

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

The Post Amerikan Project

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Post Amerikan

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"Uranium should stay in the ground"

Citizen Wayne & the Bio-Vamp



POST AMERICAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 26

50¢

NUMBER 14

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 1997

CONSUMERISM FOR BEGINNERS



Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1993 Clay Butler

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PAGE 2



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 26

NUMBER 4

AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER 1997

In this Issue:

Page 2--What you are lookin' at
 Page 3--Community News; Letters
 Page 4--McLean Co. AIDS Task Force
 Page 5--Mental Illness Awareness
 Pages 6-7--Poetry Pages
 Page 8--Publication Denial Notice
 Page 9--Notes from the Land of Anti-fat

Page 10--Welcome to the Dollhouse review
 Page 11--Execution of Innocence
 Page 12--Road trippin' readin'
 Page 13--Eleanor Roosevelt
 Page 14--3rd Encounters of the pig kind
 Page 15--World according to Matt

Page 16--"Uranium should stay in the ground"
 Page 17--Citizen Wayne & the Bio-Vamp & Lavenders cartoon
 Pages 18-19--Seeing Red by Steve Eckardt
 Pages 20-21--Voice for Choice
 Page 22--Labor News
 Page 24--Underground barfly
 Page 24--Lizard's ad

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 828-4473 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*.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to the *Post Amerikan* are available for the low price of \$6.00 per year for six complete issues. Please send a check (made payable to the *Post Amerikan*) to: *Post Amerikan*, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702.

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

David, Gregg, Linda, Matt, Ralph, Sherrin, Steve

Post Sellers

Bloomington

AIDS Task Force, 313 N. Main (inside)
 About Books, 221 E. Front (inside)
 Bakery Banc, 901 N. Main
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 Circus Video, (Emerson and Main)
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main (inside)
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 Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main (inside)
 Last Chance Newstand, 404 N. Main (inside)
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 Medusa's, 420 N. Madison (inside)
 Mystic Link, 1206 Towanda Ave. Su.4 (inside)
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 The Park Store, Wood and Allin (inside)
 Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main (inside)
 U.S. Post Office, Center and Monroe
 U.S. Post Office, 1511 E. Empire
 Wash House, 609 N. Clinton

Normal

Acme Comics, 115 W. North (inside)
 Amtrak Station, 100 Parkinson
 Babbitt's Books, 104 North (inside)
 Bus stop, (School and Fell)
 Coffee World CoffeeHouse, 114 E. Beaufort
 Deadpan Alley Records, 129 E. Beaufort (inside)
 Koffee Kup, 205 W. North
 Mother Murphy's, 111 North (inside)

Champaign

Babbitt's Books, 614 E. Green, (inside)

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.

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Due Date:

The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.)

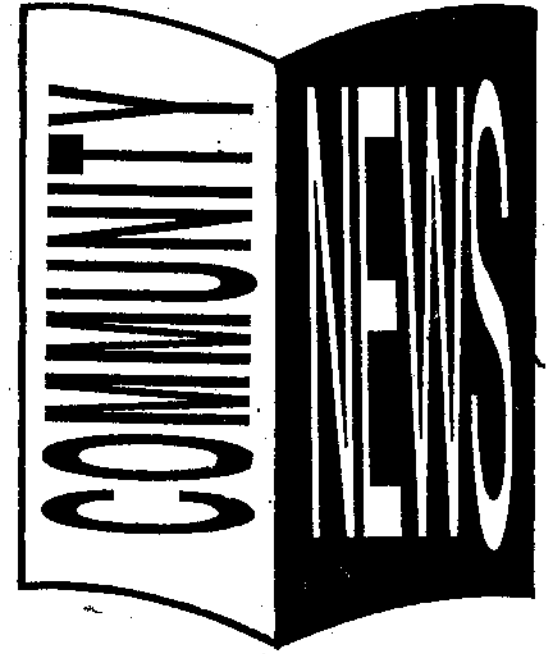
Sept. 15

Good numbers

ACLU.....454-7223
 Advocacy Council for Human Rights.830-2521
 AIDS Hotlines
 National.....1-800-AID-AIDS
 Illinois.....1-800-243-2437
 Local.....827-AIDS
 Alcoholics Anonymous.....828-7092
 Animal Protection League.....828-5371
 Bloomington Housing Authority.....829-3360
 Boys and Girls Club.....829-3034
 Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035
 Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070
 Dept. of Children/Family Services.....828-0022
 Gay & Lesbian Resource Phoneline...438-2429
 Habitat for Humanity.....829-0693
 HELP (transportation for senior citizens/handicapped).....828-8301
 Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356
 IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621
 IL Lawyer Referral.....1-800-252-8916
 Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-5051
 Lighthouse (substance abuse treatment).....827-6026
 McLean Co. Center for Human Services...827-5351
 McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450
 McLean Co. Humane Society.....663-7387
 McLean Co. Peace Coalition.....828-7070
 Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691
 Mobile Meals.....828-8301
 Narcotics Anonymous.....1-800-779-6178
 National Health Care Services/
 abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622
 Occupational Development Center....452-7324
 Operation Recycle.....829-0691
 Parents Anonymous.....827-4005
 PATH (Personal Assistance Telephone Help).....827-4005
 Phone Friends.....827-4005
 PFLAG(Parents, Families and Friends
 of Lesbians and Gays).....663-0831
 Planned Parenthood (medical).....827-4014
 (bus/couns/edu).....827-4368
Post Amerikan.....828-4473
 Prarie State Legal Services.....827-5021
 Project Oz.....827-0377
 Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005
 Safe Harbor Mission(Salvation Army) .829-9476
 Sunnyside Neighborhood Center.....827-5428
 TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301
 Unemployment comp/job service.....827-6237
 Voice for Choice.....828-3108
 Western Ave. Community Center.....829-4807
 Youth Services of Mid IL.....828-7346



Community News



Letters

Dear Post Amerikan,

First of all, please let me thank you for your coverage and contributions to the poetry scene here in Bloomington-Normal. It is great to see coverage on local artists doing their thing that would otherwise be ignored by the Pantagraph. I really appreciate it.

Thanks again for your consideration and support.

easily yours,

Dan Knestaut

Dear Post,

Sign me up for another year. Keep up the great job! I'm hoping some of my other friends here contact you. I especially enjoy Marcee Murray's and the Native American sections and the environmental news.

Love,
Sue

P.S. I saw the web site - it looks good!

Classy Fried Ad

Starving artist needs work! Murals, sponge painting, anything creative. Please call Lori @ (309) 827-5491

Heel of the Boot: Prints by Sue Coe

August 14 through September 21, 1997
Sue Coe lecture and reception: Tuesday, August 26 @ 7 PM

Panel discussions on domestic violence, animal rights and other topics will be held on Tuesdays: September 2nd, 9th, and 16th at 7 PM in the gallery.

University Galleries is pleased to announce the opening of **HEEL OF THE BOOT: PRINTS BY SUE COE**, our first exhibition of the 1997-98 season. **HEEL OF THE BOOT** is a comprehensive retrospective of Sue Coe's lithographs, monotypes and photo-etchings from 1979 to the present.

Arriving in New York from England in 1972, Coe quickly found work as an Op Ed page illustrator for *The New York Times*, and also contributed political drawings to publications such as *Mother Jones*, *Penguin Books*, *Discover*, and *RAW*. In 1979, she began to make photolithographs, taking a drawing and making virtually unlimited editions, selling the prints initially for \$5. Gradually, she became actively involved in the various printmaking processes, exploiting the expressive potency of woodcut, monotype, etching, photo-etching, and aquatint.

Coe has used prints as a vehicle to broaden her reach in expressing her outrage against inequities of power and the vulnerability of the powerless. Sharing the tradition of Francisco Goya, George Grosz, Kathe Kollwitz, and John Heartfield, she portrays the plight of victims of war, economic injustice, violence, racism, animal experimentation, and sexism. Despite its unflinching examination of the misuse of power as the artist sees it, Coe's work also contains much irony and humor.

The exhibition contains 92 prints, and will be supplemented by a showing of historic political prints and drawings, including work by Daumier, Goya, Grosz, Wojnarowicz, and Kollwitz. **HEEL OF THE BOOT** was curated by Marilyn Zeitlin and Jean Makin at the Arizona State University Art Museum. Partial exhibition support is provided by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

For further information contact us at: 309.438.5487; fax 309.438.5161; or visit our website at <http://www.orat.ilstu.edu/cfa/galleries>

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly in condensed version

Has anyone other than myself noticed that the Model Paris (last issue's recipient of "the Ugly" award) has been demolished and carted away via Stark Excavating? The only proof of its existence is the outlined foundation (and the flag pole -- no flag, just the pole). How clairvoyant of me. How much do you want to bet that a parking lot will occupy that space in the future?!

This edition of *the Good, the Bad and The Ugly* is on break, but will be back in two months to explore current housing design as opposed to homes built fifty+ years ago. Everything from the unexplained popularity of octagon windows to cul-de-sac streets will be explored.

Hope to see you then!

towanda!



WRITE YOUR TEXT

- 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....
- 6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....
- 11.....12.....13.....14.....
- 15.....16.....17.....18.....
- 19.....20.....21.....22.....
- 23.....24.....25.....

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News from McLean County AIDS Task Force

"Right Before Sex"

Lack of communication is one of the main factors contributing to the spread of HIV through anal intercourse, according to a new study conducted by the University of California, San Francisco's Center for AIDS Prevention Studies. Gay and bisexual men who usually practice safer sex occasionally take risks when seeking intimacy, the study revealed. These individuals often relied on their partner's physical appearance, home environment, personal hygiene, and the presence or lack of AIDS drugs to determine his HIV status, instead of explicitly discussing the issue of safer sex. The study was commissioned by the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, which was seeking to understand why HIV continues to spread among gay and bisexual men.

-Red Ribbon Review

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance through MCATF continues to be available to HIV+ clients who have not used up all their eligibility.

They have emergency assistance funds for those in McLean and Livingston Counties. They can provide financial assistance for housing and utilities, groceries, and certain medical expenses.

There are additional funds available through your HIV Case Manager at the McLean County Health Department. Certain items above have income and other eligibility requirements.

-Red Ribbon Review

HIV Positively

1997 Grant Cycle

Los Angeles— Applications are available for the 1997 cycle of PEN Center USA West's grant program for writers with HIV/AIDS. Winners receive grants of \$1,000. Eligible applicants included writers living in the western and Midwestern United States who are HIV positive and actively involved in creating literary work. Eligible projects include fiction, poetry, stage plays, and creative nonfiction. The application deadline is October 6, 1997.

The program was established in 1993 in response to the devastation in the literary community brought about by AIDS and to support the work of those with the disease. The purpose of the program is to encourage writers with HIV/AIDS to continue and/or finish a current literary project. Past recipients of the grants have included fiction writers Ron Athey and Joe Villalon, playwrights Michael Karns and Ted Sod, poets Gil Guadros, Ronnie Burke, and John Sakowicz, and nonfiction writers Robin C. Hardy and Michael Brennan.

The program is supported in part by grants from the Lannan Foundation, the David Geffen Foundation, and proceeds from the sales of the book, *The Way We Write Now: Short Stories from the AIDS Crisis* by Sharon Oard Warner (Citidel Press)

Applications are available from PEN Center USA West, 672 S. LaFayette Park Place, #41, Los Angeles, CA 90057. (213) 365-8500, Attention: Sarah Jacobus.

