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The Keep

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The Post Amerikan Project

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POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 30

FREE

NUMBER THREE

JUNE/JULY 2001

Activism Issue:

CIOP protests predatory lending in Decatur

Jesse Wolf Hardin speaks on Activism, Dance and Earth

Local PoliSci professor teaches course to instill activism in ISU students

Urbana independent journalist gets active at Summit of the Americas in Quebec

and more!

ac • tiv • ism

A doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct, vigorous action for political ends.

Webster's Merriam Dictionary

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BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 30

NUMBER THREE

JUNE/JULY 2001

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In this Issue:

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, Linda, Ralph
and Sherrin

Good numbers

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
 Amnesty International-ISU...Miomi@ilstu.edu
 Animal Protection League.....828-5371
 Better Business Bureau.....1-800-500-3780
 Big Brothers/ Big Sisters828-1870
 Boys & Girls Clubs of B/N.....829-3034
 Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035
 Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070
 Dept. of Children/Family Services...828-0022
 Gay, Lesbian & Bi teen drop in center.828-3998
 Gay & Lesbian Resource Phonenumber...438-2429
 Habitat for Humanity.....827-3931
 Headstart.....662-4880
 Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356
 IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621
 IL Lawyer Referral.....1-217-525-5297
 Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-0790
 LIFE-CIL.....663-5433
 Lighthouse (substance abuse treatment).....827-6026
 McLean Co. Center for Human Services...827-5351
 McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450
 McLean Co. Housing Authority.....829-3360
 McLean Co. Humane Society.....664-7387
 McLean Co. Peace Coalition.....828-7070
 Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691
 Mobile Meals.....828-8301
 Narcotics Anonymous.....827-4005
 National Health Care Services/
 abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622
 Occupational Development Center...452-7324
 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
 Prairie State Legal Services.....827-5021
 Project Oz.....827-0377
 Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005
 Runaway Switchboard.....1-800-621-4000
 Salvation Army.....829-9476
 Safe Harbor Mission.....829-7399
 TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301
 Unemployment comp/job service.....827-6237
 Western Ave. Community Center.....829-4807
 Youth Build.....827-7507

Pick up a copy

Copies of the *Post Amerikan* are now available for free at the following locations:

Bloomington

AIDS Task Force, 313 N. Main
 About Books, 221 E. Front
 Barnes & Noble, Veterans & Rt. 9
 Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive
 Burwells, 908 N. Main
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main
 Crazy Planet Kitchen, 414 N. Main
 Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main
 Heartland Community College, Raab Rd.
 Lizards Lounge, 612 N. Main
 Shockwaves, 415 N. Main
 To Your Health, 1214 N. Towanda, #2
 Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main

Normal

Acme Comics, 115 W. North
 Babbitt's Books, 104 W. North
 Campus Town, 121 W. North
 Centennial Hall, ISU
 Coffeehouse, 14 E. Beaufort
 Deadpan Alley Records, 107 W. North
 Ecology Action Center, 208 W. College
 Mother Murphy's, 111 W. North
 Movie Fan, 202C W. North
 Normal Public Library, 206 W. College
 North Street Cafe, 205 W. North
 Stevenson Hall, ISU
 University Galleries, ISU

Peoria

Bicycle Bus
 Illinois Central College

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City/State/Zip _____

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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.); or submit via e-mail at: pamerikanusa@netscape.net



Community News

ACHR board members meet with Rep. Brady

Board members of the Advocacy Council for Human Rights met March 26 with Rep. Dan Brady to urge his support for HB101, which would add sexual orientation to the state's human rights act.

The legislation would bar discrimination based on sexual orientation in the areas of housing, employment, public accommodations, and credit transactions. The bill could come up for a vote in the house at any time.

Brady, a freshman legislator whose 88th district encompasses most of Bloomington/Normal, professed that he was not very familiar with the bill but that he had gotten phone calls from constituents on both sides of the issue. He added that at the moment he had not taken a position on the legislation.

However, he did voice concern about legislating based on preference and overburdening our state with laws. Jyl Josephson from Bloomington/Normal PFLAG pointed out that this legislation was not favoring any one group over another and that the bill would provide equal, not preferential, treatment.

