was impressed by the sensible approach of Alan Guttmacher, the obstetrician who served as president of Planned Parenthood. It was ridiculous, he told the committee, to blame mothers on welfare for having too many children when the clinics and hospitals they used were absolutely prohibited from saying a word about birth control. So we took the lead in Congress in providing money and urging—in fact, requiring—that in the United States, family planning services be available for every woman, not just the private patient with her own gynecologist."

George Bush
Foreword, *World Population Crisis*
Phyllis Piotrow, 1973

* * * * *

According to recent studies by an independent family planning organization, Catholics have 30 percent of the abortions in the United States.



Operation Rescue is planning two months of activity beginning July 4 in a yet to be announced city (it's probably too much to hope for, but wouldn't it be fun if it were Bloomington?).

Since arrests and fines have reduced OR's rank and file, their tactic is to target big cities with only one or two abortion providers (Chicago could be an option). In these situations, "rescuers" will generally encounter police who lack experience dealing with clinic blockades. If the police are aggressive in arresting them they claim brutality and campaign to raise funds around their arrest.

If the city chosen is in Illinois and you would be interested in assisting in some kind of action, please contact us at 828-3108.

* * * * *

The Illinois Department of Public Health has proposed rules that would require the mandatory testing of all infants born to women receiving public aid when the mother's HIV status is unknown. While in principle we agree that this knowledge could be useful eventually in providing healthcare to those infants who go on to develop HIV infection, we believe the proposed rules to be discriminatory.

The proposal does not establish any services for these infants, it does not establish follow up testing programs for them. Given that the proposal has been incorporated into a statement regarding the rights of pregnant women to voluntarily be tested, the move seems merely an attempt to identify HIV positive women, not children. Please write to Public Health and express your concern over this proposal.

* * * * *

During the 20 months that the state of Illinois required HIV antibody tests for couples filing for marriage licenses, the number of marriages performed in Illinois dropped 14%.
Source: *Insider*.

* * * * *

A four year study at the University of Miami showed that aerobic exercise and "cognitive behavioral stress management" (including cognitive restructuring, the changing of negative thoughts to positive ones) improved the immune function of gay men following a positive diagnosis of HIV.

Source: *Insider*.



Birthright: Madame X visits yet another pregnancy advise center



Can you spot the surprises in this story?

1. She did not mention God or religion to me. Not a word about church or sin or heaven and hell passed her lips.
2. I did not have to watch a video tape of Stepford women with happy children or crying women who regretted an abortion. The TV and VCR were right there in front of us, but she never said, "Maybe this video will help make up your mind."
3. She did not take any personal information of any kind. Unlike the Crisis Pregnancy Center, she didn't ask for my full name, address or telephone number. She didn't ask me to sign a statement declaring my understanding that I wasn't talking to a medical-type person. And I doubt we'll be receiving a number of anonymous telephone calls, as we did when I went to the Crisis Pregnancy Center.

I don't know who provides financial backing for Birthright. When asked, Madeline simply said they were one of 15 offices in the U.S., funded out of New Jersey. (New Jersey is the ancestral home of the Popeil Pocket Fisherman and the Ronco Cap-Snaffler that "really, really works." Using the same geographical principle that underlies the location of Birthright and Tobin's Pizza, maybe we can keep these other blobs of American cellulite in the same state.)

Birthright is not, in my opinion, the balanced source of information one would hope for when faced with an unwanted pregnancy. It will not refer women for abortions, and gives a biased opinion of abortions and their effects. However, it does provide service vastly better than that given by the Crisis Pregnancy Center. If I had a daughter or a close friend who needed some outside advice, and she had only the choice of Birthright or CPC, I would urge her to go to Birthright. At least she wouldn't be subjected to emotional violations of her religious and ethical thoughts.

--Madame X



strength or power. We ask you to join us as equals, not because we need guidance. Listen to what we tell you our needs are. Don't confuse our needs with your perceptions of our needs. If you are not actively involved in the struggle, then you are a part of our oppression. Understand that oppression harms us all. There are many fine organizations in this community that could use your energy: Planned Parenthood, Reproductive Rights Action Network, Countering Domestic Violence, Rape Crisis Center, Men Against Rape, and Voice for Choice are but a few.

One closing note: If you found this article really offensive and now feel justified in any resentment you may feel towards women, you are one of the men we were trying to reach.

--Voice for Choice.

"Well, I don't know," she said. "I've heard that having an abortion is really bad business, it's really traumatizing and can scar you for life."

I was sitting in the (rather dreary) office of Birthright as a follow-up to the visit to the Crisis Pregnancy Center. The CPC, you might remember, was decked out as a Christian living room, with comfy couches and dim lighting. Birthright had none of these amenities. Instead the room was equipped with three pretty hard chairs, a TV and VCR, a couple of bookcases, desk and filing cabinet. The effect was that of an office, not a home, and made me - who came to visit under false pretenses of course - feel as though I might actually hear a straight story within these walls.

No doubt you're wondering just what tale your friendly neighborhood Voice for Choice tramp had come up with THIS time to shock the anti-choice people. THIS time I went alone. After all, when Mr. Y accompanied me to the Crisis Pregnancy Center, he may as well have been a dust bunny under the couch for all the attention they paid him. So this time around, I decided to go as a pretty typical woman: divorced, seeing more than one man, and pregnant by who knows whom? Broke, working a crappy job at minimum wage, not able to support a child if I wanted one. I have known more than my share of women in these circumstances in my life - it's not far off a description of the human condition.

I made an appointment and went over to Birthright (1410 1/2 S. Main in Normal) "right near Tobin's Pizza." (Tobin's Pizza puts bible verses on advertisements and in their pizza boxes - I know because we tried them when we first moved here. This isn't Birthright's fault. I just hope we can keep all of these places congregated in the same block or two so we can keep an eye on them.) The woman I met with was peppy and sincere and fairly young. I'll call her Madeline for convenience's sake - I don't want to call her by her real name because I discovered after our conversation that I like her. So I'll use Madeline, which is the name of one of my cats that I like pretty well, too.

Madeline invited me to sit down by her and asked me to tell my story. I did. She was very sympathetic, and asked me what I was thinking of doing. I said, "I just don't know." She gave me lots of information about programs in town that help the impoverished woman take care of herself and her children and their collective health.

I didn't have the heart to point out to her how many of the programs she described are, even as I write, on the chopping block in Springfield for even further cuts. I stilled my tongue from pointing out how many children already live below the poverty line in this country, too many to handle now and too many to add even one more. I heard about the Catholic Social Service and the McLean County Health Department, as well as other programs and offices, and what they could do for the needy.



Madeline brought up the "A" word, I didn't. She asked me if I would consider an abortion. I said that yes, I would, but I didn't know very much about them and wouldn't know where to go to get one. Could she help with this information?

That's when she said it was really bad business and could scar me for life. She didn't know where to get an abortion either. But she did know that abortions were either (in her words) salt poisoning of your baby, dilation "where they scrape your insides to make sure they get all the baby's body parts out," or vacuuming the baby from you.

She again pointed out that if I had an abortion, I would have to live with the consequences of it the rest of my life. I forbore to point out that I would be living with the consequences of having the child the rest of my life, too, and that there could well be two miserable and hungry people in the world instead of one.

We talked a little bit about adoption, and a little bit about the possibility of my moving back in with my parents. (I am barely on the sunny side of 40 - I don't think this suggestion would work real well.) She told me several times about her girl friend who had a baby out of wedlock and now found her life enriched beyond measure.

There were a lot of brochures. I walked out of there with 17 of them. Three contained general information about pregnancy, 5 were from social agencies, and 9 were anti-abortion. I left saying I would read them, and might get back in touch later.

VFC—Looking for a few good men

Are you a sensitive new age guy? Do you say you care about women's issues? Are you hip enough to recognize that simply being sensitive is not enough? Would you believe that there are men in this community who call themselves politically correct and yet when asked to contribute financially to assist a low-income woman in obtaining an abortion, their first response is, "Why did she get pregnant?" Did you know that there are men in this community who believe that somehow the struggles of women, gays and lesbians, people of color, or people with AIDS can all be separated out and neatly compartmentalized as different struggles? Well, these men do exist. You may even know one.

To determine if you know any of these men, use the following questions:

1. Does he say he understands our struggles but doesn't like to discuss sexism?
2. Does he explain his absence at demonstrations related to women's rights, events like "Take Back the Night," by saying he didn't think women would want him there?
3. Is he patronizing or condescending?

4. He wants you to donate to his causes but whines about contributing to yours?

5. He says he supports women's rights but gets very defensive around strong women?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, chances are you know a man who needs education.

We do not mean in any way to suggest that there are not men in this community who care about women and their struggle--there are. Chances are you know some of them, too. We appreciate the energy, commitment, and yes, financial contribution these men make to the women's movement. These are not the men we are concerned about. They are not the men who this article is addressed to. They recognize that the picture is bigger than any one group's or individual's needs. They have joined us in the struggle because they believe in it, not because they will gain some status or recognition.

If you are a man who has yet to do anything other than read about women's struggles, we challenge you to join us. We invite you to join us. But please, do not feel threatened by our



Lambda News

New York's highest court rules only biological parents may seek visitation

In a decision that has stunned the lesbian community, the New York Court of Appeals the week of April 29 denied a lesbian non-biological parent the right to seek visitation with the child she raised for many years with her former partner. In *Alison D. v. Virginia M.*, the court ruled that Alison D. is not a parent within the meaning of the law because "she is not the biological mother of the child nor is she a legal parent by virtue of an adoption."

The court rejected the argument that "parent" should be defined according to who functions as a parent, not just by biology. Only Judge Judith Kaye, the only woman on the seven member court, dissented from the majority opinion, stating that the court must look to "modern-day realities in giving definition to statutory concepts."

Lambda Legal Director Paula Eitelbrick, who represented Alison, stated, "I am shocked at the insensitivity to the lives and fates of lesbian parents and their children. The...court seems to insist on using a 1950's definition of family in spite of the 1991 reality that the vast majority of children do not live in 'traditional' families. This decision closes the courthouse door in New York to lesbian non-biological mothers who want to seek visitation."

Virginia and Alison were committed partners when they decided to have children together. Virginia was inseminated and bore a son in 1981. In 1983, Alison was inseminated and gave birth to a daughter. Several months later the two women separated but agreed that they would maintain visitation rights and relationships with the children, which they did for several years. Four years later, Virginia severed all contact between Alison and the boy.

Lambda filed a petition for visitation in state court, one of the first attempts to define the term "parent" to include non-biological mothers like Alison. The lower court dismissed the petition because Alison was not a biological parent. That decision was upheld by the Appellate Division. The recent Court of Appeals decision is the first such decision to come from the highest court of any state.

"The court's decision represents the threat many in society feel over the idea that lesbians can have children and families without men," said Eitelbrick. "This case also closes the door to step-parents and other 'non-biological' parents who may want to maintain relationships with children. It's an example of how homophobia can restrict the rights of everyone."

Name-calling judge refuses to disqualify himself

In the latest round of the case of Joseph Steffan, a former midshipman who was discharged from the U.S. Naval Academy for being gay, the judge in the case who repeatedly referred to Steffan as a "homo" has refused to disqualify himself.

The remarks were made by Judge Oliver Gasch at a hearing March 6, and shortly thereafter Steffan's attorneys asked Gasch to disqualify himself for bias. In an April 12 decision, Gasch refused to permit another judge to hear the case.

The Justice Department has defended Gasch's statements, claiming the use of the term "homo" does not evidence any prejudice on the judge's part.