-Red Ribbon Review



P. Stadler/CPP

Some local resources

Advocacy Council for Human Rights
PO Box 5048
Bloomington, IL 61702-5408
309-830-2521

Bloomington-Normal PFLAG
Carol & Craig Cadnoic
1211 Nicki
Bloomington, IL 61704
309-663-0831

PRIDE, Illinois State University
Campus Box 2700
Normal, IL 61790-2700
309-438-2429

Gay, Straight Alliance
104 E. University St.
Bloomington, IL 61701

Interweave
c/o Lin Hinds
1707-B King Dr.
Normal, IL 61761

McLEAN COUNTY AIDS TASK FORCE

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Services Provided

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Hospital Visitation • Transportation • Pastoral
Care • Peer Support • Non-Therapeutic Support
Groups • Emergency Financial Assistance

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(309) 827-AIDS



Mental illness awareness

Law Ruled Unconstitutional

The Illinois Appellate Court has ruled that the Guilty-but mentally ill law is unconstitutional. It will now go to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Critics of the guilty-but-mentally-ill verdict have said it offers a compromise between verdicts of guilty and not guilty when none exists. And they contend that it dangles the false promise of psychiatric treatment in prison.

The Appellate court said the law only confused jurors, "We find that these misconceptions and misunderstandings encourage a compromise verdict...which is devoid of any substance," wrote Judges S.L. Rathje and R. McLaren of the 2nd District Appellate Court.

Judge Bob Thomas dissented saying the constitutionality has been upheld in the majority of cases in Illinois and other states. "The verdict clarifies for the jury the distinction between a person who is not guilty by reason of insanity and one who is mentally ill yet not insane and therefore is criminally ill.

"What this verdict does is gives jurors a cop-out that makes them feel that somehow they're recognizing the mental illness, even though the finding is totally irrelevant" said Paul Robinson, professor at Northwestern University's Law School. "The mentally ill part of it really means nothing."

A 1985 Tribune analysis found that about two-thirds of the convicts sent to prison under the law received no regular psychiatric treatment. Today there are 159 inmates imprisoned in Illinois under the law.

The court reversed the 1994 murder conviction of Eric Robles, an Elgin High School student who killed his parents with the help of a classmate.

--AMI Illinois

Only Modest Link Between Mental Illness and Violence

Contrary to popular belief, the relation between mental disorder and violence is modest, say John Monahan and colleagues of the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Mental health and the law. Their U.S. \$8 million research was presented at a conference on mental health law in Phoenix, Arizona, on Jan 9-10. The findings, which will be fully available in July, are the culmination of 8 years of research in which 1000+ patients with mental disorders were assessed in the hospital and periodically in the community to measure violence during the first year of their release. This was then compared for violence with a large random sample of people in the general population.

The researchers found the link between mental disorder and violence to be only modestly greater than chance. Previous research which confirmed this however, could not be put to use to improve the accuracy of clinical assessments. The researchers pointed out that better ways had to be found to improve clinical risk assessment, enhance the effectiveness of clinical risk management, and provide information for the reform of mental-health law and policy. Accordingly, the researchers proposed risk factors for violence in public health setting (panel).

Monahan and colleagues asked two further questions. How does the rate of violence by former mental patients compare with the rate of violence by other members of the community, and are the risk factors for violence any different among former mental patients than among other community members? They did a second study of 500 people from the same community in which former patients lived and found that patients with mental illness, and those with major mental illness, such as schizophrenia, were no more violent in absolute terms than people in the general population. However, patients with mental illness who undertook substance abuse were more likely to show violent behavior.

--AMI Illinois

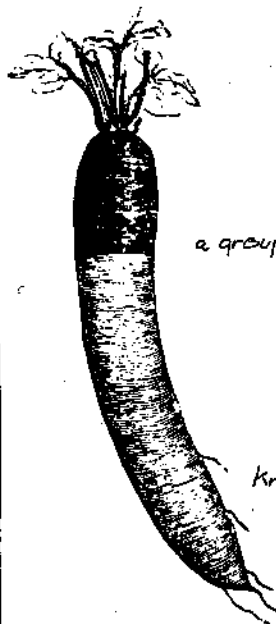

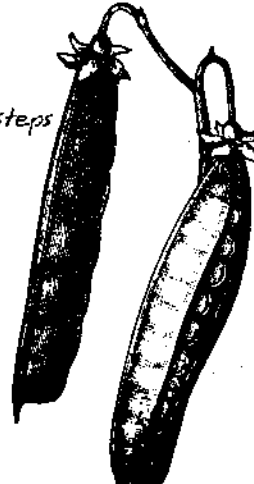
"Angel Baby" to be shown at Normal Theater

"Angel Baby," an award winning film will be shown at the Normal Theater on October 9 and 10 as part of National "Mental Illness Awareness Week."

The film depicts the struggle of a young couple with mental illness as they have a baby. The film received an 8.8 out of 10 rating. It will be shown at 7:00pm each evening. The film is an Australian production.

(Please be aware that this film is of an adult nature with intense themes. It is not suitable for children.)

--AMI Illinois

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The Poetry Page

a portrait of the artist as a young man

ohmigod, dick!
 won't you look at this.
 check out that poseur
 sitting in the corner,
 quietly sipping his latte'
 & scribbling in a nofebook.
 it's probably beat poetry.
 i don't know what
 he thinks he's trying to do.
 he's sitting in *our* coffeehouse
 trying to pretend he's cool.
 well, i bet he sucks!
 couldn't write his way
 out of a wet biscotti bag.
 look at his black "star trek" cap,
 pulled low over his shaggy hair.
 black baggy ragged sweater,
 worn osh koshes
 & beaten black work boots.
 you *know* he's just wishing
 he were just so cool.
 but you can just tell
 he's just no f#%*ing artist,
 he's just wishing like hell.
 but i tell you what, dick.
 he just can't be
 any better than us.

--Dan Knestaut

well, mr. white man?

i passed a billboard
 on my way to market.
 it showed a white man
 & his special drink.
 white man said,
 "Coca-cola refreshes best!"
 so where is my coca-cola?
 is it in the fields
 with the broken back children?
 is it on the dirt paved roads
 with the choking dust
 & the scraggly herds?
 is it in the hands
 of the emaciated men?
 is it in my stomach?
 i wouldn't know
 what having something there
 would be like anyway.
 is it in my head
 buzzing with fever and flies?
 how about inside
 the ramshackle shacks,
 lying on the dirt floor?
 or perhaps deep inside
 a dry earth well?
 is it in the eyes
 of my starving daughter?
 well, mr. white man,
 do i even get a coca-cola?
 will i ever get a chance
 to refresh myself best?

--Dan Knestaut

Alban Heruin: Summer Solstice

Songbirds weave trailing
 melodies among boughfuls
 of whispering leaves.

The soil absorbs heat;
 winds alive with season's fire
 embrace naked stone.

Dragonflies guard dew
 in condensed caches of shade,
 cool remnants of dawn.
 Sunshower waxes
 and wanes; with each passing cloud
 the day seems to sigh.

Midnight sweats for us,
 refreshing mists cradle stars
 and halo the moon.

--Matt Toczko

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Shoved

the seagull screams, its mind
 gone numb with the bleeding
 sunset. hungry, it dives, throwing
 caution like down to the stagnant
 Pacific air, shattering the water
 from whence all salt is borne
 the fish aren't even awake
 but all flesh smells of it as never
 before. flesh clenched in a fist
 smeared with grease and boney
 between my shoulderblades.
 slip-sliding spine drenched in sweat
 skin bruises skin in pushing and slipping,
 driving us up from the sea and past
 the pleasures only monkeys will know
 to think on two legs such as man. replace
 the food-chain plan for fear with
 the prayer and service program of fear
 until your god becomes a hook-billed
 bird of pray feasting on the shame
 of sheep branded for salvation. replace
 the balance of nature with the clergy's need for
 meat and deny us our right to experience nature's
 subtle truths. Can we believe none are expendable as we laugh
 at the athlete staring down the seagull's gun?

--Matt Toczko



T'was a Mighty Wrath

Deep in the shadows of my loneliness,
I shed a mournful tear,
I had a little skirmish with the one that I hold dear,

She pulled the house down round of me,
I was all that she let stand,
T'was mighty wrath that she unveiled,
within her tiny hands,

She slipped away by cover of night,
and me she did not warn,
all over a silly fight,
she left me here to mourn!

--Bert Fasking

CLAW OF AN ALBATROSS

The burning bush
that did not burn,
this piece of paper
afame, an the claw
of an albatross
scribbles with
black ink, an
the echo of my life
is shadow on the
white forest, black-
birds of ink that
come an go.

--John Firefly

RAILROAD WINE

Railroad wine,
aging on the lips
of a bluesman,
and he says
I can hold my
lover like a
raisin holds
a wrinkle, I
can almost
always touch
a full moon
with the tips
of my fingers,
an this poem
is a broken note
that I would
play, that I
would gather in
my arms an re-
susitate, that I
would call la
infant ocean,
that I would
call embryo
sky.

--John Firely

MY LOVER

My lover was
a piece of paper
the touch of my black
shadow fingers of ink,
and I hold my baby
tender, as she does
me, the night.


--John Firefly

YOUR POEM HERE.

The Post Amerikan is seeking poetry
submissions for the Poetry Page.

If interested, please mail your poem
to: Post Amerikan, P.O. Box 3452,
Bloomington, IL 61702 or e-mail to
pamerikan@aol.com.

We have the right to
reject any poem.



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PUBLICATION DENIAL NOTIFICATION

TITLE OF PUBLICATION POST AMERIKAN Apr/May 1997 V26 N2

The above listed publication has been reviewed and denied in accordance with Section 3.9 of the TDCJ-ID Rules and Regulations for the reason(s) checked below:

- (a) Publication contains contraband.
- (b) Publication contains information regarding the manufacture of explosives, weapons or drugs.
- (c) Publication contains material that a reasonable person would construe as written solely for the purpose of communicating information designed to achieve a breakdown of prisons through inmate disruption such as strikes or riots.
- (d) A specific factual determination has been made that the publication is detrimental to prisoner's rehabilitation because it would encourage deviate criminal sexual behavior.
- (e) Publication contains material on the setting up and operation of criminal schemes or how to avoid detection of criminal schemes by lawful authorities charged with the responsibility for detecting such illegal activity.

REMARKS: Page 10 contains material of a racial nature.

(Qualifies for clipping. Page 10 [1 page].)

If there is a desire to appeal the rejection of the aforementioned publication, this may be accomplished by writing to the Director's Review Committee, P.O. Box 99, Huntsville Texas 77342-0099. The appeal must be mailed so as to arrive at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice - Institutional Division **WITHIN TWO (2) WEEKS** of the date shown below.

Mail System Coordinators Panel
Department/Unit

June 30, 1997
Date

Publication
Post Amerikan
Publisher/Sender
P O Box 3452
Address
Bloomington IL 61702
City/State/Zip Code

DISTRIBUTION :

- Original - Vendor copy
- Yellow - Department/Unit copy
- Pink - MSCP copy (book denial)



Notes from the Land of Anti-fat

FEN-PHEN LINKED TO HEART DISEASE

Fen-Phen, a heavily touted weapon in the War Against Obesity, may not be the wonder drug that the pharmaceutical industry has claimed. In addition to its links to Primary Pulmonary Hypertension, a seriously fatal lung disorder, a recent study by the Mayo Clinic has found a connection between Fen-Phen use and heart valve disease.

Fen-Phen is a combination of two drugs - fenfluramine, an appetite suppressant, and phentermine, a mild stimulant. When combined they alter the way the brain chemical serotonin is metabolized, affecting the patient's appetite. Although both drugs are FDA-approved, their combination is not. The Fen-Phen combo is comparatively new to the diet scene, but it's taken off spectacularly. In 1996, there were 18 million prescriptions written for Fen-Phen in the United States alone.