Those who attended the meeting agreed that Rep. Brady needs to hear from his constituents and get more information on this issue. The Advocacy Council urges all supporters to contact Rep. Brady immediately:

88th District (most of Bloomington/Normal)
-Dan Brady's local phone number is 827-8303
-Dan Brady's Springfield number is 217-782-1118

87th District (eastern edge of Bloomington)
-Dan Rutherford's local phone number is 815-842-3632
-Dan Rutherford's Springfield number is 217-782-7776

-Note: Dan Rutherford has voted for this legislation in the past, so if you call his office thank him for doing this and urge him to do so again.

--from The Rainbow Connection

ACHR needs your help!

As part of our support of Connections Community Center the Advocacy Council maintains one half of the center's window displays. Our display has not been changed for almost a year and we are in need of fresh ideas and people with a flair for decorating!

If you have ideas for the window display or would like to help with the new display e-mail us at achr@mailcity.com or call us at 309-830-2521.

--from The Rainbow Connection

Database of gay-supportive attorneys in central Illinois created

In the weeks following the local presentation by Lambda Legal Defense attorney Heather Sawyer the Advocacy Council for Human Rights has heard from three members of our community looking for help with custody and adoption cases. These requests for help are not new - from time to time we have received requests for legal referrals for tasks ranging from the drafting of wills to representation in custody battles.

As a result the Advocacy Council, in cooperation with Lambda Legal Defense, has created a database of central Illinois attorneys who have expressed a willingness to work on cases with gays, lesbians and bisexual and/or who have experience working on these types of cases. So far we have compiled a list that includes attorneys from Bloomington/Normal, Champaign/Urbana, and Peoria, and we hope to soon expand this database to include attorneys from Springfield and Decatur.

The attorneys in the database have agreed to let us give their names as we receive requests for referral. If you are in need of a gay-friendly attorney or if you would like to recommend an attorney to be added to our database, please contact us by phone (309-830-2521) or by e-mail (achr@mailcity.com).

--from The Rainbow Connection

Habitat seeks skilled help

Why not put your skills to good use this summer volunteering for Habitat for Humanity of McLean County? The local affiliate is looking for trades members to serve as project directors and crew leaders.

Each of the five houses planned for this summer needs one project director--or two co-directors--to coordinate the house build from start to finish. Duties include working with Project Coordinator Bill Waller on the day-to-day construction of the house and with Construction Manager Randy Timm to obtain supplies and arrange for sub-contractors. The project director plans the work from week to week, decides how many people are needed each Saturday, makes certain the materials are delivered and supervises the volunteer crews.

On Saturday mornings, at least two crew leaders are needed to supervise the less experienced volunteers. A crew leader must be experienced in the task at hand for the day, such as framing, wrapping, siding, roofing, insulating, installing windows and doors, drywalling, trimming and installing cabinets. Crew leaders may volunteer for one or more Saturday mornings.

To obtain more information or to volunteer for one of these important jobs, call the Habitat office at 827-3931.

--from Livingston & McLean Counties Union News



The Illinois Theatre Consortium's "Masks and Stories"

The Illinois Theatre Consortium's Seedling Theatre will offer "Masks and Stories: A Multi-arts Storymaking Workshop" that will combine art, drama, music and dance to tell stories based on tales and legends that represent McLean County's ethnic diversity. Available to students in the 4th to 12th grades, the sessions will meet 8:30 am - 12:30 pm on the following schedule: June 11-15 = High Schoolers; June 18-22 = 7 & 8 graders; June 25-29 = 4th-6th graders. During the week of July 2, 3, 5, and 6 all students will come together to assemble a final showing of their work, which will occur early evening on July 6, for family and friends. The Workshop fee, which includes all materials, is \$45.00. (A few need-based scholarships are available.) For registration forms call Jonel Langenfeld-Rial at (309) 438-8949.