In a letter to Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, Lambda staff attorney Sandra Lowe stated in part:

Any teenager knows that "homo" is a derogatory term that is used by individuals to express their prejudice... [W]e do not see how the [Justice] Department could conclude that the deliberate and repeated use of ["homo"] by a federal judge in the dignified confines of a courtroom does not reflect bias or prejudice...

Before he was discharged, Joseph Steffan was one of the ten highest-ranking midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy and the proceedings before Judge Gasch reflect only Mr. Steffan's extraordinary accomplishments. There is no justification for deriding him. Nor is there any justification for deriding Steffan and other lesbians and gay men on the basis of their sexual orientation....

Lambda also sent Thornburgh an affidavit from Professor John E. Boswell, Chairman [sic] of the History Department at Yale University, which was filed in support of Steffan's disqualification motion. Boswell, an expert on prejudice against minority groups, reviewed the history of the word "homo" and its usage in his affidavit and stated:

When the press has used the word "homo," it has typically done so in quoting individuals who are expressing their bias and hostility against gays. For example, *Newsday* recently reported that when Mayor David Dinkins marched with a gay group in New York's St. Patrick's Day Parade, Mayor Dinkins and other marchers were subjected to the catcall, "Go back in the closet, you homos" from a decidedly hostile crowd.... "Homo" is also frequently used in the press in connection with reports of anti-gay violence as an epithet used by the assailants along with their fists, knives and baseball bats.

I can affirm with absolute assurance that "homo" is and always has been a derogatory term that is usually employed by adolescents or acknowledged opponents of civil rights for gay people. It may be slightly less vulgar than "queer," "fag" or "faggot," but is equally a sign of antipathy. No objective person could reasonably conclude that an adult who repeatedly employs the term "homo" in a public forum, particularly a courtroom, is open-minded or fair on the subject of homosexual orientation.

On April 22, Steffan's attorneys appealed Gasch's decision to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, the same court that several months earlier overturned Gasch's ruling to dismiss the case altogether.

Arguing that Gasch's refusal to disqualify himself has broad significance, the appeal petition contends that "if a judge who labels a litigant as a 'homo,' 'nigger,' 'spic,' 'Hebe,' or 'gook' is permitted to continue to sit in a case brought by that litigant to protect the civil rights of [the litigant's minority group], the inevitable result will be to undermine the confidence of minority groups in the ability and willingness of the judiciary to safeguard their rights to due process and equal protection of the laws."

Steffan's attorneys also argue that "there is simply no rational basis for any conclusion other than that Judge Gasch's injudicious use of the pejorative term 'homo' has already raised grave and reasonable doubts in the public's mind as to his impartiality to sit upon a landmark case involving the rights of the very group he has slurred."

The case *Steffan v. United States Naval Academy* was filed in December 1988 in federal court in the District of Columbia as a challenge to Steffan's forced expulsion from the Naval Academy and to the military's policy of excluding lesbians and gay men from military service.

Gay man discharged from Air Force is eligible for unemployment benefits

An administrative law judge May 9 reversed a decision of the California Employment Development Department which had denied unemployment benefits to a man discharged from the Air Force after he stated he was gay.

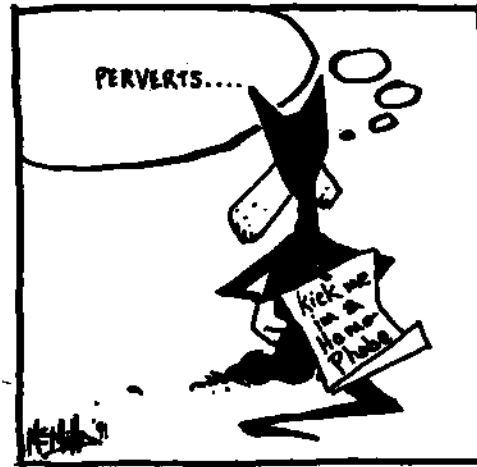
Jody Brakefield, age 20, was initially denied unemployment benefits because the Air Force contended that individuals discharged for homosexuality were ineligible for benefits ordinarily granted to ex-servicemembers. Brakefield's successful appeal establishes that the military cannot discharge servicemembers for homosexuality and then deny them unemployment benefits for no longer being in the armed services.

Brakefield's sexual orientation was discovered after a barracks inspection revealed copies of gay-identified magazines under his mattress. Brakefield, who entered the military at age 17, had only recently acknowledged to himself that he was gay, and had never engaged in any same-sex sexual conduct. Upon discovery of the magazines, he acknowledged his homosexuality to his commanding officer. Discharged abruptly, though honorably, in December 1990, Brakefield sought unemployment benefits, but his request was denied.

Lambda Staff Attorney Mary Newcombe commented, "Jody Brakefield's discharge for being gay—despite his excellent service record—exemplifies the irrationality of the military's policy....The denial of Jody's unemployment benefits shows just how low the military will stoop to persecute lesbians and gay men."

Both the Air Force and the EDD have the right to appeal the decision, but have not yet filed an appeal.

Leger the Gatt by Jonathon McMills





Gay ROTC cadet fights to complete officer training

The Air Force has commenced disenrollment proceedings against a gay Air Force ROTC cadet at Washington University in St. Louis. In a March 6, 1991 letter signed by AF/ROTC Detachment Commander Col. Larry A. Rachey, the Air Force notified Robert S. Schwitz, a cadet who has been named to the Dean's List and is in the top 15% of his class, that the military was beginning proceedings to separate him from ROTC. Two days earlier Schwitz had advised the Air Force that he is gay, and that he wished to complete his ROTC officer training and "serve as an openly gay man in the United States Air Force."

Schwitz entered the Washington University AF/ROTC program on a full-tuition business scholarship in 1988. After receiving the letter from Col. Rachey, Schwitz contacted Lambda to help him prevent the disenrollment.

Schwitz, who has received excellent ratings as a cadet, stated, "I came forward out of a sense of duty and personal integrity—I will not conceal my sexual orientation and deny who I am in order to serve my country. My sexual orientation in no way compromises my fitness to serve in the United States Air Force."

In a related matter, a Washington University ROTC Task Force released its findings on March 1, 1991, stating in part that the Department of Defense policy barring gay, lesbian and bisexual people from service is absolutely "indefensible, illogical and irrational."

Schwitz is the second Washington University ROTC cadet within a year to be disenrolled on the basis of sexual orientation. In the spring of 1990, James M. Holobaugh was also disenrolled. Despite the Holobaugh case and despite acknowledging that Washington University subsidizes this discrimination by providing ROTC with certain free services and facilities, the Task Force stopped short of recommending that ROTC be expelled from campus.

Schwitz commented, "If I am disenrolled, I will be forced to leave Washington University, where I have a very successful academic career and am involved in many campus activities—unless Washington University can replace my ROTC scholarship benefits."

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund is a national advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the legal and civil rights of gay, lesbian and bisexual people, and people with HIV/AIDS, and to assuring good public policy on AIDS and health care.

GALA news

Summer meetings scheduled

GALA's executive board has begun meeting weekly to plan activities for summer and next school year. All GALA members are welcome to attend any meeting and offer their input. Meeting information is available at the Phonenumber at 438-2429.

Pride parade info

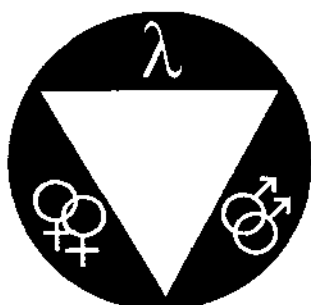
The annual Gay/Lesbian Pride Parade will be held this year on Sunday, June 30. We want a huge turnout from GALA, so if you're interested in going and need a ride or a place to stay, or if you are going and can offer one or both of these things, please call the Phonenumber.

GALA newsletter in print

The new Executive Committee has published the first issue of *Community News*, the brand-new newsletter detailing GALA happenings. The newsletter committee is shooting for a bi-weekly publishing schedule. To obtain a copy of the latest *Community News*, to offer submissions or to purchase classified ad space, you guessed it, contact the Phonenumber.

Where no one gay has gone before

Attention *Star Trek* fans! 1991 marks the 25th anniversary of the creation of *Star Trek*. In those 25 years, three television shows and five movies have depicted the adventures of the starship *Enterprise*. In the course of those adventures, we have seen women and men; white, black, Latin, and Asian; human and alien all working and living together in a common vision of a humanity free from prejudice and hatred. We have even seen the first interracial kiss ever in prime-time television (Kirk and Uhura, in "Plato's Stepchildren"). What we have never seen is an openly gay character.

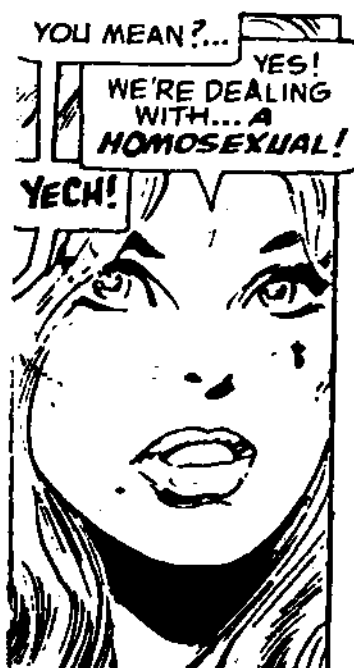


G A L A
GAY AND LESBIAN ALLIANCE
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry has said that "to be different is not necessarily to be ugly; to have a different idea is not necessarily to be wrong. The worst possible thing that can happen to humanity is for all of us to begin to look and act and think alike."

The Gaylactic Network, an international organization for gay/lesbian/bisexual science fiction fans, is calling upon the community to hold Roddenberry to it by writing to him and to head of Paramount Pictures Brandon Tartikoff to voice your support for including openly gay characters in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Write each of them separately at:

Paramount Pictures
5555 Melrose Avenue
Los Angeles CA 90038



This may seem like a silly thing to get all worked up about, but currently there are no openly gay characters appearing in prime-time series—unless you count the faggot stereotypes on *In Living Color*—and when the networks do include openly gay characters, like on *thirtysomething*, the religious right pitches a shitfit and the entire episode disappears. For us to have a voice, we have to be visible, including on prime-time. For more information on the campaign, write:

Kindred Spirits
P.O. Box 160225
St. Louis MO 63116

So long, and thanks...

This is the last time I will be addressing the gay/lesbian/bisexual community of Bloomington-Normal as the president of GALA, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who worked so hard in the past year to help both Vince when he was president and me to make GALA a successful and thriving organization again. I would especially like to thank Lem, Deb, Tina, Barb and all my other "cronies" who worked so diligently on the Holly Near concert; Roy, Jerry, Aaron, Sharon, and the rest of you who put in time as officers last year; Mike, Craig, Ken and all the other new Phonenumber volunteers and trainees; most especially Bob Sutherland, GALA's faculty advisor and fiscal agent; and I know I've forgotten lots of people so thank you to all of you.

Your new officers for fall of 91 are Sharon, Pam, Mike, Pat and Vince. They are all already off to a fast start this summer, and I know great things are going to happen this year. Peace.

--jmc

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Friday thru Saturday 9:00 AM - 4:00 AM
Present this ad at the bar for a drink.
One per customer per night



Coalition politics

The impossible dream

Is diversity a bad thing? Is coalitionism a sure way for a lefty group to self-destruct?

It seems to me that many groups striving to increase the scope of their diversity are sending their groups to an early grave. At a certain point within these groups more time is spent disagreeing over issues than is spent getting things done.