Mayo Clinic's preliminary report was based on a study of 24 women living in the upper Midwest who had no history of heart problems. The women had taken Fen-Phen for six to 18 months. Each experienced a deterioration in the valves of their hearts. As a result, one or more heart valves in each patient had thickened and blood was regurgitating (or "leaking" backwards), making the heart work harder to pump blood throughout the body. To add to the bad news, eight of these women also had newly documented pulmonary hypertension.

Valvular heart disease is not a disorder typically associated with fatness.

The Mayo Clinic report is considered so serious that news about these newest findings are being disseminated before the article on it will appear in the New England Journal of Medicine. Even the FDA, which historically has been wimpy when it comes to arguing with the Diet Megalith began sending letters to thousands of doctors, asking them to immediately check Fen-Phen patients for valve problems and report them to the agency.

When it first came out, both the diet mavens and mainstream media promoted Fen-Phen as a scientific miracle cure for obesity, the "Killer Disease." Those fears about possible side effects? They were pooh-poohed, while Pharma/Pimp Researchers categorically stated that any risks were based on a guesstimated percentage so small that it was barely worth worrying about. There were big bucks to be made in Fen-Phen, and even though occasional cautionary statements would be made public to the effect that the drug should only be used by the "morbidly obese," doctors have been prescribing it for all sizes of fat-phobic patients.

The results of this blithe faith in Pharmaceutical Science? An uncounted number of women who will now require heart surgery to replace damaged or leaking heart valves.

CHEAP SHOT COMMERCIALS

We collect cheap shot commercials in the Land of Anti-Fat, and this Summer has had a bumper crop of 'em.

Tops on the list: the recent Diet Coke ad set in an Italian village. In it, an Italian matriarch tries to talk a young girl out of drinking Diet Coke. She doesn't need to drink that stuff, the elderly peasant woman says; without it, she'll grow up to be just as beautiful as the matriarch. One look at the fat and careworn woman (with trademark mole on her face), and you just know the young girl's gonna be guzzling Diet Coke by the caseload.

Quite a one/two punch: an ad that manages to be offensive to both fat and older adults! Good work, Diet Coke!

For Dishonorable Mention, there's Pizza Hut's summer ad. In it, a babysitter type is putting together an order for a group of small kids. Whole focus on the scene is on which topping to get for the group until a fat kid enters the room. Then the babysitter decides she'd better order a second pizza. Get it? He's a fat kid! So he's gonna eat a lot!

How do they come up with this stuff?

Pizza Hut has reportedly gotten a number of complaints for this ad, but, hey, if you wanna add your voice, their customer service number is 1-800-948-8488.

SPICY CITY

This 'un is a close call. Check out the new HBO animated series, "Spicy City," by animator Ralph (Fritz the Cat: the Movie) Bakshi. The show's premiere episode - sandwiched between the typical Bakshiesque the images of futuristic squalor and over-endowed cartoon bimbos - contains a super-sized hero who finds self-esteem and love as a cyberspace avatar. Get past the initial humiliating imagery and some overdone "adult" moments, and there's a size-positive message in the tale.

Recommended for those who think Aeon Flux is way too skinny.

EVERYTHING?!?!?

Sez a lot for our culture's ambivalence about the current beauty ideal and eating when the winner of this year's Miss Universe contest, Brook Lee, tells the judges and audience that she'd "eat everything - twice" if she was given the opportunity to do anything she wanted.

You can't help but wonder: how many years of food deprivation lead up to that heartfelt statement?

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The execution of innocence

"The recent developments of reliable scientific evidentiary methods has made it possible to establish conclusively that a disturbing number of persons who had been sentenced to death were actually innocent." - U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, during his opening assembly address at the 1996 American Bar Association annual meeting.

Generally, Americans know very little about who is executed and why. And they are blissfully unaware of the potential dangers of executing an innocent person.

Our judicial system relies on a burden of proof called "beyond a reasonable doubt," which is intended to protect the innocent. But it is not foolproof. As the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall once wrote: "No matter how careful courts are, the possibility of perjured testimony, mistaken honest testimony and human error remain too real. We have no way of judging how many innocent persons have been executed, but we can be certain that there were some."

No issue posed by capital punishment disturbs the public more than the possible execution of an innocent person. A recent nationwide poll found that fifty-eight percent of Americans are disturbed by the fact that the death penalty might result in the execution of someone who is actually innocent. This is the number one concern about the death penalty in our country today.

The most conclusive evidence that innocent persons have been condemned to death comes from examining the large number of people who were sentenced to death and later were lucky enough to be able to prove their innocence and gain release from death row. Consider the case of Walter McMillian:

Walter McMillian was released from Alabama's death row after having spent six years there because of perjured testimony and withheld evidence that pointed to his

innocence. He was convicted of the shooting death of a storekeeper. On the day of the murder he was at a fish fry with his friends and relatives, many of whom testified to this at his trial. No physical evidence linked him to the crime, but three people who testified at his trial connected him to the murder. All three witnesses received favors from the state for their incriminating testimony. Only sheer luck saved Walter McMillian. After listening to a tape recording of a key witness's testimony against McMillian, a volunteer appellate lawyer flipped the tape to see if there was anything on the other side. Only then did he hear the same witness complaining that he was being pressured to frame McMillian. With that fortuitous break, the whole case against McMillian began to fall apart. Every element of the prosecution's case has now been discredited. And all three prosecution witnesses have recanted their testimony. On March 3, 1993, the County District Attorney joined the defense in a motion to dismiss the charges. Walter McMillian was finally freed.

Cases involving innocent persons condemned to death are not all that hard to find and are not as rare as the public might imagine. An article printed in the *Stanford Law Review* in November 1987, reports of an extensive nationwide study that found 349 cases of wrongfully convicted individuals sentenced to death. And the recently published book, *In Spite of Innocence* (Northeastern University Press), expands on the Stanford study and found that since 1900 there have been 416 documented cases of innocent Americans who have been

convicted of potentially capital cases.

Unfortunately, once an innocent person has been convicted and sentenced to death, their chances of eventual exoneration are poor. This is because before the trial the defendant does not have to prove anything. The burden of proof is on the state, which must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. However, after the trial, the presumption of guilt shifts in favor of the state. Now the burden falls on the defendant to prove to the court that they are not guilty. And it is no longer enough to raise a reasonable doubt - to overturn a conviction, the defendant must produce "clear and convincing" proof of their innocence. And this new evidence often must be presented within a limited time. Seventeen states limit the time to present new evidence to 60 days after conviction. Eighteen other states have limits that range from one to three years. And they strictly adhere to that rule. Consider the case of Leonel Herrera:

Leonel Herrera was convicted and sentenced to death for the 1982 murders of two police officers. Some years after his conviction, an attorney who had represented Herrera's brother came forward with evidence that Herrera's brother Raul, who had died in 1984, had confessed to the murders. In addition Raul's son, who was nine years old at the time of the killings, gave a sworn statement that he was an eyewitness to the crime and saw his father commit the murders. However, because

Texas law requires that any new evidence must be presented within 30 days of the conviction, Herrera's motion for a new trial was denied. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld Texas's decision by ruling that Herrera's claim of "actual innocence" was in itself not a constitutional claim - stating that the Constitution does not forbid the execution of an innocent person so long as that person had a fair trial at the time of their conviction. Justice Harry Blackmun attacked what he saw as an outrageous and ominous decision by the court, declaring in his dissenting opinion that "the execution of a person who can show that he is innocent comes perilously close to simple murder." Leonel Herrera was executed on May 12, 1993.

We have no way of knowing how many innocent people have been executed or how many currently remain on death row. We do know

that since 1970, over 66 people have been released from death row after being erroneously sentenced to death. As now-retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Douglas once noted: "One who reviews the records of criminal trials need not look long to find an instance where the issue of guilt or innocence hangs in delicate balance. A judge who denies a stay of execution in a capital case often wonders if an innocent man is going to his death."

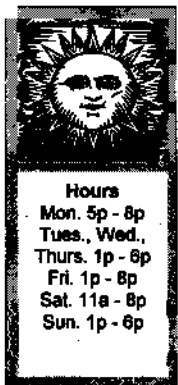
For the sake of argument, let's assume that there are some individuals who, in some sense, "deserve" to be executed. The real question that should be asked is: Do we really need the death penalty? As long as capital punishment remains a part of our penal system, innocent persons will continue to be executed. It is inevitable.

There are suitable alternatives. Those who favor the abolition of capital punishment do not advocate releasing convicted murderers into society. The choice is not between the death penalty and unconditional release, but between the death penalty and meaningful long-term sentences. Life with no parole, or natural life sentences meet the necessary requirements for the protection of society. Granted, some innocent people will still be wrongfully sentenced to life imprisonment, but since they remain alive, there remains the hope of someday proving their innocence. But once an innocent person has been wrongfully executed, no one can correct that mistake.

What can you do? You can get involved, for no justice is done if everyone leaves the work of justice to everyone else. For a list of abolitionist organizations near you, send \$3.00 for: *The Abolitionist's Directory*; *The National coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty*; 918 'IF' Street, NW Suite #601; Washington, DC 20004. Or call (202) 347-2411. Together we can make a difference.

-Michael Ross

Author's note: I am a condemned man on Connecticut's death row. I have been on death row since June of 1987. I am currently under a stay of execution pending the resolution of the appeals process.



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Welcome to the Dollhouse

Director-Todd Solondz
Starring-Heather Matarazzo (Dawn Wiener)
Co-Starring-Brendan Sexton, Jr. (Brandon McCarthy) Eric Mabus (Steve Rodgers) Josiah Trager (Mark Wiener) Daria Kalnina (Nfissy Wiener)
Rating-R
Length-102 minutes

Remember when you were in the seventh grade? The days of innocence when life seemed simple. Life was not that simple for one little girl named Dawn Wiener, whom her classmates referred to as the "Wiener Dog."

Dawn was the girl in your class who went through puberty at a late age and did not try out for cheerleading. Everyone had a girl like Dawn in their class, the girl who everyone made fun of at least once.

The criticism that Dawn receives from her classmates leaves mental scars of distress and hopelessness. She thrives on pure fantasy when she is away from the realities of junior high.

Living in a suburb of New Jersey, where all the houses and cars look the same, Dawn is an outcast to society. Not being able to relate to anyone, she subjects herself to a classmate named Brandon McCarthy, a bully who tells her he is going to rape her after school everyday.

Through all of this madness, Dawn finds some piece of mind with her obsession with high school rocker Steve Rodgers, the type of guy that some day will be seen on MTV waving a guitar and screaming at the top of his lungs. This is Dawn's sanctuary that keeps her going through life, and with absolutely no guidance from her parents, she has to battle with these inner demons by herself.

Heather Matarazzo (Dawn) plays this role to perfection. If I had it my way, she would have won the best actress award at The Sundance Film Festival in 1994. Only eleven years old at the time, Matarazzo gives the performance

that most actors only dream of.

The strength of this movie is the truth behind it. Director, Todd Solondz, retells his own childhood through the eyes of Dawn Wiener. This off-beat comedy about puberty contains a form of laughter that most people are not used to. This movie is like our character Dawn, different than most movies you have seen.

While watching this movie, I sat and remembered the Dawn Wiener who I went to school with, thinking how true to real life this movie was. The torture that one girl takes from a class of heartless and cruel students is the basis of this wild story.

Taking home a Grand Jury Prize at The Sundance Film Festival, *Welcome to the Dollhouse* is a must see movie. It is available in your local movie rental stores today.