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DJ

The Bistro

Monday...\$1 Jagermeister
Tuesday...\$1²⁵ Domestic Beer
Wednesday...\$2 Long Island Ice Tea

Hours: Monday - Thursday 4 pm - 1 am
Friday 4 pm - 2 am • Saturday 8 pm - 2 am
Sunday 6 pm - 1 am

316 N. Main Street • Bloomington • 309.829.2278



Community News cont.

Society for Democratic and Independent voters created

The recently-formed Stevenson Society is an organization of people with common beliefs that are frequently similar to those held by the Democratic Party. The purpose of this organization is:

- To provide social, educational, and informational networking for Democrat and Independent kindred spirits;
- To provide a conceptual foundation and educational forum for strengthening political aspirations and visibility of Democrats and Independents;
- To provide opportunities to discuss and analyze current issues;
- To develop the ability to listen to, participate in, analyze, and understand political discourse;
- To encourage people to vote and to stand as community candidates;
- To encourage members to be active in supporting candidates;
- To encourage diversity in members' backgrounds and commonality in purpose.

The group plans to hold monthly meetings at least two special events a year. Dues for the organization range from \$5 for students (ID required) to \$500 for sustaining members. A person who joins in this calendar year will be considered a charter member of the organization.

For more information about the society, call 309-827-6384 or send an e-mail to Stevenson Society@aol.com.

--Central Illinois Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union Spring 2001 Newsletter

Volunteers needed for African-American Outreach for HIV/AIDS Prevention Education

For three years the Committee has been raising awareness of HIV and AIDS in McLean County's African-American community, informing people how to avoid infection, and training themselves and others.

African-American women and men have the highest rates of HIV infection in the nation. HIV/AIDS is the #1 killer of African-Americans in the U.S. in the age group 25-44, surpassing deaths from prostate cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. This does not have to be the case, for HIV infection is preventable with education and changes in attitude and behavior.

The Committee needs volunteers to strategize, plan, become peer educators, and raise awareness in their communities. It's a team effort: no pay, but you get to do important and interesting work with interesting people.

If you would be interested in serving on the Outreach Committee, contact Dora Doyle, Chairperson, at e-mail: d56baker@msn.com or Bob Sutherland, Secretary, at (309) 452-4831. Additional information will be sent to you. If you would like to work with the religious, or church, community on raising awareness, contact Jennifer Palmer at (309) 663-9848.

Richard Thomas--A First Amendment fighter

Two years ago Richard Thomas wrote a letter to the editor of the *Gardner Chronicle*, a Livingston County newspaper: His letter opposed the candidacy of Richard Hileman for the village board of Gardener. Thomas is a welder at the Caterpillar plant in Joliet and is a member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. Hileman is a long-time high-ranking official of the same union.

In his letter Thomas sharply criticized Hileman for supporting an agreement that sold out younger workers by significantly reducing wages and benefits for them, and Thomas argued that Hileman, therefore, should not be elected to public office.

Thomas' letter contained strong language. For example, "Hileman wholeheartedly endorsed a Pearl Harbor-like attack on the American Dream" and "Hileman supported the biggest bag over the head-kick in the economic crotch ever perpetrated from one generation to the next."

Hileman demanded a written, public apology from Thomas and filed a defamation claim against him, seeking \$100,000 in damages. Thomas hired attorney Roger Gomien, a long time ACLU member, to defend him. Gomien filed a motion to dismiss Hileman's complaint on the basis that Thomas had engaged in speech protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Thomas had expressed his opinion concerning a public figure and that is protected, regardless of how derogatory his statements.

Volunteers needed for HIV/AIDS Prevention Education

For three years the Committee has been raising awareness of HIV/AIDS in the student population (middle school thru college), informing people how to avoid infection, and training students to educate themselves and others.

Half the HIV infections in the U.S. occur in people under 25 years of age. This does not have to be the case.

The Committee needs student volunteers to strategize, plan, become peer educators, and raise awareness in their schools. It's a team effort: no pay, but you get to do important and interesting work with interesting people. Currently we have student members from Normal Community High School, U-High, and Illinois State University. We need members from Normal Community West High School and Bloomington High School.

If you would be interested in serving on the Outreach Committee, contact David Foster (U-High), the current Chair, at (309) 862-1844 or Bob Sutherland, Secretary, at (309) 452-4831. Additional information will be sent to you.