But what should these groups do? Keeping out certain factions from your group would be discrimination. Silencing voices who express opinions other than your own would be met with similar disapproval.

But let's face it. All groups, lefty or otherwise have a limited amount of resources, whether it's money and capital or it's personnel and meeting time. And these groups surely must have the right to decide what they want to do with their resources: deciding how to spend their money or what to talk about in their one-hour weekly general meeting. At the same time, there is that myth on the left that every group should be striving for increased diversity in its membership. But what happens when you feel like that diverse membership is taking over your group, taking directions you wouldn't have chosen or taking positions you feel are morally wrong?

I think the left needs to come to terms with the fact that some coalitions might be more effective if they weren't coalitions at all and parted company. It seems to me that it is unfortunate if a group spends so much time striving to overcome their own differences that members within that group become frustrated and alienated by the very group that they formed.

An allegory

Let's say you start a group called "Save My Undeveloped Rain Forest" (SMURF). Your descendants came from the Amazon, but you now live in Amerika. You send a letter announcing your new organization to a diverse selection of American lefty groups. Your initial respondents are people very much like yourself with intense personal interest in the rain forest and its value to the planet.

With twenty hard working members, meetings are run on consensus, and you are getting things done: letters written to congress, a line of products that get your message to the American public, funds raised to help protect the aboriginal people of the forest. You also receive a positive response from the South American governments; the U.S. media starts recognizing SMURF as a force to be reckoned with.

Your group expands further. Your membership is now in the hundreds. You have to move your meetings from the basement of the Unitarian Church to a new building you rent with donations and your profitable merchandizing enterprise.

All along, as the founder of SMURF, you have clung to your beliefs in diversity and coalition building. The board and committee chairpersons come from a variety of backgrounds: ethnic, cultural, racial etc.

Unfortunately, as your group goes mainstream, more and more diverse groups of people join SMURF. These newer members don't necessarily share the passion for the rain forests that you and the other founders have, but were attracted to SMURF because of its increasing

success and publicity. When one of the newer members brings up a possible action on the redwood forest, you initially feel that your group is best suited to address the rain forest. While acknowledging the importance in preserving all world forests, you think perhaps a new group or other existing environmental group would be better equipped to save the redwoods.

Meeting your fate

At one fateful meeting, you are set to make the biggest proposal yet to the group. SMURF has just been selected by Brazil as warden of 100,000 square miles of rain forest and you are going to use the meeting to devote a massive amount of SMURF's resources for forest management. First on the agenda, though, is the group who wants to discuss redwoods, and who, in your diverse coalition, have just as much right to the floor as you do. Unfortunately, their presentation turns confrontational, and the meeting disintegrates into a debate of redwoods vs. rain forests. You argue that the group is SMURF and not SMURedwoods. Unfortunately, your opinion is in the minority, and from then on half of SMURF's resources—and half the meeting time—will be devoted to redwoods.

Several meetings later, a group within SMURF wants to start LoggerSMURF, a sub-group that wants to give financial assistance to Northwestern logging companies to help them develop new industries. While you agree that this would help alleviate the problem of deforestation, you also feel that as much as you have fought the logging companies world-wide, they are the last group that deserves your financial assistance. Unfortunately, once again you are out-voted by what you perceive as a majority of newer members—people passionate about rain forests and who joined the group after SMURF received international recognition.

Meanwhile, your wardenship is threatened. With so many voices to hear, there is increased disagreement and debate within SMURF on the method of appropriation and management of the rain forest fund. With more projects coming in, the group doesn't feel that there are enough resources to handle wardening 100,000 square miles of rain forest. Viewing SMURF's indecisiveness and inaction as a bad sign, Brazil withdraws the offer of wardenship.

You have been crushed by your own creation. Like Frankenstein, you created a monster, selfishly thinking all along you were doing the right thing. And it killed you.

But what could you do? Declare a dictatorship, claiming that SMURF will deal with rain forests and rain forests alone? There certainly would have been an uprising as you forcibly silenced the diverse views of the group. But in the end, those diverse voices silenced you in a fair, politically correct fashion.

ACT UP - Headed for coalition hell?

ACT UPs around the nation are buckling under their own diversity. The many diverse AIDS coalitions that make up ACT UP are having membership problems on both coasts. ACT UP New York has seen such a rise in disagreement and distrust between the many diverse points-of-view that meetings are often taken up more by bickering and posturing than by actual planning and decision-making. In California, ACT UP Golden Gate was created after splintering off from the other local ACT UP. The conflict was between one group who saw civil rights as the key issue behind AIDS activism and the other group who wanted to concentrate on PWA's and their daily needs. ACT UP Portland split up over accusations of sexism and other forms of harassment between members of the coalition itself.

Currently under contention in New York is the group call ACT UP Against the New World Order. This group is concentrating on the United States military and the war against Iraq. While any issues can conceivably be tied to AIDS, many within ACT UP New York contend that ACT UP Against the New World Order is dealing with issues too remotely connected with the epidemic. They instead want to concentrate on concerns they perceive would result in more immediate benefits for People with AIDS, like healthcare, and resent their meeting time and hard fought for funds being taken up with an issue that they personally disagree with.

The members of ACT UP Against the New World Order contend that the U.S. obsession with war and the military is intricately linked with its poor performance on AIDS. If U.S. money is being spent to kill 200,000 Iraqis, then it is not being spent on the epidemic. For this group, AIDS is just as much a political crisis as healthcare crisis.

From what I gather, there is a general impression that ACT UP New York is loosely divided into two groups. On the one side are the more "conservative" members of the group, those who feel ACT UP should concentrate on AIDS specific issues and not issues tied to but not directly related to AIDS. Many within the group also feel that these members are the ones most directly affected by AIDS: PWAs and those who are HIV+. For these people, six more months could be a lifetime, and they want to spend that time finding a cure.



On the other hand are those who want to see a broader focus for ACT UP and see a logical connection between political action and AIDS. There is also the impression that this group is made up of persons less directly affected by AIDS, those who are HIV-.

Now it seems unlikely to me that the division within ACT UP New York is that simple and clean-cut, but what matters is that the impression of division exists. After reading their weekly minutes and accompanying briefing, I sometimes feel like I am watching ACT UP self-destruct. Much of the letters written into the weekly briefings deal with members dissatisfaction with the agenda, dissatisfaction with discrimination within the group, and dissatisfaction that all the disagreement is limiting the vitality of a once vital activist group.

But what can they do? Should the members who have been with the group the longest be the ones to decide the agenda and have the disagreeing members removed? Should decision-making be left up to the PWA's because they have, theoretically, the most to lose? Or should the group be run on consensus and majority rule, even though the possibility exists that one group may recruit more sympathetic new members and change the focus of the group entirely?

I think the answers lie in dispelling the myth of the coalition and the myth that diversity should be embraced at all costs. ACT UP and other similar lefty organizations have to come to terms with their differences and decide when it's best to go their separate ways.

—Peter Doubt



Coalition politics

Unleash the power not the privilege

Every week the *Gay Community News* seems to report another fracture amongst the organized ranks of left-wing AIDS activist groups. Actually, it isn't just the GCN that is reporting these fractures, ACT UPs from all over the country networking to fight AIDS and to improve systems of public healthcare seem to be openly articulating the splintering that is taking place within the various coalition chapters.

Issues of internal sexism, racism, and homophobia are becoming as much a focus of the ACT UP agenda as the fight for an improved healthcare system. And running concurrently with these issues is the threat that such diversity and dissention, such preoccupations with "other" issues which have no place on the agenda of an AIDS activist coalition, will ultimately be the ruin of an organized AIDS coalition. In short, there exists a fear that dissention spells doom for AIDS activism.

When difference and dissention are not controlled or handled neatly and efficiently from within, when a united front is threatened by dissent, screams that the "end is near" ring out loudly. Many ACT UP members are currently concerned about the threat posed by political dissention. Laying importance in the belief that AIDS activism must remain mono-focused if it is to remain powerful and successful they believe that goals will remain unrealized if "unrelated" (political) issues are taken on board.

However, this attempt to separate issues which "belong" from issues which do not begs the question of whose definition of AIDS "we" are talking about? And who is this single-subject, unified "we" that is feeling threatened? Whose interests does this unified "we" represent? Obviously not everybody feels the "real" issues are being represented for why else would effort be put into making known these differences?

What counts as AIDS related, and more significantly who counts as worthy of attention in this crisis is then seen as being prioritized according to the assumed position of a few privileged people who are able to speak in a unified voice. This is in turn interpreted as one group attempting to identify for the rest of us specifically "real" issues in relation to AIDS and AIDS activism, issues which are in effect culturally specific and historically bound and which may not be real to us at all.

I would argue that such assumed "unity" and sameness should be viewed with scepticism. When activism and political change becomes a comfortable project, when the sites out of which resistance erupts are no longer viewed as potential sites for change, when those generating the turmoil and creating the challenge find themselves in a familiar and comfortable place of their own making, then the necessary question to ask is whose world has been made safer, and at whose expense.

When I hear AIDS activists' demands which suggest that "we" set aside all "our" differences to fight a national healthcare crisis, I cannot help but hear a nationalistic call to arms which assumes that AIDS affects us all in the same way. Initial accusations of sexism and the subsequent demands by women activists for changes in the diagnosis of HIV to include differently manifested symptoms in the female body illuminates legitimates the value of dissent within coalitions. Indeed if we were all equal there wouldn't be an AIDS healthcare crisis.

A recognition of the dissonance created by discriminatory government healthcare and the non-discriminatory nature of HIV brought many activists together in the early '80s. If the differences don't continue to be heard and recognized, then ACT UP only serves to replace the monolithic US government it has been so fiercely fighting against.

A reluctance to recognize AIDS as a multi-faceted issue, and a determination to view difference as a disseminator dangerously reduces and isolates AIDS to a disease only of the immune system. Instead of validating the importance of the many issues being raised by the AIDS crisis, instead of using the emergence of these various issues as a means to legitimate a struggle against discrimination and intolerance of diversity, diversity within AIDS activism is being viewed as a covert act of betrayal, a sidetrack from the "real" issue which focuses on the fact that people are dying.

People are dying, but what is killing them is not just HIV. People are dying because of the ineffective healthcare policies of a discriminating government administration. But what's new. Western late-capitalist governments have been responsible for decades for the deaths of many thousands of people. The fight against AIDS cannot stop at inadequate healthcare. For the AIDS healthcare crisis is a symptom of a collapsed cultural condition, and rather than cry out that such recognition distracts and diverts attention from real AIDS issues, I believe that the ruptures of faith these revelations have created should be embraced as a sign of the effectiveness and power that AIDS activism has unleashed.

AIDS cannot be reduced to a life or death issue because the AIDS crisis and the fact that it has been allowed to happen proves that AIDS is about more than immune deficiency. The unacceptable response by governments to the AIDS crisis illuminates a social and political system which has allowed itself to divide society into groups of dispensable people and to become immune to the needs and demands of those who do not fall within the categories of what governments consider to be "essential" and "important." This type of attitude is one which I fear in the discontent and outrage being spoken against such groups as ACT UP Against the New World Order.

In a letter submitted to ACT UP New York's "Monday Night Agenda," the meeting schedule and minutes for the week of May 6, 1991, George M. Carter proposed the aims for an ACT UP Against the New World Order. In this proposal he attempts to bring into perspective "the systematic evils of our government and its strategies in the broader context of policy making and militarism."

Carter positions AIDS in relation to the priorities and the prioritizers. He writes: "The unanswered question of the [gulf] war has been: how is it this government can send, house, clothe and feed over half a million people some 8,000 miles away in the middle of a desert, yet there's next to no money for AIDS." This very simple and obvious question significantly opens up the AIDS crisis as much more than a currently incurable immune deficiency virus.