--Dennis Warner



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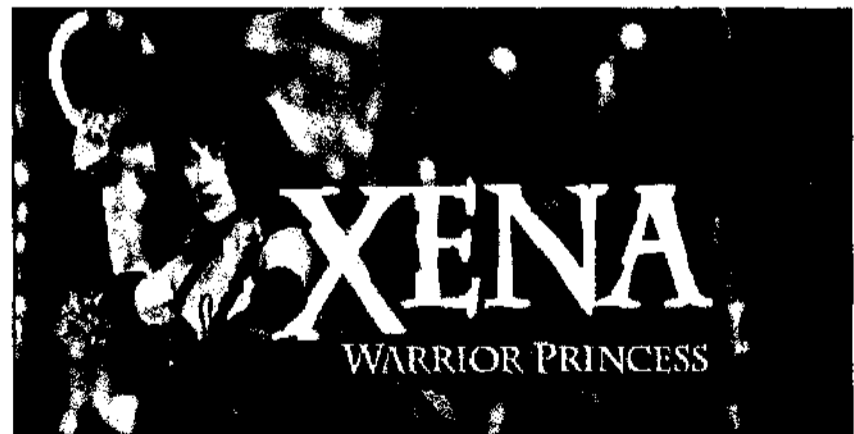
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Road Trippin' Readin'

Alas, the thick of summertime is upon us. With it, of course, comes the best time for us adventurous folks to hop in our autos for a weekend (or two) of road trips. But, before you leave town to visit Elvis' grave or stroll through the Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame, why not pick up some books on the subject of road trippin'. (There are plenty titles available at your local library.) Leave the conformist guidebooks behind and throw your hat to the wind. —but leave one of these books besides you.

Fiction

Spinsters by Pagan Kennedy

It's 1968 and Frannie and Doris, sisters and spinsters, have been taking care of their father for their entire adult lives. When he dies, they hit the road in their Plymouth Valiant to take a much needed vacation. Frannie, the novel's narrator, longs to continue her reclusive life with her sister. But Doris, cut free of responsibility, wants to raise hell and get laid. Their journey through the changing landscape of America is an elegy to a lost time in the United States.



Non-Fiction

On the Road with Charles Kuralt and Charles Kuralt's America by Charles Kuralt

Kuralt's introspective and endearing views of everyday American life are probably the complete opposite of Bryson's. But that's not to say I don't enjoy them.

From 1967 to 1994, Charles Kuralt toured America in a motor home to chronicle the lives of ordinary Americans. What he found is a country filled with an interesting bunch of people.

Kuralt had the gift of relating warm and fuzzy patriotic feelings about our country by introducing us to remarkably unremarkable people.

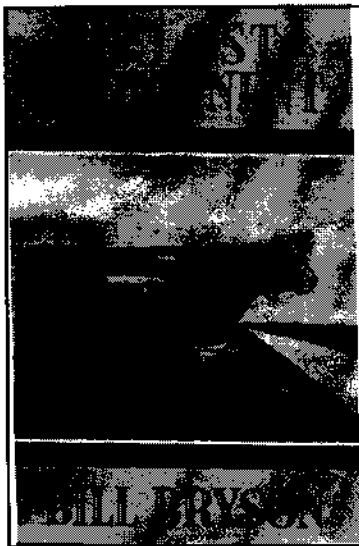
The Lost Continent: Travels in Small-Town America by Bill Bryson

Bryson, an Iowan transplanted to England, returns to Des Moines years later and decides to travel across the continent in an effort to follow in the steps of childhood vacations and search for the perfect American small town.

Bryson records a sardonic account of his travels across thirty-eight states in a cross between mental memorabilia and social commentary.

Nothing it seems, escapes Bryson's wit. From speech patterns in the South to baseball caps "with plastic turd decorations," Bryson seems to cover all the unexplainable creations of Americans.

It sure is great fun.



Neither Here Nor There: Travels in Europe by Bill Bryson

O.K. maybe this isn't very suitable for an American roadtrip, but I'm reading this simultaneously with "The Lost Continent" and its anecdotes are just as hilarious. Even if you haven't travelled through Europe, you'll enjoy Bryson's muses of various cultural customs and pop cultural trends that differ in every region.

Road Scholar: Coast to Coast late in the Century. by Andrei Codrescu

Codrescu, the National Public Radio commentator and poet, decided to travel the U.S. of A in search of its wonderful excesses and ironies. Codrescu's witty and poignant perceptions of the absurd realities of contemporary American culture are always informed by recollections of his unusual upbringing in Stalinish Romania.

You can find these titles, along with others just like it in the book, "The Traveler's Reading Guide" edited by Maggy Simony -- located in your local library's reference section.



Tunes to bring along

Road trips are not complete without certain variables. Hard candy, a cooler full of cold stuff in the backseat, an agreeable companion and great tunes, of course. It doesn't always take forever to get someplace, not if you have the right tunes.

The Passenger - Iggy Pop

Surly sing it as you sit idly in traffic while next to the "happy" suburban family in their mini-van.

Go-Go's Greatest Hits

Head boppin', bubble gum smackin' fun. Just watch the speed limit, o.k.

Anything by the Carpenters, Barry Manilow or the Captain and Tenille

Although listening for extended periods is not recommended.

The Velvet Underground & Nico

Run, Run, Run

Make yourself feel like an outlaw.

The Grateful Dead

Truckin'

Pretend you're a cowboy when you sing this. (?)

Paul Simon

Graceland

Especially effective if you are going to Graceland.

David Bowie

Suffragette City

Coming of age music

Any pop hit from your junior high and high school days -- admit to yourself you really (even in the smallest sense) like it.

Can you say musicals!

Grease (I only -- with the exception of Cool Rider from Grease II), Oklahoma!, West Side Story, Mary Poppins, etc. Get campy! Have fun! Drive safely!

Happy motorin'

--towanda!



“Eleanor Roosevelt’s Crusade for Freedom in the Fascist Era”

Women’s issues. Racial equality. Civil rights. Peace issues. Economic justice— the right of all people to health care, to a job and to a decent standard of living.

This sounds like a litany of issues propounded today by progressives.

And they are just that. However, they are also the same issues raised by liberals, such as First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, some 60 years ago.

A fascinating discussion of the leftist political activism of Eleanor Roosevelt is presented on one of many tapes offered by Roger Leisner and Radio Free Maine, based in Augusta, Maine.

The tape, which traces Mrs. Roosevelt’s “endless crusade for justice,” includes a talk by Blanche Wiesen Cook, a university professor and author of “Eleanor Roosevelt: A Biography.”

Titled “Eleanor Roosevelt’s Crusade for Freedom in the Fascist Era,” the talk outlines her constant struggle against the forces (at home and abroad) that were determined to impose fascism on the people of this planet.

Eleanor was not only one of the great women in American history, but a true conscience of the nation in the period of the Great Depression and of World War II. This, of course, was the time when Nazi and other fascist forces in Germany, Italy, Japan and elsewhere were planning to militarily occupy the entire world.

Eleanor was definitely to the left of her husband, President Franklin D. Roosevelt. (Although, in fairness to him, we should keep in mind that he did stand for election every four years and she did not.)

For her progressive efforts she was constantly vilified by the press and by other right-wing elements in society. She is quite well known for her efforts to encourage racial tolerance and end discrimination. She touted the benefits of education for the masses. She supported the efforts of labor. She supported women’s rights (and even had press conferences for women journalists only.)

But, many people do not know of her intense support for economic justice—and, of course, most of those goals have NOT been met to this day.

She wanted, for example, the right (as a matter of law) to a job for everyone. (In this reviewer’s opinion, the issue of a right to a job at decent wages has the best chance of being a really viable political issue for the left in the future.)

But she wanted more than a right to decent employment. People, she said, also have the right to an education, to decent health care (another important issue today) and to decent housing.

After FDR died in 1945, Eleanor continued her struggle for humanity through the United Nations. She enthusiastically supported the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which outlined economic as well as political rights.

Ms. Cook presents an Eleanor Roosevelt who, although a great and fine woman, also had her idiosyncrasies. For example, she went everywhere with “rotten, mean dogs” that snarled, barked and bit. And, of course, she had her squeaky, trademark voice.

The Cook tape recounts the life and work of a true American patriot. Radio Free Maine offers many other tapes for sale. Another recent one is a talk by Howard Zinn, teacher, historian, playwright and author of “A People’s History of the U.S.” Titled “Beyond Electoral Politics: Toward Social Change,” the talk was presented at MIT.

Zinn’s thesis is essentially this— Voting has its place, but much more important is political organizing and activism. Mass movement and mass actions do much more to move society in a progressive direction than voting for the lesser of various evils in an election.

Some of the newer political movement — such as the New Party — have their positive aspects, Zinn says, but political action is more important than elections.

Emma Goldman, the famed anarchist, is quoted as saying that women would gain equality “by Direct action,” not by voting.

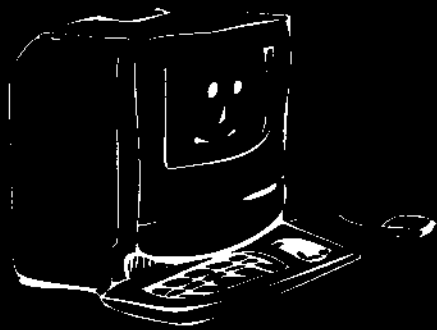
Zinn points out that the U.S. constitution and government has from the beginning represented the interests of the wealthy and powerful. In earlier years, for example, government protected merchants, slave owners, railroads and manufacturers, often to the detriment of the working class.

Zinn outlines many movements which made progress through struggle in the streets — such as union and labor struggles, abolition of slavery, civil rights, women’s liberation and the anti-war movement.

These and other tapes can be ordered from Roger Leisner at Radio Free Maine, P.O. Box 2705, Augusta, Maine 04338. The phone and fax number is 207.662.6629.

--Allan H. Keith

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Third encounters of the pig kind

Well, well, well. July has all but faded into August, and with summer's heat comes another fiery installment of police harassment stories in the Bloomington-Normal area. This edition marks the end of the full first year of this feature, and the start of a crazy second. Thanks to the readers brave enough to share their harrowing tales, at least three instances of cops behaving like pigs have been covered in each of the last six Post Amerikan, and there are already enough stories coming in to keep things going for the foreseeable future. As long as cops stomp on the rights of peaceful citizens and enforce policies that are obviously evil (such as... um... marijuana prohibition), there will be room here to expose their shame in a public forum.

Exposing police harassment and the vicious, illegal lengths they will go to to enforce policies that are wrong to begin with is, of course, the primary function of THIRD ENCOUNTERS OF THE PIG KIND. This is important, for it shows both the sheer scope of pig occurrence in McLean Co., as well as the diversity of the people it affects. As many occurrences are not isolated happenings, the victims of such barbaric policies need to know that they alone are not effected, that a much bigger problem exists. By printing the actual stories, as they are told to me, my hope is that the rest of the public may come to know the human side of the stories, beyond statistics and the rare police policy criticism in the mainstream media. The fact is that the police have been assuming greater controls than We The People have ever agreed to, they are using their authority to enforce personal prejudices, and the legislators are granting them even more invasive powers than ever before as you read this. It has to stop somewhere, and each personal case adds to a growing pile of connections and experiences that shed more searing light on the depth of ethical decay apparent in our law enforcement agencies.

With a full year of cases in hand, it is interesting to compare and contrast the three major policing bodies in the B-N area.