Livingston County Circuit Judge Harold Frobish agreed and dismissed the claim. Hileman appealed. On December 5, 2000, the Fourth District Appellate Court affirmed the lower court decision.

So Thomas' freedom of speech has been vindicated, but he has paid a heavy price in legal expenses his family could ill afford, as well as the stress of facing Hileman's huge claim for damages.

Thomas spoke about his case with some members of the steering committee of this ACLU chapter last September and later met with the full committee. He turned to the ACLU because his case concerned the civil liberties values ACLU is committed to. He hoped for assistance from the ACLU legal staff in Chicago. We wrote a summary of his situation and sent it to Mary Dixon, the Illinois ACLU staff person who is the liaison with local chapters. She brought the matter to the attention of staff attorney Barbara O'Toole, who specializes in First Amendment cases. ACLU did not represent Thomas in court but did consult with Thomas' attorney as he prepared his appellate brief.

Thomas is not alone in being subjected to this sort of action by parties, including large corporations with deep pockets, who seek to intimidate those who would express their opinions. ACLU is aware of the practice and would like to fashion an effective remedy for its targets.

In the meantime, despite the expense and the stress Richard Thomas is not intimidated and his passion for freedom of expression is as strong as ever. He and others like him are First Amendment heroes, who help preserve the liberties of all of us.

--Central Illinois Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union Spring 2001 Newsletter

Wheels to Work

Wheels to Work is a community-based effort to provide affordable transportation evenings and on weekends when public transportation is not available. emphasis is placed in providing round-trip transportation to places of employment and child care facilities as well as providing access to transportation for individuals with disabilities.

At a cost of \$1.00 per ride, the service is provided by YWCA of McLean County. Their service hours are 6:00 PM to Midnight Monday-Saturday, and 6:00 AM to Midnight on Sunday. For a reservation or more information, contact the YWCA at 454-7676.

--from *Life-Lines*



Letters to the editor

To the Editor:

I went to a Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities Conference entitled GET CONNECTED.

One workshop was on disability rights: "Olmstead, Garrett and Other Supreme Court Decisions: What Lies Ahead." Basically it only takes one voice to ask a question, "Why...?" or "Why not...?" Change is possible; my very being is witness to the fact in the people I encounter as my life unfolds each passing day, right now from a wheelchair. This workshop was presented by Barry Taylor, Legal Advocacy Director of Equip for Equality in Chicago. He's very knowledgeable.

Another session dealt with advocacy skills: "New Freedom Initiatives: Working with the New Administration." Andy Imparato, President and CEO of the American Association of People with Disabilities. He was also inspiring. President Bush seems to be listening, but will he sign an executive order to implement Olmstead within 30 days?

The ADA Notification Act was mentioned and Mr. Imparato suggested I write Senator Dick Durbin and meet with him. Senator Durbin presently does not see a problem with waiting 90 more days with each ADA violation. ADA is over 10 years old. How will 90 more days correct abuses?

The Illinois Assistive Technology Project held a vendors' fair. Clear-View Products from Optelec showed that people can read a magazine page after page without adjusting the height of the machine. It was enlarged in black and white or color. It can even be used by diabetics to check if there's an air bubble in their syringe.

Body Sense products demonstrated herbal hot or cold packs for sore muscles. You can be in "heaven" the very next minute!

The Wrist Wizard was exhibited as assisting those with carpal tunnel problems.

Door prizes and a computer were given away. Letters were written to Governor Ryan expressing the need for disability issues to be included in the budget. I focused on increasing salaries for personal assistants and accessible transportation.

My stipend came through the Illinois Early Childhood Intervention Clearinghouse. Funds have been allocated so check out the possibilities. Your brain will thank you for it!

For a presentation, call me at 828-8114 or LIFE CIL, 663-5433.

Rosemarie Moew Scarbeary

To The Editor,

I have a son who's been diagnosed borderline mentally retarded, bi-polar, alcohol dependency impulsive B.D. His rap sheet goes back to his teens with charges such as resisting arrest, criminal damage, a couple of aggravated batteries which were thrown out two times, plus several other charges which do not include rape or murder.