Carter later asks who sets to gain from the profits of the gulf war, and once again the answers aren't difficult: "A certain small handful of US corporations . . . [the] passive

genocide of 100,00 Americans on the part of an indifferent Administration parallels the slaughter of around 200,00 Iraqi civilians and soldiers." Similarly, as various ACT UPs resist and resent cries of sexism, racism and homophobia because they detract from the real issues, the question needs to be raised, "who sets to gain from ignoring these issues?" and what kind of a world order will ignoring these issues help to create?"

In a presentation at the West Coast Women's Music Festival in 1981, Bernice Johnson Reagon spoke about the importance, and the struggles, of coalition politics in the civil rights movement and in the wider framework of political activism in the final decades of the twentieth century. Her words regarding the civil rights movement echo many of the struggles now being fought over in ACT UP.

She writes, "Within the Black movement there was also all of the evils of the society, so that anything that was happening to you [for example] in New York or the West Coast probably happened also to you in another way within the movement. And as you became aware of that you tried to talk to these movement people about how you felt. And they say, 'Well let's take that up next week. Because the most important thing now is that Black people are being oppressed and we must work with that.' Watch these mono-issue people. They ain't gonna do you no good. . . . And there are people who prioritize the cutting line in this issue, and more than anything we must move on this issue and that's automatically saying that whatever's bothering you will be put down if you bring it up." The struggle against oppression has to be against all oppression, it cannot be a selective struggle.

If the fight against AIDS is to be purely a struggle for a cure that will save the lives of those who are HIV antibody positive, what will happen to those who are still being oppressed after that cure is found? Again, what kind of world order will be left if issues, for example, of racism, homophobia, sexism, militarism, and poverty are considered distractions to the "real" agenda? AIDS activism is not "going wrong" by recognizing the turmoil within itself. As Bernice Johnson Reagon suggests, "If you are really doing coalition work [most] of the time you feel threatened to the core and if you don't you're not really doing no coalescing."

Those involved in coalition work can often inadvertently reinsert the very sovereignty they are fighting against by trying to assert an ideal form for coalition structures in advance. Judith Butler discusses this in her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Butler writes that "the insistence in advance on coalitional 'unity' as a goal assumes that solidarity, whatever its price, is a prerequisite for political action. Perhaps a coalition needs to acknowledge its contradictions and take action with those contradictions intact."

Butler suggests that perhaps a part of attempting to dialogue and form a coalition should be an understanding and an acceptance "of divergence, breakage, splinter, and fragmentation as a part of the often tortuous process of democratization." Coalitions cannot ignore the threats posed by difference, they cannot hope for "an easy life." For it is only through the fractures and the splinterings that activism can remain sceptical and informed.

--miz priz

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African-American Primer

G is for ... Gay and Black

I'm walking back to my dorm. I'm 21, white, and for the first time in my life living as an openly gay man. I call for the elevator and, as the doors close behind me, I hear in the lobby the three black men who have been hassling me for weeks snickering and calling names. "Queer!"

I'm walking into a bar in Chicago. Inside the lights are hot, the jams are pumpin' and the men are sweatin'. As I head off to get a drink, I notice a small group of black men walking out the door. The guy on the stool next to me says, "Don't they know the spade bar's down the street?"

About 10% of Amerikans are non-heterosexual. About 11% of Amerikans are of Afrikan descent. And, as much as large chunks of each group would like to deny it, there is a sizable overlap between the two groups, to the tune of 2.5-3 million people who are black and gay.

The resemblance goes beyond mere numbers. Both minorities have been traditionally disenfranchised and it is only in the last 25-30 years that truly nationwide strides have been made to secure the rights of either group. One would think that such a long common history of oppression would form the basis for, if not friendship, at least a camaraderie and a political alliance.

Yet from my black lovers I have heard time and again how they feel they have to hide their sexuality from family and non-gay friends because "it's just not accepted at home." According to an article on the impact of AIDS on ethnic minorities, this attitude is at least partially rooted in the perception of powerlessness in the Afrikan-American community. As one Afrikan-American male living with AIDS put it, "All we've ever had is the power of the dick... so if one dick likes another dick, that's a problem."

Which is not to say being gay makes one colorblind. I have lost count of the number of times I have noted an absence of black faces because it was "understood" that this bar/meeting/cliq was "whites only." And in all honesty, a number of white gays hold the perception that the gays were there in the fight for black civil rights but the favor is not being returned for the gay rights battle. It must be pointed out, however, that this last assertion is somewhat unfair, since most gays who marched did not march as openly gay people. Although it does not excuse the lack of support, it should be noted that non-gay blacks did not have the same luxury gay whites did of being able to openly support a group of which they were obviously not members.

Of course, good old-fashioned racism and homophobia are as rampant among these communities as among any other.

This is a critical time for both minorities. Existing civil rights legislation is being dismantled by the Reagan/Bush Supreme Court and new legislation is being killed. Hate crimes are on the rise, with a reported increase of anti-gay violence of 122%. The hatred and violence and bias against both groups will only worsen until we unite to demand an end to it. Instead the internal racial and sexual apartheid continues, because "we don't need their kind, right?"

Wrong.

--Ivory

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Afro

H is for ... Hair

The African-American head of hair has survived a chemical warfare. After so many years of being lyed, dyed and slicked to the side, finger-waved and S-curved into a merciless surrender, the African-American "do" has decided to reclaim its roots and embrace its natural texture and uniqueness.

Many sisters and brothers have managed to deprogram themselves in order to dispel the old myth centered around the existence of "good" and "bad" hair. Individuals of the black community have had to live under the circumstances of being defined by what is on top of their heads instead of what is inside.

The texture of one's hair and the shade of one's skin has been used as a means of brutal attack--fatal ammunition in a game of the dozens. A kinky kitchen. Nappy edges. BB's. Rats...Blue hair grease and hot combs were used to fry some rebellious locks into submission. However, these weapons never worked, 'cos "bad" hair always knows the way back home.

Today, we don our politics upon our heads. Dope fades and rasta-fashioned dreadlocks have become a celebration of what a wonderful "thang" a headful of African-American hair can be. We have rescued African braids from their association with Bo Derek. Bo don't know sh**! about the twisted, beaded beauty that originated from the Motherland. And to the brothers and sisters that wrinkle their noses at the sight of what is truly natural, the something that is our most Afrocentric attribute...WAKE UP!

Just like the way in which we speak--a bi-lingual phenomenon, consisting of standard and "black" English--African-Americans have had to change their hair-do's for the approval of a society which refuses to accept the "multi-facetness" of black folks. The corporate world which expects blacks to automatically assimilate--to talk that talk, to either straighten or "tame" our hair--in the name of Almighty IBM and the rest of the Fortune 500 simply ignores a choir of black voices shouting, "Let me be me on my own terms."

And if I wish to straighten my hair, dye it blonde or shave every inch of it off--then let me do it peacefully! I do not want to be preached to about my "mutilated" hair just because I have Ultra-Sheened. Don't worry about a sister's weave. She bought the stuff. She paid for it, so it is her hair. If an African-American wants to go blonde, let them have fun with it. Let the young men grow their box cuts as high as the Empire State Building if they please. This is a time of self-expression for black folks, of coming into contact with self. A self-definition, a positive self image can take shape in many forms. It can evolve from something as simple as the way in which you wear your hair. SO...hats off to the hair you wear!!! Peace.

--Alice Y. Jackson, "Black As We Wanna Be"

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Senate squashes debate over ROTC discrimination

Hands across campus: Another PRSSA failure

NORMAL--After a somewhat bizarre turn of events, gay/lesbian/human rights activists are claiming victory after forcing the Academic Senate of Illinois State University to recognize the blatantly discriminatory practices and policies of ROTC.

On April 24, 1991, over 50 community and campus activists attended a regularly scheduled Academic Senate meeting where English Professor/Senator Curtis White presented a resolution which asked the Senate to review policies and practices of the ROTC.

The resolution acknowledged that the ROTC program discriminates against applicants based on sexual orientation. The resolution continued by asking that the President of the University to work with administrators from other universities "with the goal of changing the federal policy that allows discrimination based upon sexual orientation in the military." The understanding of the resolution was that the President would report back to the Senate on the progress of the initiative, and after three years, if the ROTC program continues to discriminate based on sexual orientation, the Academic Senate "will be free at that time to reconsider the University's contractual relationship with the Reserve Officers Training Corps."

What should have followed the introduction of this resolution was an open debate amongst the Senators. However, open debate on the resolution wasn't as much a given as one might expect in a University setting. Instead, political science professor/Senator Harvey Zeidenstein cited an Academic Senate statement which prohibits debate on issues that "politicize the University."

After the introduction of the Statement of Politicizing the University, Senate Chair Leonard Schmaltz ruled Zeidenstein out of order. In turn, Zeidenstein challenged the Chair. According to Senate procedure, challenge of the Chair must be followed by a vote of Senate members to decide whether or not the original resolution should be debated.

After making the rounds of Senate members, the vote was cast: 15 members voted to debate the ROTC issue, 21 voted to discontinue discussion, and 5 abstained from voting.

Welcome to the circus

"ROTC DISCRIMINATES!" Activist Peter Howells was the first voice to sound across the Circus Room in the Bone Student Center where the Senate meeting was taking place.

"ISU DOES NOTHING!" answered activists on the other side of the room. With the set-up of the Circus Room, almost a Senate-in-the-round, activists easily surrounded the Senators while chanting and clapping. The demonstrators quickly made their way to the doors of the Circus room, raising banners and blocking the main exit.

Lively demonstrations continued for over 30 minutes as Senators located other exits or ripped banners as they stepped over--and on--the activists. Protesters responded, "WHAT ARE THEY DOING? WALKING AWAY!" and "SHAME! SHAME! SHAME!"

We won't talk--so don't ask us

Most of the demonstrators and supporters of the resolution agree that while they they know they face an uphill a battle to have the Department of Defense change the sexual orientation policy (or have ROTC removed from campus), they were most frustrated by the vote that closed off all debate on the issue.

Gloria Jeanne Davis, Director of Affirmative Action at ISU, was upset with the Senate's vote to refuse debate on the issue. She said, "I am very disturbed by the unwillingness to discuss this issue. Homophobia needs to be discussed. Some positive things could come out if people would just take the opportunity to expose themselves to a little education."

Most were angered by President Thomas Wallace after he abstained from the vote to debate the issue. Wallace openly supports the resolution and has already begun to work toward ending the ROTC discrimination.

"CELEBRATE DIVERSITY AT THIS UNIVERSITY!" was one chant directed toward President Wallace. Demonstrators were making reference to Wallace's "Celebrate Diversity" campaign at last fall's Festival ISU.

Wallace defended that he always abstains from voting since the Senate reports directly to him as the President. However, activists still believe that he should have voted to continue the debate.

Activists were also angered by Romney Ruder, newly elected Student Body President (and a ROTC scholarship recipient), who voted to squash debate on the issue. Ruder stated, "The scholarships that are offered are not University scholarships. They are national scholarships from the Department of Defense. I think that it should be dealt with at a higher level."

When asked how he was going to deal with the demonstrators, many of whom were members of the student body at ISU, Ruder responded, "The meeting is over. I'm going to leave. I've got studying to do."

Ruder pushed through the crowd as demonstrators began, "WE'LL BE BACK! WE'LL WIN! ROTC WON'T STAY IN!"

ROTC DISCRIMINATES

ISU DOES NOTHING

Second verse, same as the first?