The worst of the bunch were the Normal/ISU pigs. By sheer number of calls complaining about their behavior, these pigs (the two agencies were often mentioned together) are the most likely to go off on a gung-ho verbal assault on just about anyone for any reason. They blatantly ignore their own rules, and are famous for marking tires at bars, using their badges to get served after hours, and for assuming that all minors (especially students) are drunk or high. Coming in a near second worst were the McLean County Sheriff's Police. They had less instances reported, but those that were were among the most brutal and blatant disregards for citizens' liberties reported here. More so than the Normal/ISU Police, the problem here seems to lie with individual "loose cannon" pigs and not general agency policy. The least piggish of the batch was the Bloomington Police Department. These guys tend to confuse everyone for crackheads and are quite paranoid about firearms. Basically, Bloomington cops have bigger things to worry about than hard working, peaceful people with ten dollars worth of pot, but can be a bit more intense because of it.

Besides police harassment reports, people have used the Third Encounters phone number (829-9920) to relay helpful tips on combating the heinous efforts of our government to squash the pot subculture out of existence through a campaign of deception, illegal legislature, and bizarre amounts of common funds (not to mention their motives behind said policy). These are always welcome, and some of them deserve a second mention here (they do no good buried in back issues...).

—SOW your seeds everywhere seeds will grow. This saps their resources eradicating scattered patches and reminds people that it is wrong to practice genocide on anything nature intended.

—CARRY a piece of clean (pot resin free) paraphenelia on your person or in your car. This effectively weakens the pigs false right to assume paraphenelia is necessarily DRUG paraphenelia (and the subsequent search with false probable cause.

—GRANT permission to residence searches if you are really wasted. There are several incidences where police without warrants searched houses with the permission of the residents, only to have all physical evidence thrown out of court because the permission grantor was too stoned to give permission (and thus had felt intimidated by the pigs... which certainly isn't hard to believe...)

***An anonymous caller offered a \$50 reward to anyone able to get into Task Force 6 as an undercover informant, and submit to the Post Amerikan the names and photographs of at least two active undercover informants who take the vilest of deeds seriously. Official Task Force 6/Police documents detailing the persons' pig involvement is necessary to get the dough, as well as any introductory / training literature you receive to verify that we are not accusing any innocents of piggdom. At any rate, the caller pointed out, the mere offer of this reward (and it is serious) should breed some mistrust and suspicion within the ranks of those who attempt to do the same to the stoners.

Since the last Post Amerikan, some more real piggish tales have been brought to my attention. In one report, a sixteen year old was caught with five grams of pot. The caller hasn't yet gone to trial, but the authorities have taken further action based upon his possession of cannabis. The prosecuting attorney has forced his parents, one of whom lives out of state, to have separate lawyers attend a hearing meant to place him in foster care. This, when according to their own rules this individual is supposed to be innocent until proven guilty. In the name of the drug war, it seems, persons may be punished before even going to trial.

Another caller was sitting outside of a local convenient mart drinking a soda. It was night, but not too late (between nine and ten). He was sitting back against the building, when suddenly a figure leapt out from behind the corner, flashlight blinding the caller. The sudden intruder loomed over the caller, high power flashlight inches from his eyes. Startled and unable to see, the caller



understandably shouted, "Get that light out of my eyes!", possibly with an added expletive. He was answered by a male voice, "This is in your eye," at which moment the flashlight was pushed against the caller's eye socket until his head turned against the brick wall. The caller tried to get up and escape, at which time the assaulter identified himself as a Normal cop and arrested the caller for resisting arrest. With no warrants out, no verbal discussion with the pig, and no immediately prior crimes being committed by the caller (or ever), he still doesn't know what arrest he was resisting!

The next tale has to do with a Normal cop who has gone to abnormal extremes, even coercive extremes, to push his religion on random individuals who (rightly) question the established mainstreamism he has latched onto. It seems he put up fliers advertising a forming discussion group. Its purpose was to get together with other people in the area interested in tribal, new age, pagan, and other "alternate religions". When people showed up, they were give hell and brimstone Christian evangelicism.

Our last story for this month is really bad. This guy just got out of prison (heroin) and was checking out a local bar. While taking a leak in the restroom, an assailant put a knife to his back and took his wallet. When the mugger turned around, however, the caller grabbed his head and hit him against the door. As he regained his own wallet, a patron called the police. When they arrived, the mugger gave false testimony, no witnesses stood up (they were alone in the restroom), and the caller went back to jail for strong-arm robbery. What's worse, the mugger got his money by claiming it as his own!

Wrapping up this year of Third Encounters, I would like to set the record straight and mention that the last two cops I've been stopped by were professional and un-piggish. One even understood (gasp) the futility of fining me for a headlight out, as that would only hurt my ability to purchase a new one! Just so folks truly understand the nature of the term "pig", as it pertains to law enforcers (I'm not intending to insult livestock, either), I offer the following article, reprinted from last year's August-ish Post Amerikan.



The world according to Matt

What is a Pig?

To assure that only those deserving insult take offense to the term "pig," when used to describe an officer of the law, I offer this explanation.

Not every cop is a pig. It is unfortunate, but we need them to protect us from murderers, rapists, muggers and molesters. In this function, cops are hard-working men and women who put their lives on the line for the safety of society, and they deserve nothing but respect.

However, when a cop steps outside of his/her duty to protect and serve, and instead enforces laws that do nothing but rend to shreds the life and liberty of honest, tax-paying and otherwise law-abiding citizens, that cop is a pig.

With that definition, it can be said that any cop who has participated in a marijuana bust is a pig. These people in no way deserve any respect, and it is every moral citizen's duty to

create a social atmosphere that is hostile to their efforts. One of the manifold positive reasons for ending this nefarious war on peaceful people, the basic fact is that pot busts are hate crimes.

Those helping these efforts, are ready, willing and able to use deceptive means, those who are not, are no better. These people have been used as a thin disguise for personal greed. Police who pursue and combat the docile hemp subculture are just another group of conquistadors, missionaries, klansman and Nazis. Fuck da Pigs!

In this world there are good and bad cops. Some look the other way where pot is concerned; the rest are pigs. As someone's mom once said, "Pigs is as Pigs does."

-MattToczko



In this season of energy sapping humidity and refreshing evening breezes, The World According To Matt is chilling out. In following issues look for the fourth installment of These Fated Times, and, as the season of rebalancing ripens, the grim truths about Godmoney and other spooky shit all to apparent to objective scrutiny in the world around you.



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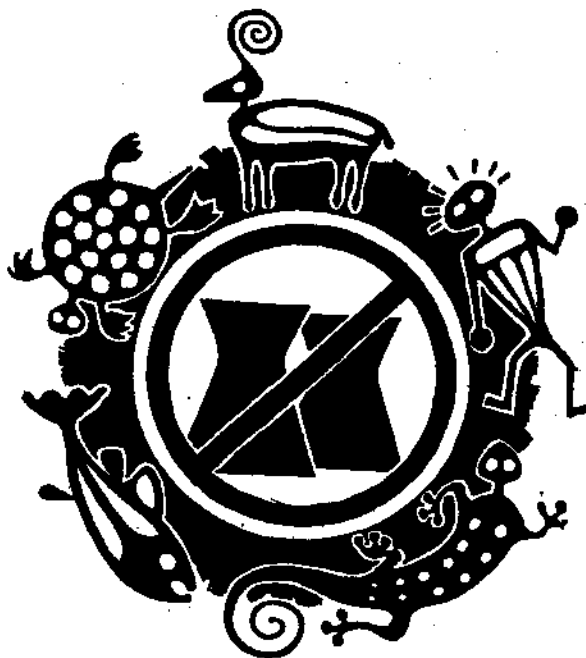
"Uranium should stay in the ground"

"Death is everywhere that uranium touches. . . the destructive properties of uranium are unleashed the moment it is mined from the ground. Native people tell us that uranium should stay in the ground -- but their voices are lost in the wind. Tribal people possess the knowledge of the past that could help heal and restore the earth -- but their views are in conflict with the nuclearized, neo-colonial mindset of the multinational energy corporations. We in the west are in possession of the most advanced strain of ignorance the world has ever developed. . . Native people don't think this way. By resisting the repeated incursions of industrial society into their lands, their cultures and their religions have heroically preserved a world view which carries the concept of sacred earth. . . It's time we listened."

Those words are part of a booklet that was printed to promote the World Uranium hearing held in 1982. They are quoted by Jerry Mander in his book In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations published by Sierra Club Books.

As I write this on July 10, Illinois Power is working to restart the Clinton nuclear power plant by their stated goal of later in July.

I hope that the relevance of the words that I quoted in this article is clearly seen. On the one hand is the corporation hustling to meet its deadline. On the opposite (and opposing) hand are the Native people who are resisting the mining of uranium out of their ancestral sacred lands.



In his analysis of the workings of the corporations, Mander presents what he calls the "eleven inherent rules of corporate behavior." Among them are the corporations profit imperative, its growth imperative, that it will be competitive and aggressive, it will be amoral and irresponsible, it will dehumanize, and it will act in opposition to the natural world.

Given the native people's deep and abiding

understanding of the seemingly obvious truth that we can't live without the natural world, it was inevitable that their society would come into conflict with corporate drives and hungers.

And it truly all does come down to "the concept of sacred earth." One society knows, feels and understands that concept. One society doesn't. One society is capable of walking in balance and beauty. The other seems absolutely determined to eat and eat and eat and to shit out its poisons until there is nothing left alive.

How important is it for us to grasp "the concept of sacred earth?"

How important is it to breathe?

-Gregg Brown

Tribal good times had by all

Last June I had a chance to attend the Return to Pimiteoui Intertribal Pow Wow, held annually in Peoria. A friend and I went on Saturday and decided to return on Sunday as well.

The two days were filled with powerful experiences in an atmosphere that was profoundly different from those that are usual for me.

While I was on that land [a wooded park just outside of the city], I saw teepees against a treeline with the hazy smoke of campfires lingering overhead. The drums beat a constant reminder of the heartbeat of the Earth Mother. Hundreds of little bells woven into the dress of the dancers rang out in many-pitched voices.

The Spirit Fire burned for four days, and was attended for the entirety. This four day vigil was shared by four firekeepers. Every so often one of the firekeepers would throw sage or sweetgrass on the fire, and everyone in the area was smudged with its smoke.

A large bird of prey circled lazily on the air, watching all below with its keen eyes.

The dancers performed their art gracefully in their brilliant colored attire. All ages, from toddlers on up, participated in the festivities.

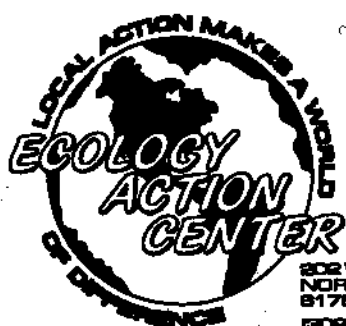
Booths displayed many beautiful works of art and traditional crafts. No matter how long you were there, you couldn't possibly take it all in.

My friend pointed out that the people attending's faces did not have the pinched look that they normally wear in the cities. It was washed away in the good care of the shamans.

Much wisdom was encoded upon the days' experiences, wisdom touching many levels, conscious and otherwise. Synchronicities popped around us and embedded their messages in us. Few came away untouched, unmoved, unchanged.

Next June, when this weekend draws close, watch for signs. Return to Pimiteoui.

Gregg Brown



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Citizen Wayne and the Bio - Vamp

In corporate ethics, the difficulty lies in what we don't know. When Bruce Wayne withdraws funds from a research project, in Batman and Robin, we don't know where his professed "ideological differences" lie.

A possibility is that Wayne went shopping for a token nature cause. After all, the project's botanist claimed her animal plant cross breeding could save plants from extinction.

But something is rotten far from Gotham. Deep in a rain forest, Foundation funds bring forth a super soldier — for sale to a mini meeting of the UN. The botanist reacts with horror as her plant toxin "Poison" pumps up the power of the other raw material, a convict.