He got married in 1997. I felt he'd gotten a help mate. Instead his wife had more problems than he; she alleged that he beat her up. She was on probation for filing false police reports. She took a notarized letter to the state's attorney admitting she had lied but at his trial none of this was ever admitted. Not to mention the same public defender who represented her represented him.

Anyway, hein Jan. 2001 he was released. He had an episode in which I received a call from a young couple in a downtown apartment building wanting to know if I knew a Randy Reecer. I said yes. They asked if I could come pick him up as he was inebriated and had frightened a senior citizen and they didn't want him to end up in jail. On my way home he was pounding his fists on my dash. Once I got him to my house he was still out of control. He called and talked to crisis team. Angie wanted to know if I needed the police. I said no. I thought he'd calm down. He didn't, so I did call and asked he be taken to Bro Menn. I didn't want him to be arrested. Anyway, he kept putting his hands in his pockets, therefore, they charged him with resisting! Not much resisting according to Webster's.

Anyway, my point is this: our fine state's attorney wants to give him 3 months in the county or now 2 weeks. Do they not care about what they do in that court house? Our jails and prisons are not warehouses for the mentally ill. Perhaps all of our states attorneys, judges and public defenders need to join N.A.M.I. (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill). To lock him up he receives SSI and SSD (\$409 due to overpayments). His rent is \$385 as he can't hold a job. If they lock him up again SSI will take more of his SSI for more over payments and he'll be back at our shelters! Our

community claims they're concerned about our homelessness, but are we? Half the homeless are in the same situation as my son. They're on limited income and end up in jail or back on the streets with no where to go so they get in trouble. They can't get housing because of their legal status. I think McLean County courts need mental health courts here as they have upstate as an alternative to jail. Haven't we had enough publicity over another mentally ill person: Shannon Smith?

It seems to me we should be better educated in our community. My son is currently attending C.H.S., taking his meds and doing better. To lock him up again would be detrimental.

Cordially,

Sue Spivey



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The Poetry Page

Requiem for a Ramone

They brought the gift of punk
to stagnant rock and roll
he stood up front and dared us
to re-invent our soul

Little round glasses
kept the hair out of his eyes
tall and gawky, singing songs
like a man lobotomized

Black leather jacket
over a dirty white t-shirt
torn up blue jeans
and worn out sneakers

Their music spoke to me
of exuberance and youth
that fun is where you find it
and never mind the truth

Gabba Gabba Hey
Goodbye Joey
Goodbye Joey
Gabba Gabba Hey

--Peter Elvidge

Sherrin's Poem

I'm still asleep. I don't know
if I will ever awake.
It would help if I could see.

--David Hall

Frank

Frank with the
Frizzy hair, pock-
mark face, an country
twang, who always
road his bike in
the rain, he past
around uh letter
he got from uh friend
in jail, she said what
she heard on the inside,
that these two guys
she knows was smoking
crack in this house
with some white boy,
well the white boy
started gaggin' an
coughin' and havin'
uh seizure, so
they took him outside,
an drug him into an
alley in the freezing
rain, they went back
inside ta smoke some more,
an that white boy died,
all they had ta do was
call 9-1-1 for
an ambulance, they
could've saved his
life, she said in
parentheses,
(God have mercy
on their souls if
this is so), cause
I know one of 'em,
and if they did that
they some cold mother
fuckers, she went
on ta say, I done
learnt my lesson, it
could be raining rocks
outside, I would keep
my fat ass inside,
P.S., Frank, Om so
broke, please send
mesomemoney.