One week after demonstrators shut down the Academic Senate meeting, Student Senator/Senate Vice-chair Rob Englehardt, who originally voted to squash debate on the ROTC issue, introduced an alternate resolution for consideration. This time, however, the Senate chose to debate the issue.

After two hours of technical deliberations and detailed procedures, the Academic Senate passed a resolution that addressed the Department of Defense's discrimination based on sexual orientation.

However, the resolution that passed was a watered down version of the original. For example, all references to the ROTC program were deleted from the resolution with responsibility being placed directly on the Department of Defense. Also, deleted was a statement that expressed the Academic Senate's disapproval of discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The passed resolution does, though, require that the President of the University present an annual report to the Senate on progress made toward working with other university administrators to end Department of Defense discrimination.

Whereas activists were concerned with deletions made in the resolution, all were pleased that the issue at hand will return to the Senate floor annually. And all have promised to keep close watch on the next academic year's Senate proceedings.

--S. Lloyd DeWitt

Once upon a time a bunch of college students decided to take a stand against racism. They decided the best way to do this was to encourage another bunch of college students to stand in the middle of campus holding hands with each other. And behold, racism was, by virtue of this great act, magically wiped away from the campus.

Well, that's not quite how it went. What really happened is that on April 10, a group of around 500 ISU students, faculty and staff, almost all of them white, took part in "Hands Across Campus." The event, which was part of a larger action held simultaneously on several other midwestern universities, was supposedly designed for college students to join hands to "show support for a world free of racial turmoil." And it would have worked too, except that darn Black Student Union boycotted it.


Tsk, tsk. "And after all we've done for them." Imagine.

Members of the Public Relations Student Society of America, the organizers of "Hands," immediately branded the BSU as hypocritical because its membership voted to participate in the educational aspects of "Hands" but not to participate in the actual joining of hands itself. In other words, the PRSSA was pissed because the BSU spent its time and energy on outreach and wound up spoiling PRSSA's "ebony and ivory" photo opportunity.

The reasoning behind the BSU boycott was simple. While they appreciated the gesture, they recognized that "Hands" was just that, a gesture. And when after almost 500 years of European occupation of North America racism still exists to the extent it does, the time for gestures is long past.

In critiquing "Hands," many people have pointed out that at least PRSSA tried to do *something*, and BSU should have supported them on that basis. What these people don't seem to realize is that whether or not a white person chooses to oppose racism is not a decision that should be contingent on whether or not a black person supports her/him in that decision or even knows s/he has made that decision. Additionally, PRSSA sunk several thousand dollars into "Hands" for advertising alone. PRSSA is one of the few "non-black" campus groups that has the money and the personpower to genuinely fight racism. They chose instead to stage a media event, and those who most needed to hear the message stayed at home.

--jmc



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Thirteen cases: Censorship all over

The liberals will censor you just as quickly as the conservatives. And both sides will kill the truth for reasons ranging from fear to greed.

For nine years I was a newspaper reporter. I worked two years as a television news assignment editor and have spent the last 11 years writing periodic freelance articles. It has been 13 years since I decided to leave the newspaper business. In that time I ran firsthand into 13 situations where I believe attempts were made— in some cases successful— in censoring news stories. You can bet similar censoring is occurring in your area.

Case 1: Happened my last year at the Amarillo (Texas) *Globe-News*. My friends Bill Cox and David Bowser were working on a major expose on pornography. The city editor, who assigned them the story, had discovered local sales of child pornography.

The series never saw the light of day. On a Friday, publisher Jim Whyte killed the series. That Sunday, for the first time in the nine years I had worked at the paper, the movie section carried ads for all three adult movie houses in the city. Any connection there?

Case 2: During the years I had worked at the *Globe-News*, the paper's owners refused to report on the city's black community. The murder of a white man went on page one. If a black man was murdered, it went on an inside page. So I was surprised during my last year when my editor, Orville Howard, told me he wanted a story about the plight of Black Amarillo for the next afternoon's paper.

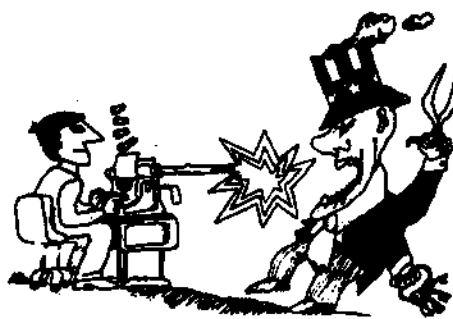
Well, I used up a year's worth of luck, stumbled onto a black gathering at a community center, and managed to put together a story documenting that Amarillo banks would not grant loans to buy houses in the "black section" of town. I also confirmed "black" parks did not get the care and maintenance of "white" parks. The story ran the next day.

As I looked over my story in print, Bill Cox walked by and explained exactly how the story actually got into print. It was fairly simple. Orville had cancer and expected to die (although he recovered and is alive and well—and out of the newspaper business). He had always wanted to do a story on blacks in Amarillo. The publisher had left town the previous morning to go on vacation. The publisher's right-hand man had also left, for an editors' convention, and would not return until that night.

So Orville, thinking he was dying and wishing to give the city the coverage it always should have had, ran the story on the one day his superiors would not be in town to stop the presses.

Case 3: As news assignment editor for KAMR-TV in Amarillo, I had discovered a story out of Washington D.C. about some infant formula the Food and Drug Administration had ordered recalled that was still showing up on some Washington grocery shelves. I visited four local stores and found the stuff in two of them. I went back to the station and wrote up the story.

Michelle Paul, the anchorwoman, went to the news director to kill the story. She said we should wait two weeks because it would be a ratings week and we could jack up the ratings. Of course children would die.... Fortunately the news director backed me up. The news consultant, a friend of the anchorwoman, recommended the news director and I both be fired.



Case 4: In 1984, at the request of a friend, I wrote an opinion piece for the Oklahoma *Free Press*, a short-lived alternative paper based in Norman, Oklahoma. I wrote on the abortion issue, lamenting the fact that no local facilities existed for unmarried pregnant women who did not want an abortion but had nowhere to go. I also noted discrimination by medical schools in accepting doctors who for religious reasons would be likely to oppose abortion.

An area professor, who ironically has written about comics and censorship, was so outraged by my article that he sent a letter to my employer, a woman who was a leader in the pro-ERA drive in Oklahoma. I lost my job. My friend's publication folded as pro-choice readers stopped buying it.

Case 5: I have occasionally written for the Oklahoma *Constitution*, a conservative, pro-life quarterly. Once I developed a poll asking the publication's readers about their schools. It included questions on whether their children had ever heard a teacher denouncing God, swearing or lambasting Christians in front of his/her captive audience.

The editor refused to run the story. I found out he was a teacher and may have been afraid of the flak that could come down on his head.

Case 6: A Birthright chapter had formed in Norman since my story in the *Free Press*. The group provided financial and other assistance for unmarried pregnant women who chose to continue the pregnancy. The group was in danger of being evicted for failure to pay the rent. The director called the local television stations. One station did a story and funds poured in. Channel 4—reported to have had a staff member involved in Planned Parenthood—allegedly told her they were not interested in a story until Birthright got kicked out into the street.

Case 7: This involved fear of gay readers by the *Post Amerikan*, for which I had written several articles documenting OSHA indifference to worker safety, plant wrongdoing at a Minnesota strike and questionable dealings by a Florida preacher. All of these stories could have gotten the little paper sued but it ran the stories.

But it panicked when I wrote a story suggesting gays ask Anita Bryant to be head entertainer at a fundraiser for AIDS research in exchange for gays agreeing to stop protesting when a radio or TV show is offered to her. One Atlanta station was scared off four years ago by gay protests. After all, the Anita Bryant/gays clash in Florida is 14 years old. I noted that (1) Bryant had not publicly attacked gays or jumped on the hate bandwagon since the AIDS scare, and (2) the Florida bill she had opposed would only have affected private schools and would not have affected gays teaching in public schools (contrary to popular belief).

The *Post Amerikan*, which has gay writers and lots of gay readers, wouldn't touch my story with a ten-foot pole. [See PostNote]

Case 8: In 1988 when Dan Quayle was nominated for Vice President, I sent information on him to columnists Jack Anderson and Carl Rowan and to *The Nation*. Quayle's family runs the newspapers in Indianapolis and Phoenix, Arizona. The Phoenix paper killed a series on organized crime in Arizona, even though one of its own reporters, Don Bolles, was murdered by a car bomb. I questioned if we needed a member of that family, who allegedly supported organized crime, in the White House. No one chose to follow it up.

Case 9: As a member of the Church of Christ, I wrote an account of how a Church of Christ in Norman had gone two years without doing a single sermon on drugs, even though the drug situation was so bad the church felt obligated to start a drug dependency class. *The Herald* rejected the story but said they would welcome a story by me on "immorality in America." Any criticism of the church was to be censored.

Case 10: I discovered that Oklahoma Christian College, affiliated with the Church of Christ, was selling an anti-Catholic pamphlet urging readers to vote against all Catholic political candidates and not to promote Catholic workers. I wrote this up and sent it to the Oklahoma *Observer*, a widely-respected alternative bi-weekly. The editor declined it, stating that Catholics had attacked abortion and tried to interfere in politics.

Case 11: The National Cowboy Hall of Fame inducted Barry Goldwater as a member. I wrote an article for the Oklahoma *Gazette*, a mainstream weekly, challenging the appointment. I cited the Don Bolles murder case mentioned above. Following that murder, some 40 reporters came to Arizona and did a multi-part expose on organized crime there. The stories tied Goldwater's brother to organized crime and stated at least one organized crime figure donated to Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign.

Goldwater threatened to sue anyone who printed the series, a formidable threat since he had previously won a libel suit against *FACT* magazine. Years later in his autobiography, Goldwater admitted he knew the story was true and still tried to kill it. The *Gazette* editor wouldn't touch the story. The *Gazette* does touch lots of stories promoting Oklahoma City attractions. Like the Cowboy Hall of Fame.



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Case 12: When I discovered a Dallas area church was publishing anti-Catholic hate literature, I sent the information and photocopies of the publisher's ads to the Dallas Times-Herald and the Dallas Morning News. Neither ever wrote a word about it. Of course, both carry church pages with lucrative church advertising.

Case 13: Remember the excitement over "The Last Temptation of Christ" from Universal Pictures? Steve Gooden, who is black and a Christian, had just signed a recording contract with MCA, a Universal company. Appalled by what he felt was an attack on his religion, Gooden asked to be released from his contract. Universal refused and has barred him from recording for anyone else. The Oklahoma Observer ran my story on Gooden.

I sent a copy of the story to "60 Minutes." The reply: "The 60 Minutes staff read your letter with interest; however, there are no plans for a segment on the subject you discussed." CBS produces movies and has been challenged by Donald Wildmon and his American Family Association.

But how do you explain the actions of Ebony, a publication supposedly for blacks? Their reply to my story: "Ebony is unable to consider a feature on Mr. Gooden." If you check the magazine, you'll see Ebony does a lot of features on black Hollywood celebrities. Wouldn't want to endanger that, would they?

--Steve LaPrade

[The opinions expressed in this article are those of Mr. LaPrade and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Post Amerikan.]

PostNote: In the past three years since I joined the Post collective, I have seen many people come and go. Responsibilities change, and unfortunately, like any other struggling, non-profit, completely volunteer organization, important issues and concerns are sometimes overlooked until someone points them out to us.