As her old nerdy self, Poison Ivy confronts Citizen Wayne at one of the many splashy benefits. Wayne touts the importance of coolants and diesel fuel, tosses aside her scholarly plan for manufacture clean-up and greets media with his trophy super model.

Meanwhile, Mr. Freeze continually absconds with hefty diamonds to fuel a quest to cure his wife's cancer. Wayne will cast his princely lot with this radical — investing, at the film's close, in cancer research, and in turn, the values of family and love.

One of the problems, of course, is that the lady is a vamp. Evil Jason Woodrue had dosed Isley with her own medicine. But Poison "becomes" her. In true harem style, Ivy strips off a monkey suit to reveal new powers of beauty, seduction, and a kiss "to die for." In campy come-ons she offers favors to Batman and Robin, among others: "My garden needs tending."

Before Batgirl "kicks Ivy's botanical butt," she derides the vixen for "giv[ing] women a bad name" with "that old passive-aggressive routine." The movie gives both women and environmentalism a "bad name" by equating them with lunacy and militancy. It uses all of the clichés of the corporate backlash against the movement: environmentalists don't care about people and think nothing of killing them.

The trouble with the nature-lover? They've got the meaning of life all wrong. To coolants and diesel fuel. So much for truth and justice.

From Eco-Survivalist to (Un)Natural Woman

Batman and Robin's Poison Ivy blends the extremes of the DC comics.

In The Poison Tomorrow, Ivy conspires with a capitalist to "Poison" baby food. His plans are to profit by peddling the antidote. Hers are to quicken the apocalypse. The "New Eve" will lead the natural survivors, skipping "the wars and destruction . . . inevitable as the rest of humanity realizes its folly and panics."

Two other stories focus on crime and punishment in a less revolutionary vein.

Detective Comics has Ivy contribute to the debate on how to weigh human and plant life. She lets two doctors die while whining to Batman about public response to an acutely allergenic man's vendetta against Gotham plants. "Sure, some useless citizen gets himself murdered and you and the cops are there like a shot! But some maniac kills millions of innocent plants . . . The press calls him 'The Weedwacker' and everyone has a good laugh."

In the "Eternal Youth" episode of the current TV series: Ivy runs a fake health spa to punish capitalists. One CEO hails from a "company that leveled a thousand year old forest for a strip mine." Turning the woman into a tree, Ivy pronounces the sentence: "You and your kind own Mother Earth a debt, and I'm going to see that you pay it." When the finger points at Wayne he pulls a Kathy Lee: "One of my greedy directors made a deal with a slash and burn operation in the Amazon. I hate it when things slip by me." Ivy's self-defense to Batman is that she too punishes evil, where's his sense of justice? Says the rubberized sage, "Justice, yes, but not the vengeance of an eco-terrorist. You're as destructive as the ones you punish."

A Shadow of the Bat trilogy buries Ivy in an anti-drug message. Jason Woodrue would take over the world with pot, but she'd rather run off with the stash — of money.

In one Legends of the Dark Knight comic Ivy is a bright student who's published on "Complex Plant Animal Forms." After suffering as Woodrue's test subject she's emotionally volatile and is "drawn to abusive men" — this time, to a profiteer for whom she creates a designer drug. As in the film, Ivy's the embodiment of polluted nature gone amuck — a virus and a drug that Batman finally evades. She traps herself by succumbing to love, ending up back in the mental institution to play the love-me, love-me not game with a Daisy.

The House and Garden TV episode plays out the furthest extreme of Ivy's function as an object of masculine anxiety, Fatal Attraction-style. She apes reform while reproducing herself (alas, she's married a man for his DNA, as if this wasn't what traditional marriage was all about anyway), with no concern for the danger wrought by the murderous plant-monsters her children become.

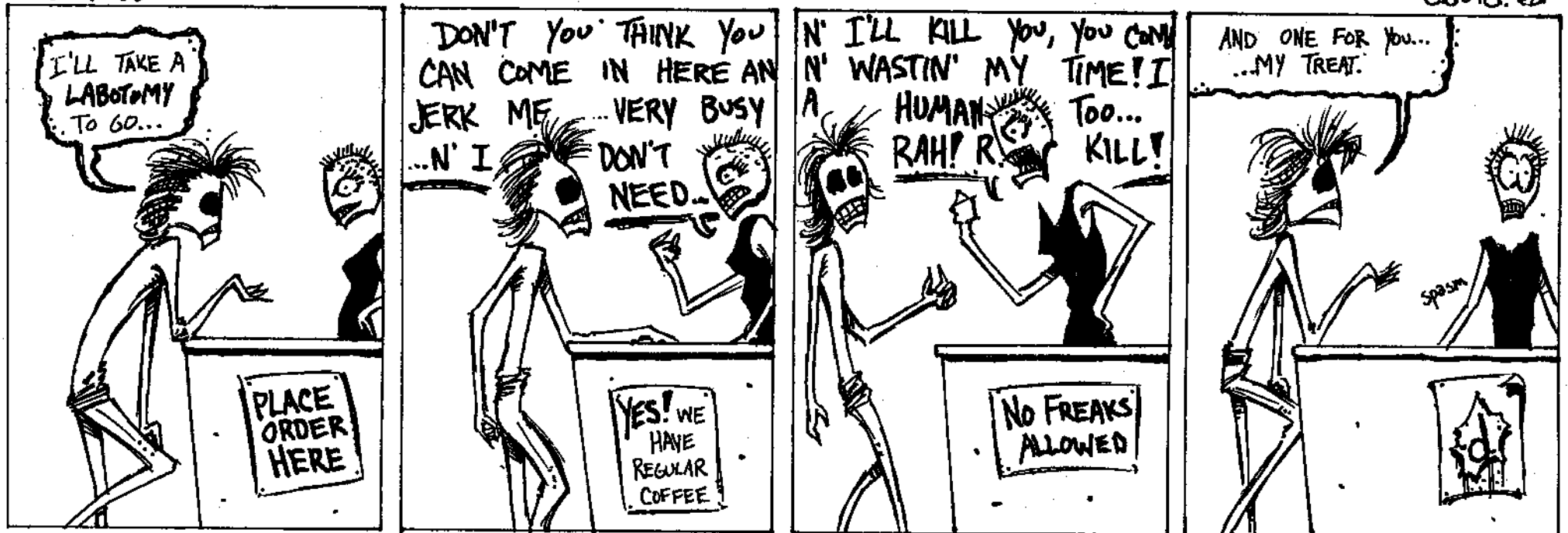
The range of these plots is rather like the one realized in Batman and Robin. As Ivy becomes less the environmental evangelist she preys more on men — for revenge, or as the woman done wrong who yearns for true love.

A subplot, yes, but the film portrayal of Poison Ivy offers a critique worth considering. Are Batman and Robin, as Ivy suggests: "militant arms of the warm-blooded oppressors, animal protectors of the Status-Quo"?

— Lisa Prothers
<leproth@rs6000.cmp.ilstu.edu>

the lavender

-david. @





Seeing Red 500 Years of Slavery

In the beginning—say the year 1500—Europe mined human beings from Africa. Some 100 million were harvested, sold and used as slaves; perhaps 75 million of them perished in the process.¹

For 350 years the West plugged relentlessly away at this lucrative business, doing the best they could with whips and small wooden boats.

But by 1880 Europe at last had the technology to move beyond the crude gathering of human muscles and brains, technology equal to truly-continental plunder.

Now blest with iron boats, steam shovels and locomotives—plus rifles, machine guns and artillery—Europe embarked on a far more sophisticated exploitation of both human and non-human African resources. Now Africans could be pressed into slavery without the bothersome business of transport, and forced to strip their own land of gold, diamonds, rubber, timber, ivory, and more.

The "Scramble for Africa" was on.

From 1880 to 1910 every square inch of the "Dark Continent" was seized by Europeans (with the dubious exceptions of U.S.-dominated Liberia and Italian-dominated Abyssinia [Ethiopia]).

For Africa the real nightmare had just begun. It was "the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the human conscience."²

And the horror was the worst in the territory grotesquely dubbed "The Independent State of the Congo."³ This vast land was the personal dictator.

Over the next thirty-odd years the West's man, now self-christened Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Zu Banga ("the all-powerful warrior who by his endurance and will to win goes from conquest to conquest, leaving fire in his wake") received more than one billion U.S. dollars in American aid alone.⁷ He was allowed to drink deeply of the plunder now flowing freely to the West. Western troops were dispatched to quell uprisings against him.

Mobutu became one of the ten richest men in the world. He built seven vast palaces in Zaire alone, and another on the southern coast of France. Weeks would pass where it Mobutu decreed that no Zairian name except his could be mentioned in the national media.

At the same time, all education and medical care ground to a halt for lack of funds, as did all other rudimentary services including the maintenance of driveable roads. (The national bank had become Mobutu's personal checking account.) Per capita income for average Zairians fell to a nearly immeasurable US\$80/year. Hunger and plague swept the country.

And every U.S. president from Kennedy to Bush welcomed him to the White House. (JFK actually dispatched a U.S. Air Force plane to Mobutu, along with a crew to fly it for him.)

Meanwhile, Washington utilized Zairian territory to launch counter-revolutionary operations against neighboring Angola and Mozambique. UNITA and RENAMO forces, respectively, killed hundreds of thousands of civilians and wreaked unheard-of devastation on these countries struggling with newly-won independence from Portugal (1975 on).

Then in 1995 Tutsis in neighboring Rwanda rose against a government they felt sure was set upon genocide. France quickly intervened and re-installed the Rwandan dictatorship. Within weeks the Rwandan government unleashed the most intensive program of genocide in human history; easily 800,000 butchered in 3 month's time. (Exhausted killers would machete their victims' Achilles' tendons so they could get a night's rest secure in the knowledge that tomorrow's slaughter could not run away.)

Yet unbelievably Rwandan Tutsis, along with Hutu allies, managed to rise and overthrow the genocidal government. Soon thereafter Mobutu declared his intention to deport Zairian Tutsis (already resident in the Congo for some three hundred years)

Now Zairian Tutsis rose as well, and the march to Kinshasha was begun. Within seven months the population of Zaire threw itself into joining the uprising—electing local committees to run things, ending systemic corruption, and freeing themselves of dictatorial rule—and, in late May, ridding their country of Mobutu once and for all.

But before the revolution was even a week old, the Western press raised charges of "dictatorship," "betrayal by the men ...thought [to be] liberators" and a "disturbing bent toward social control."

"The More the Congo Changes, the More it Stays the Same," headlined the Christian Science Monitor. The New York Times printed alleged words from an unidentified Zairian: "Frankly, we were freer under Mobutu."⁸

Then there was "long-time Mobutu opponent ... the democrat" Tshisekedi, who had nonetheless somehow managed to serve three terms as Prime Minister under Mobutu. Why had the "Marxist ideologue"⁹ Laurent Kabila refused to give the government to him? Why the West had polls, for crissakes, showing Tshisekedi the more popular.

Forget that "political dissent is far from banned. Tshisekedi-supporting newspapers continue to denounce Mr. Kabila vigorously and Rwandan Tutsis in openly racist terms.¹⁰ Forget, too, that the May 28th mass mobilization for Tshisekedi began with 150 people and topped out at 800.

Of course it's true that Laurent Kabila himself is no re-incarnation of Lumumba, Malcolm X, or Che Guevara. (Actually, Che, who led Cuban internationalist volunteers against imperialist forces in the Congo in 1964-65, described Kabila as a man rarely seen near the battlefield, but often found in posh foreign hotels¹¹.) Nor does Kabila's career as a diamond smuggler during the 1980's represent a pedigree of a "Marxist ideologue."