--John Firefly

IT WAS A NIGHT OF BALANCE

ya gotta know how to pet the kitty
oh what a pitty
cause you find me all alone
yeat++ you knew it was comin
alonest++ aaaaahhhhhhhhh
blah blah blah
the most overused word
in poetry
you don't like that stuff
but you love that stuff
drowning descending
hemispherically collapsing
whahhhhhhh
feel sorry for you love
get out the ice cream
or smoke some more weed
here we go imma do the
dirty deed
Love
oh shit now he done said it
cleche' touche'
won't you turn the other
weak shit
make me wanna jack & spit
just ta get tha satisfaction
over this word abstraction
sub-slide it
over to the other side
now where the fuck you at
unsecured in your delusion
well you sure as hell
ain't by yourself
at mile marker zero
seams i come back to here
again & a friend
stays with me in the race
tinkle twinkle
little cutie as i piss away
the pass right by
hey watcha rightin there sailor
she speaks his mind says
anyway
can your attention cspan handle
more than quick little bytes
to get back to your drinkin
thinkin thoughts you'd
feel better
then again maybe NEVER
oh there he goes gettin negative
now the dealin's done
so turn away from afraid
maybe some good shit'll
happen only one love way
to find out
just follow the handy big sign
made by Onet4 All 7 days
& ways of the masses traffic
kiss off of the brush off

to keep me stoned dumb
ditty dumb how'd she get them
pants on
'cause now a days most girls 'em
dressin like a slut is that a
slut in your mind
whatcha really wanna find
& what's pushed there by the media
graffiti-ad all over the landscape
escape dirty tricks by the pricks
see the show of beauty
as an honor to the eyes feeling
hearts of the pure
animal yes we all be
born of the human limb of the tree
yea now things are movin
some call it evolution
big cycle supreme soul-you-a-ton
in a featherweight bout
sold you a live pay-per-credit
advance to the next tech-no-logical
step left write left over from the
previously broadcast made
for prime time revolution
for plateaus of extasy now oversteppin
the heron epidemic at least
in the clubs
scene they lookin for help too
the higher level of the free
isn't reached by a \$25 payment
or nickles & dimes 8 ballin
the gutter pocket skyrocket
straight to the void
of con-fusion? but if there's
confusion there is somethin &
somethin is not void
unless your credit's overdrawn
yea then you're fuct
protection of the selection
chosen by your mass mailing
or "your approved"
as a faceless money laundrymat
of the wanna be rich &
scheming in action
guarenteed blockbuster of the
hip-hot-cool-now-gotta
invest in the up & down of the bullet
shisting of the paper flow to the beat
'chall on & ont' it just don't stop
till the break of right wing players
now listen close to this rhyme
gonna get right up
till way past time
it's like that yall
it's like that yall
to the beat of
infinity†

--matt erickson

Nothing against Jews. . . seriously.

There once was a young man who was in such a stew
He had so many problems he didn't know what to do
He talked to friends from Arkansas to Catmandu
None could help him with his stew
He went to India to consult a guru
Who told him that he should become a Jew
So he converted to Judaism and bled to death during the
circumcision.

--David Hall

**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:
pamerikanusa@netscape.net

We have the right to reject any poem.



Clover and Dandelions

I love the color of
dandelions
and fields of clover
remind
Me
of days when I was young
Carefully
I strung
White flowers
to form a necklace
And bouquets of yellow
we did select

To bring home
to Mother
With Love
she did smother
Us
for our beautiful gesture
No money
can measure
The joy of these
simple flowers
But now
they do shower
Pesticides
to kill these "weeds"
These once
"Imagination growing seeds"
Are disappearing
to green lawns
The simplicity
is gone
Of Mother Nature
we try to take
What the Earth
does make
So all will look
uniform
But this constant
storm
Of chemicals
takes its toll
Into our waters
it does roll

As frogs swim
with five legs
And the River
she begs

Us to stop poisoning
her tenants
Doesn't seem
to make much sense

To kill these
childhood joys
'Cause the environment
it destroys
And as I sit in this park
I find
The last signs of
clover and dandelions

Smiling at me
with their memories
Mom's glowing face
I can see
As a white necklace
I donned
And a bouquet of dandelions
it won
Her Heart
on a Summer Day
Before "lawn care"
came our way

--Lin "Frog" Simmons

"without purpose" in life

Deep inside there is a voice that cries out for freedom, but the cry is ignored. And now pain wars with peace. So you run from the reality of your hidden wound, you search for comfort, but as you search you end up deeper in the pain you run from. Now tears form in the corner of your eyes, the mirror shows you you're lost, and now you shout and cry with moaning words of self pity. That's without love, how much more would you be in pain without purpose in life.