If my memory serves me correctly, I am the only full-time collective member who is still working on the paper who was with the Post when LaPrade's Anita Bryant article was submitted. And at that time, I had only attended a couple of meetings for the paper and didn't carry much responsibility.

When the article was submitted, we were very low on staff, and LaPrade's article arrived after our deadline. However, like all articles that arrive after deadline, we considered it for publication. If the article is timely and dated, newsworthy, and important to our readership, especially our local readership, we will find the means necessary to include the article in the current issue (finding a typist/editor/proofreader, printing a headline, rearranging the layout of the paper, possibly pulling another article to make the space, etc).

After reviewing LaPrade's article, the consensus was that the small staff had other responsibilities to tend to in order to meet other production deadlines and that LaPrade's article was not high priority. At no time did we "fear" our gay and lesbian readers (although they are certainly not a contingent to be fucked with--indeed!). At no time did we "panic" because of LaPrade's article (Post Amerikan has a strict policy against panicking--only when the FBI calls). And honey! If the boys who read and write for this little rag could only find a ten foot pole... (snap!)



My guess is that when we began production on the next issue, coordinators changed, people left, people came, and LaPrade's Anita Bryant article was one of the unfortunate oversights on our part.

After speaking with LaPrade, he has agreed to send us another copy of the article, and we have agreed to consider it for publication in the August/September issue of Post Amerikan. But already, before even receiving the article from LaPrade, emotions are stirring. Post writer jmc has already written a powerful response to LaPrade's defense of Anita Bryant which will be considered for the next issue of Post Amerikan.

In our review process, each article submitted is read by at least two readers as well as the coordinator. If anything in the piece is questionable by even one reader, the piece is discussed by the collective. The collective then makes the decision as to whether or not the piece will run in Post Amerikan.

--Scott

Dear Ms. Hippie



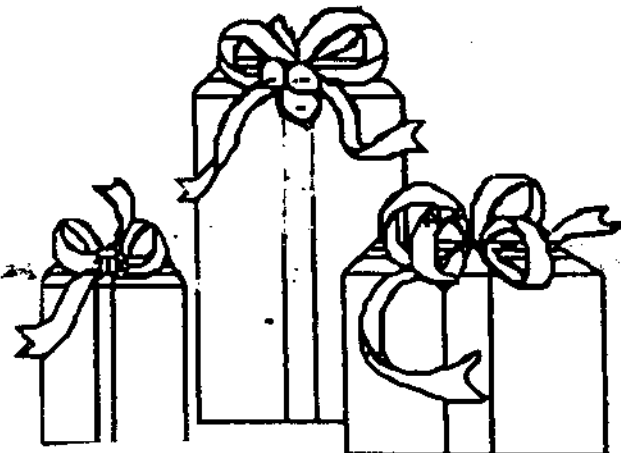
animals. Then ask her to resupply you with the appropriate smellies. Ms. Hippie is herself allergic to Mennen's Speedstick and can only use Tom's of Maine when she has to. These other products may cost more, but then if you use them sparingly, you can combine the au naturel smell with the cosmetic one.

Keep in mind that your mother already purchased the products--the money is already making its capitalist rounds. Throwing the products away or letting them sit under your bathroom sink is not going to make society's businesses become more politically correct.

There are always more radical ways to deal with those nasty companies who test on animals. Put all your gooey, icky animal-tested shit in a ziplock bag and mail it back to the companies telling them that the reason you're returning it is because you just found out they test on animals. And slap a big, radical animal rights sticker on the outside of the ziplock.

However, remember that ziplock's are made out of petroleum products! And although they are a lot of fun to play with ("yellow and blue make green!") and they are darn convenient for freezing left-over tofu burgers, we should all be careful about using household plastics.

So shit? Here we are again, concerned reader. What to do? I guess Ms. Hippie wasn't very helpful in solving your problem. But this just goes to show you that even toiletries and food storage can complicate making the world a better place in which to live. Peace and sweet smells.



Dear Ms. Hippie,

For my birthday last month, my mother sent me several "politically incorrect" gifts, including hygiene products produced by companies which test on animals. For various reasons the products are not returnable, and as a college student with a limited budget, I can really use all of this type of product I can get. What, pray tell, is the proper political response to the use of such products and what is the proper etiquette response to my mother?

Yours truly,
P.C. Manners

Dear P.C.

You are in a sticky, icky, but tricky position, one that Ms. Hippie has found herself in many times before. First of all, try not to feel guilty. Ms. Hippie herself does things that aren't always considered "P.C.," and sometimes you just gotta say "fuck it." But as Ms. Hippie always prefers the peaceful way, she prefers not to say "fuck it."

Toiletry items are not a necessity. Ms Hippie prefers the smells of nature and often goes "au naturel" as far as using cosmetics is concerned! But this doesn't appeal to everyone. So to compensate, you could tell your mother that you're allergic to certain products i.e. ones tested on



Burning up what we're fighting for

- The US Department of Defense is the single largest consumer of oil in the world.
- In 25 minutes, a single seater F-15 jet can burn 625 gallons of fuel, more than the average US motorist uses in a year.
- An aircraft carrier will put away that much fuel in under 7 minutes.
- The military consumed about 200 million barrels of oil in 1989 enough energy to run the entire US urban mass transit system for 14 years.
- The military is far more dependent upon oil than the rest of US society, getting 79% of its energy from oil versus only 34% for the US as a whole.
- A body bag requires 3 cups of oil to produce.

[Source: Gar Smith, "The Military's Oil Addiction," Earth Island Journal, February 1991]



Summer reading

Book reviews:

Tales of the City in review

Looking for something new? Armistead Maupin is the thing to do. If you lost your movie rental card, or it's too hot to play croquet, or those bars in town play the same darn music they played last summer, then pick up a book or two, or three, or for that matter, six, and enjoy. Armistead Maupin's outrageous *Tales of the City* is the perfect series of books to read this summer.

For the most part, Maupin's books revolve around the wonderfully wacky city of San Francisco. If you've never been to the city, you might feel as if you have explored ten exciting years in it with Maupin's characters. *Tales* sometimes takes you beyond the city to a desert whorehouse or to a singles cruise ship on the Pacific Ocean, or even on a mad trip to Alaska and back.

The first book starts in San Francisco in 1978 and the last book finishes in the same town 11 years later with four books between them. The first book of the series is *Tales of the City* followed by *More Tales of the City*, *Further Tales of the City*, *Babycakes*, *Significant Others*, and ending with *Sure of You*.

Although it is possible to read these books out of order, it's best to read them chronologically. As you read, the love for the books' characters (which for the most part stay the same throughout the entire series) and the enigmatic charm of San Francisco pulls you hurriedly from one book to next until you find yourself savoring every last page of *Sure of You*.

Maupin's characters are full of life, mystery, and gut-laughing honesty. Maupin is one of the few writers whose characters' desire for sex and love is realistic and human. Sometimes you find yourself crying over a lost love or yelling at a back-stabbing friend. As you read from book to book, coincidence and mystery seems to follow every person in the series. It always seems Maupin has another secret past for each of his characters, and these pasts may send you laughing or gasping for air.

The great thing about these books is how easy the reading is. Most chapters are five or six pages long allowing you to read five or six chapters in a half hour. You'll probably find yourself reading between classes, on a coffee break, or while waiting to add fabric softener at the laundromat. Although the books have their serious moments, they are undoubtedly witty and humorous overall.

Maupin keeps the story line present with the time in which he is writing the books. The series is interesting in that it is a written history of the change in lifestyle from the late 70's to the late 80's. Maupin does an excellent job of creating the atmosphere that San Francisco felt during the discovery of the AIDS epidemic. By the end of the sixth book, the AIDS epidemic is a crucial and undeniable element to every storyline and gives the reader a realistic feeling of the sorrow that many had to live through or are still living through 10 years after the epidemic began (the series is sure to serve as an important historical chronicle of the AIDS crisis).

But Maupin does not dwell on only the loss. He has a very positive message that is shown through the strength of his characters LIVING through the AIDS epidemic.

Armistead Maupin's books are available on the shelves at Follett's book store in the Bone Student Center and at other selected book stores. *Sure of You* is easiest to find because it spent weeks on the Best Seller list. And any bookstore can order the entire series for you. Or inquire at Babbitt's Bookstore in downtown Normal to do a search of used copies for you.

-DINO



Close to the Knives by David Wojnarowicz

In January of 1990, University Galleries at Illinois State University hosted the exhibit, *Tongues of Flame*, a retrospective of artwork by David Wojnarowicz which not only explicitly dealt with sexual politics, discrimination, religion, and living with AIDS, but also conjured up compassion, intrigue, fear, erections, despair, rage, and the need for change.

The show attracted regional and national attention, and was even promoted positively by the local press (Dan Craft called it "bold, direct, and uncompromised"--*Pantagraph*, 1-19-90). The exhibit also received national attention when self-serving, "brothers of all," card-carrying, right-wing conservatives William Danameyer (R-California; NEA basher) and Donald Wildmon (Fascist Father of the American Family Association) were able to grab mass media attention in their attempts to discredit Wojnarowicz, labeling him a pornographer.

The images harvested from his life struggles reflect multiple levels of social strata--levels he reveals through his paintings, his words, and his performances and videos. More recently, though, he has woven together a journal of his experiences, *Close to the Knives: A Memoir of Disintegration*, just published by Vintage Books.

Wojnarowicz's manner of describing or relating a story issues from his mind like a fountain. His thoughts are allowed to fall out onto the page with all the interruptions that occur in living. Yet his words don't get cluttered. He keeps striding along. He never forgets his intention.

Close to the Knives is more than a journal of a queer living in a world of heterosexual privilege. It documents the growth of a man from a childhood of abuse and neglect, his life on 42nd street in New York prostituting for meals or a place to stay, and the salvation he gave himself.

Wojnarowicz took himself off the streets because he knew he wanted something better. The strength he found in himself is the driving force of the book. He never looks back on life in a sappy, nostalgic way. Rather, he reflects on the circumstances that brought him this far.

He's always had the savvy to own his problems. When his father told him he was going to beat him, Wojnarowicz had the guts as a child to tell him not to. Since his father made it a practice to beat his family with dog chains, standing up for himself was a matter of survival. Even after he left home, there were times he didn't believe he would make it--being conned, abducted, beaten, and raped by johns who would dump him, leave him for dead, or at least without any money.

The honest, unabashed manner Wojnarowicz reveals himself is comforting. I never really felt that I had invaded his privacy. Addressed by Wojnarowicz again and again is the stereotypical question, "Why does anyone have to know about your private life anyway?" There is a need to demonstrate to the heterosexual world that their world is not a vacuum--that being queer in America doesn't take place in some subculture outside of their own.

Wojnarowicz's comment that "we don't live in a one tribe nation," is appropriate in this context. Within that phrase he realizes that diverse nature of human beings. He poignantly reminds us all of the fragile human condition, crippled by a social tendency to deny anything outside narrow mores.

David does not deny anything. He does not entertain the politically correct. Rather, he maintains a diplomatic philosophy that allows for the potential of harmony. It is the potential of possibilities that we all have in common: We all have the potential to grow, to learn, if we listen to each other even if the subject is painful and unnerving. Whether the harmony concerns killing your drug dealer because he ripped you off, or killing yourself because you can't see the potential of possibilities, it deserves our attention--at the very least, our awareness.

David is conscious of the knives. He is conscious of the people who want to silence him. He is forever conscious of the fact that he is disintegrating physically. He doesn't want people to feel guilty or sorry for his suffering. He is calling us to action: "Greet the State, confront the State. Smell the flowers while you can."