But of course Western attacks on Kabila have nothing to do with ways he might deviate from revolutionary democracy.¹²

It's the prospect of losing control of the heart of Africa that has the West "deeply concerned." For now the scum of the earth is on the run: RENAMO, UNITA, the Hutu genocidal forces, Serbian mercenaries, and of course Mobutu himself.

As for the anti-humans in Western capitals how else to describe those who deployed these monsters? they are not happy at all.

For them, 500 years of nightmare pale before five days of revolutionary rule.

Think it's "human rights" they're worried about?

Think again. Then look at the Congo, smile, and chalk up a long, long-overdue victory for humanity.

Reach Eckardt at seckardt@aol.com

1 Malcolm X on Afro-American History (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), p. 64

2 Joseph Conrad quoted in "Mr. Kurtz, I Presume" by Adam Hochschild, 14 April 1997 New Yorker magazine. This article is a rare gem in the mountain of literary analysis of Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness*.

Hochschild's message: the book was a semi-fictionalized documentary, for crissakes.

3 All credit for the exquisite word "grotesquely" goes to Adam Hochschild in his recommended piece "It Takes a Villa" in the 24 March New Yorker magazine.

4 c.f. "It Takes a Villa"

5 c.f. "Mr. Kurtz, I Presume"

6 as famously described by John Gunther (author known for the book *Hiroshima*)

7 "Wiley's Dictionary" in comic strip B.C. "defines 'foreign aid' as 'when the poor people of a rich country give money to the rich people of a poor country.'"

8 Christian Science Monitor 30 May; New York Times 24 May.

9 Editorial, Chicago Tribune 21 May.

10 Electronic Mail and Guardian 29 May.

11 See the excellent 32-page account "Che Guevara and the Congo" in the #220 (Nov/Dec 1996) issue of *New Left Review*.

12 Unfortunately space does not allow exploration of other complexities: the rivalry between France and the U.S. for penetration of the Congo, and Western hopes to turn Kabila into a new Mobutu.



How Sweet it Is

Glory be! Now that communism is dead and markets are free, racial justice in both the United States and the world is on the way.

Why the very President himself recently urged a national conversation on racial matters AND announced he's considering an apology for slavery. Then-just two days later-Clinton unveiled a strategy to at last truly liberate Africa: the "Partnership for Growth and Opportunity."

'Course cynics are already trying to tarnish these shining moments, grouching that the President's Big Speech on race was given on a Saturday-after the Sunday papers were already printed and TV news is almost non-existent.

But that's just the same people complaining there weren't any proposals made for bettering the lot of Black folks.

Hell-looo?! The President is talking about racism. Get it? Jeez-some people just can't recognize progress.

And what could be more important than helping the 700 million people of Africa, the world's most impoverished continent, where many live without medical care, education, or often even food?

The belly-achers-oops, make that the complainers say the whole Partnership amounts to offering to drop U.S. tariffs on some 1,800 African goods if the Africans will drop barriers to U.S. goods. They say it's just a strong-arm move to take over Africa's markets, that people in mud huts will be competing against Boeing, DuPont and Microsoft.

So? Don't they need some competition to get them moving?

The naysayers moan about the constant drain of money out of Africa, especially the heavy interest payments to Western banks. But wouldn't canceling Africa's vig on the juice just reward encourage lack of thrift and industriousness? (Hell, let's call a spade a spade here: wouldn't it reward plain ol' Black laziness?)

That's the same damn mistake we made with welfare: letting food and medicine go to moms and kids who needed it. That was just a racist conspiracy to keep Black folks dependent on The Man.

And hey-there's another step forward: the President's plan to "end welfare as we know it" goes into effect July 1st, freeing perhaps a million poor children from the degradation of getting food aid and medical treatment.

But if all this big stuff is too much for you-after all, all politics is local, right?-just take a look at Chicago public schools where the School Board just announced they were taking over ("reconstituting") seven high schools. (One of them had just 4% of the students achieving at their grade level.) Now they're flunking almost half the kids and making all the staff re-apply for their jobs. "Bout time, no?"

Let the moaners go on about segregated schools and unequal funding. Black folks have had it with the old ways, and so has the President. Afro-Americans don't want no favors, no special

treatment-they want freedom.

Why should a lead-poisoned Black child of a sixteen year-old illiterate single mother get treated any different then a white child of wealthy college-educated couple? Sure, the white kid is going to an air-conditioned, carpeted school with small class size where teachers with PhD's expect achievement.

But they're both kids.

Fact is, only a racist would think Black people can't handle a challenge. It's like saying Africans without electricity can't compete with

Microsoft.

No, now-with a Democratic President elected to a second term for the first time since FDR and a fine Republican Congress-a truly historic moment has arrived. Welfare, desegregation, and affirmative action are being lifted off the necks of Afro-Americans. And Africa itself is finally given a chance to compete.

Can there be any question that, were Martin Luther King, Jr. alive today, he would say "free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty-we are free at last."

* * * *

Regular readers of this column (who easily recognized the above material as satire) may have noticed that an overwhelming preponderance of pieces dealing with the Third ("under-developed") World and racism. (It struck me, too, as I compiled them for my new Web page which can be found at-plug, plug-www.SeeingRed.com).

Why would a Red harp on this matter so much? you might ask. What about the fight against capitalism?

First of all, in a real sense there is no "struggle for socialism" separate and apart from fights by the oppressed for justice, peace, and a decent standard of living. Nonetheless, there's no doubt that the foul, profits-first capitalist system needs to be replaced by a people-first system before environmental apocalypse or the inevitable next World War gets us all.

But the actual form that modern capitalism takes is imperialism: a few wealthy vulture nations preying on a mass of nations so relentlessly that most don't even have clean running water. The same relationship is reproduced inside the vulture countries toward people once of Third World origins: Blacks in all countries, Irish in England, Turks in Germany, etc. etc.

People who happen to be citizens of an imperialist country and "white" needn't feel guilty about their relative privileges-but they must realize they have them. Fighting for affirmative action, school desegregation and

the cancellation of the debt "owed" by the Third World to imperial banks are at the heart of fighting for a better world.


It's what seeing Red is all about.

Visit Eckardt's web page at seeingred.com and leave your responses (discussion forums are being organized). Or send e-mail to seckardt@aol.com

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News From Voice

Late term abortions infrequent in Illinois

Although Governor Edgar is likely to sign a bill banning late term abortion procedure dubbed "partial birth abortion" by the anti-choice movement, according to Illinois Public Health officials, no one in Illinois used that procedure in the past year. That information was contained in the Public Health Department's annual report on abortion. According to IDPH, there were 53,613 procedures performed in Illinois in 1996. That was a 2.5 percent increase from the 1995 number.

Tom Shafer, an IDPH spokesman, said abortion providers are asked to list the procedures they use. None of them reported using the late term method that was banned with Edgar's signature. The legislation bans abortions, except to save the life of the mother. Shafer said of the abortions performed in Illinois, 1,248 of them came after 20 weeks and 74 of them at 24 weeks gestation or later.

The IDPH report also stated that 434 abortions were performed on girls ages 14 or under, a decrease of 32 from the previous year. The procedure was performed on 4,814 girls under at 18, a decline of 39 from 1995.

Edgar supports abortion ban

On July 17, Governor Edgar amendatorily vetoed HB 382 (Abortion Ban). The amendatory veto strikes the provision that allows "the father of the fetus" to bring civil action. Governor Edgar did not recommend any other changes to the bill.

The bill now goes to the Illinois General Assembly to consider Edgar's recommendation to change the bill. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Peter Roskam, has called Edgar's recommendations for change "technical." It appears that the General Assembly will act on a motion to accept this change during the Veto Session, scheduled for Oct. 28 - 30, and Nov. 12 - 14.

If the General Assembly accepts the governor's amendatory veto, HB 382 will:

Ban the late term abortion procedure dubbed "partial birth abortions."

Would allow for the banned procedure to be performed only if the abortion is "necessary to save the life of the woman because her life is endangered by a physical disorder, physical illness, or physical injury, including a life-endangering condition caused by or arising from the pregnancy itself provided that no other procedure would suffice for that purpose."

Eckardt on Africa

HB 382 allows for civil action by the woman's parents if the woman is a minor.

According to the Illinois Planned Parenthood Council, even with the amendatory veto, HB 382 is unconstitutional. IPPC states that the definition used in HB382 is unconstitutionally vague. Because the definition of the banned procedure does not use medical terminology and does not describe medically recognized procedures, it could apply to numerous abortion procedures.

IPPC also states that HB382 includes no exception for cases in which a woman's health is threatened. In addition, the bill contains a very narrow life exception which would force a woman to undergo a more dangerous procedure if it would suffice.

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Roe v. Wade*, *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania*, and other cases has found that states cannot ban abortion prior to viability. In addition, any abortion ban must include exceptions to protect a woman's life and health.

Current Illinois law bans abortions after viability (usually 24 - 28 weeks) except when the woman's life or health is threatened.

Source: *The Pantagraph* and Illinois Planned Parenthood Council

Promoting abstinence

Congress is hoping that abstinence based education will reduce teen pregnancy. Last year's welfare law guaranteed \$250 million in abstinence education grants. States must match every \$4 in federal money with \$3 in state money; the result is that almost \$440 million could be spent on such programs in the next five years. Many states are worried that the abstinence only program will not be effective and will not mix well with current programs that provide information about birth control. Despite the concerns, only Connecticut has decided to pass on the money. Wyoming and New Jersey are undecided.

Under federal rules, the abstinence programs should teach that sex outside of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects. Other approved topics include how to reject sexual advances, why drugs and alcohol make that more difficult and the importance of becoming self sufficient before having sex.

This contrasts with "abstinence plus" programs which discourage sex but also talk about birth control and disease prevention for teens who might have sex anyway. In 1995, 66% of teens reported having sex by the time they graduated from high school. Yet many politically conservative states like Arizona say they believe abstinence will work.



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For Choice

Arizona, which has the nation's fourth-highest teen pregnancy rate plans to use the money plus an extra \$2 million for a media campaign. Other states plan similar campaigns - Maryland plans to put up billboards that read "Virgin - teach your kid it's not a dirty word." Other states are focusing on 9-14 year olds who have not yet had sex. Many are focusing on mentoring, self-esteem and the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Colorado decided to take the money but has promised not to abandon family planning and HIV prevention programs already underway - "given that almost half the kids in high school are sexually active," said Barbara Ritchen of the health department.

Despite the push for abstinence, even states like Arizona are not eliminating family planning programs. Private money will be used to help print brochures telling teens in rural Arivaca, in southwestern Arizona, where they can get birth control. The town has no place to fill prescriptions for birth control pills. For teens and adults alike, it is an hour drive to fill such a prescription--the result is that family planning assistance is not very accessible.

A California researcher has concluded that a major abstinence-only education effort in that state did not work. The California model has been seen as a model for similar programs elsewhere. Douglas Kirby, who conducted the research for the California Office of Family Planning found that the state program called "Education Now and Babies Later," had no impact on teens' sexual intentions or behavior 17 months after it started.

Kirby thinks the program didn't work because it was too brief, but others think the more serious difficulty is that it did not include contraceptive education.

The debate about what can be done about teen sex reflects a national concern about the rate of teen pregnancy. Each year 200,000 teens 17 and under have children, most of them out of wedlock. There has been a small decline in that rate in recent years, and advocates credit local education efforts for the reduction. But there is widespread disagreement over what kinds of education works best.