A limited amount of copies of *Close to the Knives* have been ordered by Babbitt's Bookstore and should be arriving soon. After these copies run out, Brian will be happy to order copies for you. Please support the local, small businesses that advertise in *Post Amerikan*.

-Patrick McDonnell



Under the cover of art censorship

The move towards censorship has forced arts communities to consolidate, defend their rights, redefine their relationships and purposes, and has drawn them into the public arena. Artistic activity has been severely hampered by the resulting gestures and attitudes of arts organizations, government agencies, the general public and congressional representatives.

There is a current sense of taboo, paranoia, and restriction about what can be said and done, not only by artists, but by the general public. Withdrawal of support (symbolic, legal, and financial) from and active campaigning against certain artists has been explained as protective of civil rights, national pride, and healthy behavioral and lifestyle codes. These practices, however, are detrimental to these concerns because they represent an incomplete cultural identity. Art's ability to express and investigate our nation's diversity is being disrupted by the suppression of work which challenges more conservative versions of reality.

Sponsorship of the arts is being disrupted by individuals who assume the right to interpret for the "taxpayer" the appropriate subjects and behaviors for the arts. The American public, through the communications of individuals such as Jesse Helms and the National Republican Congressional Committee, is being coached and fed information which misrepresents the issues and artwork in debate. Primarily right-wing, upper-class, white, and heterosexual, these individuals discriminate by refusing to consider or privilege other views.

The phrasing of Jesse Helm's amendment, for example, professes to restrict art "which denigrates, debases or reviles a person, group or class of citizens on the basis of race, creed, sex, handicap, age or national origin." What's incredibly ironic is that the amendment has been created, and is being used, to violate the very rights it professes to protect.

As Joyce Fernandes of the Art Institute of Chicago comments: "Recognition of America's first and fundamental characteristic as a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic nation has been lost in homophobic, racist, sexist reaction." An embarrassing display of the faults of the social and political groups committing them, the evaluations which have generated much of the objections are shallow and irrational. They constitute a misuse of the role Anne Stengel Raman, Director of the Nexus Foundation for Today's Art, defines for the government

towards the arts. She sees the government as responsible for managing social resources "with a view to assisting the maximum growth of the individual as well as of the the collective body."

What does "obscenity" mean?

Many of the artists targeted for censorship, such as Robert Mapplethorpe and Andres Serrano, represent minority views, identities, and lifestyles. While their work is objected to for "obscenity," this label seems more an evasion than an articulation of the actual "problem."

For example, Mapplethorpe's photography is criticized for sexual explicitness, yet there is much artwork in major museum collections which is extremely sensual and graphically depicts sexual acts. A Rococo sculpture of intercourse between a satyr and nymph occupies a main exhibit space at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egon Schiele's gritty glimpses of prostitute's crotches are in major museums all over the world, and Auguste Rodin's sexually-charged heterosexual embraces are considered prime examples of the power of sculpture.

Part of the inconsistency of the boundaries of acceptability seems due to an ignorance (on the part of the objectors) to some of the "obscene" work already within museum and library walls. University press studies of both visual and verbal erotica, such as that in decorative motifs of Greek pottery or in Japanese prints, are apparently not read (or at least, not publicly) by Helms's supporters.

Also, the explicit nature of artwork becomes anesthetized if already associated with academic or aesthetic tradition, or historically or culturally distanced. The Met's satyr and nymph sculpture is a good example of how a mythical, allegorical presentation of otherwise realistic sex becomes acceptable.

So what's especially "evil" about Mapplethorpe's erotica? Does he treat his models as pornographic slaves? A sensitive glance might detect that his photographs are extremely formal—that Mapplethorpe seems more interested in light and its ability to sculpt form than he does in arousal. The models are rendered with dignity and respect. Perhaps Mapplethorpe's real "sin" is that he treats homosexual men and women as valid, healthy individuals worthy of representing human ideals.

If the reduction of people to sexual objects is the concern, it would seem more logical to question the way women are depicted in advertising. Or, to stay in the "realm" of art, it would seem necessary to object to David Salle's portrayal of women as B movie bits of cheesecake.

A further irony is that individuals who bemoan the current state of the arts—not only for obscenity, but for lack of sophistication or technique—cite artists who were censored during their own periods as examples of higher standards of aesthetic "morality." Michelangelo, who went from sinner to saint in a few decades, created, in his Sistine Ceiling, a controversy that continued for generations after its completion. Appalled at the use of naked figures to represent Biblical personalities, many popular preachers called for its destruction. This protest resulted in the covering up, by one of the artist's proteges, of the "private parts" of the ceilings' saints and sinners.

The perils of censorship

This tendency to cover up, suppress, and intimidate certain types of expression denies us the cultural value of confronting the underlying reasons for our reactions.

Many national museum directors and curators, in response to a *New Arts Examiner* questionnaire about censorship, defined the function of art in its ability to challenge preconceived, "status-quo" definitions of reality. With sometimes disarming, provocative methods, it can force the public to rethink, as, Frank Robinson of the Rhode Island School of Design puts it, "every issue in life, from religion to politics, from love and sex to death and the afterlife."

Robinson adds that "To say that museums should not present the artistic expression of this or that culture—or of this or that point of view or religious, sexual, or political orientation—is to deny what museums are all about, and what education is all about. To say that we should study only the accepted, in other words, what we know already, is to limit out horizons and guarantee our own mediocrity."

Censorship (as is usually practiced) continues a cultural imbalance, excluding and insulting many. It limits expansion and societal self-awareness. What constitutes "offense" is not necessarily negative or unhealthy, but is often an indicator of a clash with dominant values or beliefs. The prohibition of work which gives voice or space to a cultural margin, or that confronts what is offensive, does not solve or erase that area, it merely leaves it misunderstood.

[Source: "Against Intimidation: Museum directors, curators speak out against government censorship of the arts." *New Art Examiner*, October 1989.]

—Lizzie Dripping

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Artist-writer David Wojnarowicz



Victorian storm in a 90's teacup

I've always been very interested in the past, and especially in women's lives of the past. I spent a good deal of time during graduate school goofing off in the library stacks, leafing through *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vogue*, *The Delineator*, *Good Housekeeping* and other women's magazines from about 1905 to 1920. I'm especially interested in design from this period, and have been known to do things like tat a collar from directions in the *Codey's Ladies Book*. All this is an attempt to explain why I have been perusing *Victoria* magazine for some time now. In case you haven't read this periodical recently, it is a woman's magazine (published by Hearst) with what it calls "A Timeless Point of View".

What it actually is, in my opinion, is an intriguingly reactionary publication advocating shameless commercialism and the submission of women (and other second-class entities) -- and these two as interrelated phenomena. The audience which *Victoria* has found seems to be (to judge both from the editorial copy and from the letters to the editor) the upper-middle class American woman who is one step above her "Country" (i.e. *Ladies Home Journal*) counterpart who has painted, aproned and bonneted geese both inside and outside the house. In contrast, the *Victoria* reader has the wherewithal to decorate her house with made-in-China Battenberg lace tablecloths and porcelain vases of fresh-cut roses. Her life, as painted by *Victoria*, includes strolls in the garden and regular visits to one of those tea-shops decorated in the same Anglophilic retro style as her living room, serving ridiculously expensive scones and biscuits.

One of the many ironies of the universe created in the soft-focus photographed pages of *Victoria* is the creation of a nostalgic longing for a past which never belonged to its readers and from which they would have been instantly disbarred. Let us suppose for a minute that the thousands of readers of *Victoria* grew up in huge mansions with servants and yearly trips to Europe, all around the turn of the century. Even then the pristine gentility of this repressive time and section of society was a thin veneer for the most pervasive suffering. *Victoria's* copy writers enthuse, "Our fashion story recalls the days when flowing skirts brushed the snow and gloved hands nestled in warm muffs" (1/91) but they are leaving out a few details. Obviously, they cannot sell clothes by saying, "Our fashion story recalls the days when even upper middle-class women like yourself died in childbirth by the thousands, and women and children sweated out their lives in factories to provide the flowing skirts, gloves and warm muffs."

This longing for a more gentle past which never existed is, in the pages of *Victoria*, continuously expressed in conjunction with a blatantly atavistic sexism (which is also related to pervasive racism, classism and admiration for the Cultural Canon). Here is an excerpt from a letter: "My father's reading and his objects of study were woven into our daily lives and into our home. A series of canaries were named Michelangelo, a portrait of Columbus in a heavy gold-leaved frame hung on the stair landing, and a Napoleonic piano lamp was a fixture in our front room" (1/91). I know you are probably thinking this the recollection of a mid-19th century clergyman's daughter, but let me hasten to assure you it was written by the editor of *Victoria* in 1990. Keeping the patriarchy firmly in place are the quotes by the Greats which dot the pages of retro merchandise for sale. Needless to say, the only Greats who were themselves women were Jane Austen and Christina Rossetti.

Femininity is the watchword of *Victoria*; the caption for a spread on children's clothes states: "Even a girl with a tomboyish streak is on her best behavior when turned out in new spring clothes" (3/91). The designer, we are told, began her business when she could not find clothes for her daughters "that let girls look like girls." To judge from the six year-olds wearing hats and

EVENING TOILETTE FOR A YOUNG LADY.



long white gloves with their beribboned dresses, I would have substituted the word "force" for "let". Another article recounts how its author (unlike her sister) accepted her grandmother's decree that she wear red. The proof of the wisdom of her submission to this decree comes in the memory of how one day she was given a ride home by one of her college professors who had noticed her in her red coat. She ends by stating that she will continue to wear red, "perhaps attracting another gracious bit of attention" (3/91). The message is clear: if you want the desirable males to notice you, these details are important, girls! Somehow my own sense of nostalgia reminds me of home economics textbooks from the fifties.

It goes without saying that white people make up the universe of *Victoria* magazine but I did notice one article about a black woman who owned a tea shop: the article was at the back and her picture (in an apron) was very small (1/91). Women servants constitute an important element of the *Victoria* fantasy. In a description of a painting by Gari Melchers, we read: "the young maid captures our attention, her peaceful composure framed by pleasant decor. Like the mythical Penelope, she waits, holding the yarn should a new color be required" (3/91).

Another Melcher domestic scene with maid and mistress illustrates "inner sureness . . . through these two turn-of-the-century women, heads in harmony, hands as delicate as teacups, posture as composed as the tablesetting they are about to arrange. In their household -- as in many of ours -- the china closet seems to hold the essence of a family" (3/91). How reassuring that our own societal fabric (held together as it is by china) is just as oppressive on all levels as it was one hundred years ago.



Another article tells of an advice book, written by the author's grandmother, which is still useful: "a torch passed from woman to woman, trickling down from Harriet Beecher Stowe and other Victorian forebears of the acknowledged 'Cult of Domesticity'" (1/91). It would be easy to criticize the sickening sentimentality and the muddled use of metaphor in these passages; more important is the expurgation of any political content from the 19th century. Harriet Beecher Stowe fought hard for the abolition of slavery, and of course the relationship of mistress and maid was far from harmonious (or teacup-like).

How does this vision of the past tie in to the 1990s? By the most persistent hawking of goods imaginable. I firmly believe in the restorative powers of tea, and late afternoon is always the time to put on the kettle at my house. But I happen to know that in order to have good tea you do not need (as implied in one article, 3/91) to spend \$85 for a silver-plated teapot (copied from a design used in British Colonial India "where tea was served with great ceremony" -- by the enslaved natives, they forgot to mention), \$457 for a cake stand and \$695 for a handmade pillow.

It is not only the pervasive "Things to Buy" which is the hallmark of *Victoria*. Here is where the tea-shop comes in. Since the 1990s middle-class women can no longer (unfortunately) expect to have their leisured lifestyle paid for by doting husbands and fathers, they must somehow procure money. As in *Little Women*, this must be a very genteel affair. Thus every issue of *Victoria* magazine contains several business success stories. In the March 1991 issue for example we can read about a sunny and joyful couple who now own a ceramic studio employing a staff of craftspeople and a business manager, a woman who owns a milliner's shop, and an interior designer. Another indication of the true message of the Victorian revival is the popular monthly feature "Calling Cards," where readers' attractively-designed business cards (note the euphemism) are published.



Upon close reading, these three articles -- written by three different authors -- reveal a common theme. The ceramicists are noted for the "childlike simplicity of their work" ("whimsy" also gets a mention); the milliner's shop has a "childlike sensibility" and the interior designer makes "oversize chairs that leave visitors feeling a bit like children". She also says of her workshop, "we call it a studio but really it's a playhouse". It would seem that as long as business women are careful to remain in a regressive and infantilistic fantasy world (never leaving the Victorian nursery) everything will be fine.

So there we have it, the cautionary tale for 1990s genteel and impoverished American ladies, published monthly. I had to wonder whether there was not some nod to the Oldest Profession when I ran across a quote from Admiral Nelson to his mistress ("I have been the world around, in every corner of it, and never yet saw your equal") used to sell a pattern of wallpaper named after her. Perhaps a sideline of running a "magnificently appointed" Bed and Breakfast could be prostitution? Except *Victoria* would call it being a "courtesan," I'm sure.

Christine Moneera Laennec

Reality and representation: Review of Pushing the Photo

"We make of photography a means by which precisely anything can be said, any purpose served. What in reality is discrete, images join. In the form of a photograph the explosion of an A-Bomb can be used to advertise a safe."

—Susan Sontag, *On Photography*

Pushing the Photo, the third annual juried exhibition at Bloomington's UpFront Gallery, featured the work of 18 artists who use photography in nontraditional ways. Although the works are thematically diverse and employ a variety of media in addition to film, the presence of at least one camera image in each work calls attention to the way in which photographs are constructions of reality in their own peculiar but seductive way. All the works challenge the naturalness, stability, and unitariness of physical presence, blurring the boundaries between conception and perception.

Gallery Director Peter Spooner says that the idea for this exhibit was inspired by the tremendous amount of manipulated photography that artists are currently working with. Laurie Dahlberg, doctoral candidate in art history at Princeton University, selected and judged the pieces for the exhibition.

Victor Spencer of Lebanon, Ohio, received the show's highest award for *Kiven's Tree*, his photograph of barren trees surrounded by an intricate and thick painting which forms a radiant border around the image and emphasizes the limits placed on our vision by the artist's chosen perspective. The 180-degree line drawn by the camera's gaze is itself a subject of the piece. Two other works by Spencer, using a similar process, are in the exhibit: *Intruder* and *Super Nova*.

Emily Stern of Bloomington, IL, was also awarded for her VanDyke and Cyanotype self-portrait, taken with a pinhole camera. The distortion of the pinhole image, in combination with the blue and brown colors of the nonsilver process used, eliminate fine detail and flatten tonality. The emulsions, which chemically bleach each other out, bring to the surface parts of the image and conceal other areas. The fragmented bits of image appearing and disappearing, coming through in blue and then in brown, seem to be floating on the surface of the fine white paper Stern has hand-applied the emulsions to. Rather than aggressively foregrounding its own confinement of vision as does Spencer's piece, this piece refuses us the opportunity to fix on a single perspective.

Two artists—Stephanie Taugner of Bloomington, IL, and Craig Atkinson, a recent BFA graduate of ISU's Art Department—exhibited overtly sculptural work. Taugner's piece, *The Maria Book*, consists of glass panels stacked vertically and covered with transparent portraits and diary entries. The transparency of the images on glass and the personal writings work together as a representation of the complex and fragile layers in which thoughts and visual memories are organized to construct understanding of experience.

Atkinson's untitled pieces are extremely small (not much more than five or seven inches) and intimate. We have to come very close to read them. These pieces, too, work with the problem of conceptual/perceptual layering, but the information here comes across as dense, multifaceted, and conflictual.

Atkinson's most successful—complex and challenging—piece is made of an old school language book. The covers of the book are firmly bolted together, and it sits upright on a pedestal. A window is cut into the book so that it becomes a box to both contain and display its information. Inside, pages are cut to reveal several segments of text at once, forcing sentences into alien rhetorical territory and making linear reading impossible; the words



"mother" and "father" from a later page intrude on an earlier story, the subject of which is lost in the fragmentation. The cavity of the book also contains a transparent x-ray of the human body through which we read the familiar, simplified stories of grammar-school instruction; we read the body in turn through the discourses of medical knowledge, traditional schooling, family structure, cultural values.

Atkinson's piece enacts the complicated imbrication of visuals and language in the education of the social subject. It uses photography more minimally than any of the other pieces in the exhibit; its references to language, visual representation, and the constructedness of truth, knowledge, and history address in a more sophisticated manner contemporary issues in photography and questions about its relation to reality.

For decades, advertising has successfully used photographs of one thing to represent and sell something entirely different, drawing on the body of cultural codes of meaning to create something that is "something else": neither the photographed object nor the ostensible product but a visual concept that plays on—simultaneously producing and fulfilling—our desires. Surrounded by these products of visual technology, we have come to a point in our cultural history at which our concern with how we measure up to constructed media images prevents awareness and critique of how limiting our representations are.

Artists have also found that by taking photographs out of context and inserting them into different cultural narratives they can communicate messages at odds with, but oddly congruent with, the presented object. Manipulated photographs such as those in this exhibit produce the kind of dissonance, conceptual and perceptual, that forces awareness of an image's excess of information and its overdetermined meaning. In these works we come to "see" that images are meaningful only through the lens of culturally sanctioned knowledges, and that the apparently purely

concrete is not natural, stable, or unitary. The pieces denaturalize physical presence and encourage critique and re-cognition of understanding.

The ambiguity and subjectivity of photographs conflict with their objective and mechanical appearance and their presence as evidence. This conflict—between the object and its representation—plays a definitive role in contemporary art and cultural criticisms. *Pushing the Photo* is an example of how artists can use photographic techniques in unusual and challenging ways, reminding us, as Richard Avedon says in *In the American West*, that "photographs are always accurate, but never the truth. They are opinions, not facts."

—Debra and Sue



UP FRONT GALLERY

EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

| | |
|---------------------|---|
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| June 22- July 18 | Eddie Dill |
| July 20- Aug 15 | Folk Around Here: Area Folk Art |

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Phone 827-3457
Gallery Hours:
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Feminist Primer



is for ... Witches

--who were the witches where did they come from maybe your great great grandma was one witches were once wise women they say and there's a little witch in every woman today

I remember singing this song when I was 10 years old, which may be some indication as to the type of childhood I had. I think it is safe to say that my concept of witches was not the same as other ten year olds'. Of course, like other little kids, I did read about witches in fairy tales, and I even dressed as a witch for Halloween one year-- old and ugly with warts, wearing all black and carrying a broom--but I knew that was not real; I understood what witches *really* were, because my mom is a witch.

No, I did not worship strange idols in dark, black rooms, nor did I sacrifice my cat or any members of my family in bizarre rituals over boiling cauldrons. Let me recount some of the things I did do as a kid in some of my first *wiccan* experiences.

Two of the holidays I remember celebrating were May Day and Winter Solstice. Now, please remember, these accounts are true--but hey, you can laugh, for me they were fun and exciting and not as "scary" as many of you would think. Feel free to try any of these activities at any time in your home.

I remember coming home one May Day at about 9:00 p.m. and hearing laughter in my backyard. I rushed out to see my mom and about 15 friends galloping joyously around a maypole, decorated with flowers and colorful ribbons, that had been conveniently placed in our flower garden. I went over and joined the circle of women holding hands around the pole as the "serious" part of the ritual ended. Various women were releasing the Directions that had been present during the ritual (this is also known as closing the circle), and then they wished each other well and ended in unison with "Merry meet, and merry part and merry meet again. Blessed be." Every one broke hands and there was laughing and talking and good feelings all around.

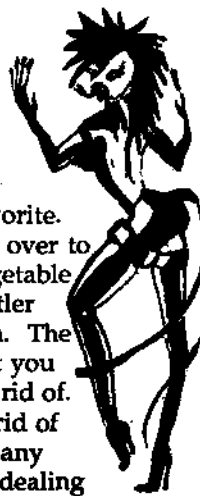
The next part of the evening was my favorite. We all (after more food and drink) went over to the pit that my mom had dug in our vegetable garden. A huge fire (remember, I was littler then), was lit and the fire jumping began. The idea was that as you jumped over the pit you released anything bad you wanted to get rid of. This was a time for some women to get rid of any serious pain in their lives as well as any perhaps not so serious things they were dealing with.

I remember my mom leaping over the blazing fire, laughing and yelling "My THESIS!" Of course it was not complete yet, but she had been working on it forever. I leaped over the pit and I don't recall what I got rid of, but I do remember that you could jump silently if your thoughts were private. The leaping and laughing continued as long as was necessary and the evening ended with tons of Goddess Food (a mix of raisins, granola, and plenty of chocolate) and everyone having a good time. I never stopped to think how the neighbors reacted.



Winter Solstice, December 21, the darkest day of the year, was my favorite holiday. We did celebrate Christmas, but Solstice was the time when just my mom, her partner, my brother and two sisters came together to do what we fondly called "the kids ritual."

My favorite Solstice was probably the first one about nine years ago. My mom bought 7 balloons and filled them each with glitter. After we decorated and lit the tree, calling on Lucina, the Goddess of Light, to bring the light back, we all sat in a circle. With a balloon in front of us, we each were told to put energy into our balloon--maybe you wanted to work harder the next year or be kinder to your family or work out a difficult part of your life. Whatever--it was for you to decide.



We did this in silence while Chris Williamson's "Waterfall" played in the background. Then, you chose one other person and when you were ready they would pop the balloon over your head and all the glitter would fall. Imagine four little kids making wishes and popping balloons. We thought it was great. No other kids got to do this with their moms.

After popping our personal balloons, we all held onto the final balloon and concentrated very, very hard and wished some good to happen in the world, and usually our thoughts were big, for instance, for world peace. We then (in the middle of winter) ran outside into the street and let the balloon go, hoping it would pop and all our positive energy would be let off. I wish we had pictures because it was a very funny sight--all of us in our pajamas and bare feet in the middle of the street clapping wildly after this floating balloon.

Then, we each exchanged presents. It was not like Christmas because we were allowed to only give each other one present--the one very special present we wanted someone to have.

Now, there is a more serious side to the "craft" and to what witches do, but as I said, this is my memory from when I was a child. All the rituals we did were positive and fun. I remember my mom always telling us that we had the power to make changes happen and we did, whether we were saving the world with our one balloon or jumping over fire pits and throwing away negative energy.

So the next time you hear that someone is a witch, don't be *scared* --instead ask her to throw some positive energy your way. You never know, it could make a difference.

NOTE: WITCH is also an acronym for a number of radical feminist groups that began in the 1960s--most are quite serious, but some fall on the lighter side:

- Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell
- Women Inspired to Commit Herstory
- Wild Independent Thinking Crones and Hags
- Women Infuriated at Taking Care of Hoodlums
- Women's Independent Taxpayers, Consumers and Homemakers
- Women Interested in Toppling Consumption Holidays
- Women Incensed at Telephone Company Harassment.

--Tina



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