The abstinence-only philosophy advocated by social and religious conservatives is embodied in the legislation last year that provided \$50 million for state education programs. Congress said the programs should focus on sex within marriage as the standard of American sexual behavior (just like all members of Congress do), and that sex within marriage is the only healthy sexual activity. Officials at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services say 47 states and Washington D.C. have indicated they intend to apply for a piece of that money.

One fear is that some states will eliminate their other programs and focus only on abstinence. The problem with that approach is that abstinence-only programs haven't been

proven effective in reducing teen pregnancy, "Seven out of ten teenagers are already sexually active by the time they're 18 years old," said Joyce Walker Tyson, deputy director of communication and development for the Washington-based Advocates for Youths. "To teach abstinence only is ridiculous."

But abstinence-only advocates disagree. They say the program didn't work because it didn't emphasize abstinence until marriage; that sex is for procreation, and that childbearing is best within a marriage. "It's a very hard job to sell this message of abstinence," said Patrick Fagan-Fitzgerald, senior policy analyst for the Heritage Foundation. "You've got to give good reasons."

To Kirby, the California failure highlights and important need. "It's very important to conduct vigorous research to find out if a program works before implementing it broadly," he said. We couldn't agree more.

Source: *The Pantagraph*

Senate interferes with women's rights--again

Federal employees who want abortions would have to continue paying out of their own pockets for the procedure under a measure the Senate approved July 22. The act was part of a \$22.5 billion spending bill. The amendment, approved 54 - 45, "would permit federal employee health plans to cover abortion only in cases of rape, incest and threats to the life of the mother," said Sen. Mike DeWine, R-Ohio, who sponsored it.

Allowing federal health insurance to cover other abortions would amount to a "tax-payer subsidy of abortions for federal workers" since the government pays about three-quarters of the premiums, he said. The ban has been in force since 1984, except for 1994 and 1995.



Illinois Senators Dick Durbin and Carol Moseley-Braun, voted in the minority to allow federal employees' health insurance coverage include abortions. Sen. Barbara Boxer, said the measure unfairly "singles out female federal said Sen. Patty Murray, another opponent, who said the amendment would "take reproductive health of women away from women."

The amendment was to the 1998 appropriations bill covering the Treasury Department, the U.S. Postal Service, the executive office of the president and some independent agencies. It is up to \$1.1 billion over current spending but is \$456 million less than President Clinton requested. The Senate approved the spending bill 99-0.

Source: *The Pantagraph*

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Labor's own Radio: WCFL's Airwave Struggle

WCFL: Chicago's Voice of Labor, 1926-78 by Nathan Godfried, University of Illinois Press, 1997 ISBN: 0-252-06592-1

Should labor have its own mass media, its own newspaper, radio and TV stations? The question is frequently asked and usually positively answered. But has anyone actually studied the problems of competing in the mass media marketplace?

Someone has tried, and that experiment is well documented in "WCFL: Chicago's Voice of Labor." When radio was new, Edward Nockels, secretary-treasurer of the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), pushed for space on the airwaves. For 52 years the CFL controlled a radio band, mixing idealism with commercialism.

Like any high-tech enterprise, 1920s radio was not cheap. Once it gained its license, union donations were not enough to sustain a station. How was WCFL going to attract the public who found soap operas, comedians and music on their radio dial?

WCFL decided to fight commercial broadcasters on their own terms. They had studio musicians, in-house personalities and sports coverage, all trying to win the average listener. Godfried's book traces WCFL's effort, contrasting Nockels' idealism with the business unionism of CFL President William Lee (1946-84). Under Nockels' the station served not only labor but farm and other progressive organizations. Nockels fought the Federal

Communications Commission (FCC), seeking a "clear-band" power station for labor. Labor and other civic groups fought for public space on the airwaves, their efforts overwhelmed by commercial broadcasters. By studying Nockels' losing battles, one learns how the our present radio system triumphed over public use.

Maintaining a station and audience was a drain on CFL resources. Under Lee WCFL made money with its popular disc jockeys and sports. Labor programming appeared in news shows. The station's final effort in the 1960s was an all-out push to become the rock and roll top-40 Chicago powerhouse. The station briefly beat WLS but then slid into red ink, leading to its sale in 1987.

This is an in-depth book, chronicling Nockels' battles with the FCC plus station programming and promotional efforts over the years. There

are shining examples of WCFL's critical strike support and innovations like the "Junior Federation Club," a children's show with a union message, that attracted 40,000 letters from young listeners in 1929.

The central struggle that marked WCFL is one that labor must still wrestle with today-- do you dilute labor's message for a mass audience? How do you sustain an expensive medium like broadcasting without resorting to advertising?

Keeping advertisers happy and still sending a union message was never a happy medium, but WCFL made the effort. There are helpful lessons here for today's unions, struggling to effectively reach mass audiences.

Reviewed by Mike Matejka
Union News - July 1997

"Family Friendly Workplace Act" a trick

by Senator Carol Moseley-Braun (D) of Illinois

The Senate is considering the so-called "Family Friendly Workplace Act." Doesn't that sound wonderful? The sponsors could just as well have called it the "Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice Act." but that wouldn't have made the actual bill any better.

There is something to the old cliché that you cannot judge a book by its cover. In this case, the sponsors of the "Family Friendly Workplace Act" tied this fancy ribbon of a title around a legislative package that would hurt working people in general and would be detrimental to working parents in particular.

Since parents would end up with less control over their work schedule and less money to pay for raising their families, it would be more accurate and more honest to call the bill the "Paycheck Reduction Act."

Supporters of this business-backed legislation claim it would give working people the flexibility to choose between overtime pay and compensatory time off or flexible credit hours.

Would it really?

My concern is that employees would not, in fact, be given a choice between overtime and choicetime. If this bill becomes law, employers still would decide which workers who agree to take comptime rather than the overtime pay that many families rely on to help make ends meet.

John Sweeney, the president of the AFL-CIO, has voiced this same concern. "Employers could discriminate against employees who want overtime pay, and employers would control when employees could use comptime," he said. A workplace atmosphere would emerge that would cause employees to believe that their jobs depend on choosing comptime instead of overtime.

There is another big problem with this bill. **It would eliminate the 40 hour work week.** In its place, there would be an 80 hour, two-week work period. What's the difference? There's a big difference. Bosses could

make employees work long, hard hours one week and then slash the amount of time they work the next week. The company would end up not owning a penny in overtime or a minute of comp time to a worker assigned to put in 60 hours one week and 20 hours the next week.

This would amount to a pay cut for American families who depend on overtime pay as a major portion of their income. This legislation would abolish the guarantee of pay for working more than 40 hours a week for 65 million workers, many of whom pay for food, shelter, education and retirement for their families with this money. With the growing gap between the rich and the poor, and with the middle class working harder than ever, working Americans have little room to give on wages.

There is a third big problem with this proposal. The sponsors talk about wanting to strengthen families, but that's only lip service if an employee could be required to work 65 hours one week and 15 hours the next. Apart from the affect it would have on take home pay, it could lead to schedules that would cause chaos, not just for working parents, but for their families. Imagine if mom was home early one week and then not home for dinner at all the next.

I am not a single working mother. I know what it means to have to balance family and work.

I believe that employers and employees working together can have flex time, can have work schedules that really do serve the interests of families, but that is not what this bill does.

If employers really want to make workplaces more family friendly, there are many realistic options available without changing any laws.

The 40 hour week and the right to overtime are protections that the working people of America fought to secure. Blood was shed and people died in the struggle to create a work week which people could see daylight, see their children, and build their communities. We should not take lightly efforts to erase the victories of America's working men and women, victories that have strengthened America's working families.

--Union News July 1997

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Underground Barfly

Hello fellow barflies. I must say that I am ashamed of myself for last issue's U.B. I didn't even review a bar! I've decided to use a 4 beer mug (4 being highest and 1 being lowest) description of each individual place. Whatdyathinkathat? Huh? Huh?

OK, let's get to business!

Moe's
Just kidding.

Bonker's

This place was definitely a pleasant surprise. This was a nice cool neighborhood bar where a person can go after a hard day's work to have a drink. It's not your usual B-N college-type bar with a bunch of young freaks acting stupid. (Mind you, I have nothing against young freaks; I was one myself at one time.) It's just a mellow place with a jukebox, a pool table, a few dart boards, and some video games.

The music in the jukebox is filled with mostly pop country balanced by some good 'ol country. But if you're not in to country of any sort, there is some good classic rock that can be dug. All in all, I would say that this box is geared mainly towards an older crowd—probably 25ish to 50ish—but good music is for everyone (21 years old and up, that is) and this box has the good music for the ears that want to hear it (and the cash that pays for it).

And while your listening to the groovy music that your drunk ass paid for, you can have a drink from their average selection of barfly juice served by one of their excellent bartenders. And if you look carefully, you might see a few surprises among those bottles! Another thing I liked about this place was the canned beer that they sold. Can ya believe it? Pretty cool, huh?

After a few canned Buschs, you're going to want to take a piss. The men's bathroom is very clean and respectable; a nice place to relieve one's self from the leftovers of alcohol. My sincere apologies to the female barflies. My gender does not allow me to inspect your places of bladder relief; but since women's toilets are usually cleaner than men's, I will give it the U.B Stamp of Approval sight unseen.

I never played any pool there, but the average-sized pool table looked like it was in pretty good shape. I don't usually like video games in bars because they're too noisy and they can distract me from my drink (fat chance!). But the video games in this place are nice and quiet. Video golf and 4 video poker machines (I wonder if they pay off) are all that this place has to offer in the way of modern technology, except, of course, the 4 electronic dart boards, which are noisy, but not too annoying.

So if you want a nice, mellow place to go to escape the young freaks, go to Bonker's. It's open every day at 10am, except on Sundays when it opens at noon. Bonker's is located at 1507 S. Main in Bloomington.

Soft Touch

This place, like Bonker's, is a place to escape the young freaks. However, unlike Bonker's, they have made rules to keep the young freaks out. Dig this: you have to be at least 25 years old to go there and there is a dress code. Don't let the dress code scare you; it's just a rule to keep out the potential assholes. For example they don't allow baseball caps that are tilted to the side, etc. It really isn't that bad. I was wearing blue jeans with a hole in the knee and a t-shirt and I didn't get hassled.

Keeping in mind that this place has not been in business for very long, their alcohol selection was kind of lame. Definitely below average. I was very surprised to see mostly the cheap, not cheapest, kind of booze in that place. I did find some decent scotch, but not what I would have preferred. But, as I said, they're just getting their shit together. So I sat and drank my scotch. Then I decided to check out the jukebox.

The jukebox was very impressive. It was filled with the best kind of blues, R & B, and jazz. What a selection! Everything from Ray Charles to Billie Holiday to Miles Davis to... you get the picture. Needless to say, I put a lot of one dollar bills into that thing.

And let me tell you that the environment was perfect for having a scotch and listening to some cool tunes. It was a large room that just by itself could make you relax. The dark—not too dark—




colors and the cushioned seats mixed with some soft R & B, jazz or blues makes Soft Touch a perfect place to bring a date. Even the dance floor, of which are usually made out of some cheap linoleum product and an eyesore, was wood, and classy So all you single barflies, and not so single too, take a hint from the Underground Barfly of Love and take your sweethearts to Soft Touch Lounge. There are also a few pool tables and dart boards & stuff. Nothing to really write home about.

Another thing that I must say about that place was that the bathrooms were absolutely impeccable! There were a couple of urinals, as usual, but there was also a little room where the toilet was; and dig this—it had its own sink! I couldn't believe it! Maybe I'm just naive, but was one of the things that sold me on that place. Wow! A sink in the "toilet room."

Soft Touch Lounge is located at 401 N. Veterans Parkway in Bloomington. If you find that confusing, it's where Tuxedo Junction used to be.

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