--Israel Jimenez

Desperate Desire

The burning fire
Of desperate desire
Longs for the sight of her.
This lake of desperation drowning me
Has begun a new life to see.
And I am blinded by beauty.
Decrepit self-destruction distances
Itself with repeated instances
Of what I believe to be love.
Ah! At one time I longed for
The love I knew before.
The love of a muse.
Passionately I searched for the compassion
Of an inspiration that had gone.
Faded in glory
Is the desperate story
Of a poisonous love.
Life the same
Now renewed by flame
All for her side by mine.
Night begins the feelings again
And every desperate fall I fall for her.
Brought to life, the blood of a stain,
In each embodiment life will occur.
Death is no longer death,
Nor is it anymore considered a gift.

--Rick Reliford

The last night of writers block

There has to be a poet in there
somewhere
tonight
After reading all that hi-fi stuff
you should be doing
all right
Never mind about those accidents --
how the words misled your mind
The poet in there
somewhere
would find his way in time. . .

Then the bricks start to fall-
Down come hinder wall!
Poet reunites with pen!
Prose, song, poetry again!

--David Hall

Deep down inside the heart

The door is open, out walks a strong, happy,
normal spirit of love. Joy speaks of peace.
Passion dances with generosity in the streets of
kind water. Satisfied by warm embrace. . .
laughing in a cloud of Angels. "Set free" liberty
sings. Life is eternal and good to the righteous.

The door is closed, in stays a prideful,
hateful, deformed spirit of war. Mistakeful
speaks of frustration. Regret dances with
selfishness in the streets of cruel water.
Lacking in cold embrace. Crying in a cloud of
demons. . . "Closed In" captivity sings. Death
is eternal and painful to the unrighteous.

Deep down inside the heart there is
a door that can lead to life or death. . .
Learn to open your heart to life
and close out every darkness. . .

--Israel Jimenez

Rape Crisis Center

of McLean County

We're a non-profit volunteer group whose main purpose is to offer assistance and support to victims of sexual assault and their friends and families.

Female and male volunteers answer your calls and are available for crisis assistance, information and speaking engagements. You may request to speak on y with female volunteers.

If you want to talk to one of us
Call PATH 827-4005
and ask for the
RAPE CRISIS CENTER



This is Not News: Journal entries from the Summit

On April 20-22, 2001, Quebec City played host to the Summit of the Americas, a meeting attended by 34 heads of state from all of North and South America. The purpose of the summit? Expanding NAFTA to encompass all the nations on the two continents in a proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas [FTAA]. The FTAA talks were to be held in the colonial-era fortress at the heart of the provincial capital, and three square miles of the city center were to be cordoned off by a ten-foot-tall perimeter fence in an effort to avert "another Seattle"—i.e. disruptions in business-as-usual by crowds of demonstrators against the ravages of so-called "Free Trade."

The demonstrators arrived in Quebec by the tens of thousands from all over the continent. Their peaceable actions in the streets of Quebec City were met with extreme force: 6,500 riot police, tear gas, rubber bullets. An estimated 100 million dollars was spent by the Canadian government to "protect" the summit from public dissent. Hundreds of peaceful demonstrators were arrested. Entire neighborhoods were affected by two days of incessant deployment of chemical weapons, including CS and CN gas.

A group of sixteen people from central Illinois attended the weekend of demonstrations, acting both as participants and as independent journalists. Urbana folk singer, songwriter, and Independent Media Center journalist Paul Kotheimer, files this personal account as a report-back from the streets of Quebec City.

Dear future, dear friends:

Not knowing whom to address, but needing to write TO some reader, I'll tell you what I saw and felt in Quebec City, and on the way there, and now that we're home.

Organizing ourselves

Interest grew and grew. Momentum built up and up. The feeling was that we were all committed to this, as a challenge, as a necessity, as an act of free speech and conscience. At first there were a handful of us, meeting at Sarah and Sascha's apartment, scouring the websites, compiling lists and lists of lists, groping for camaraderie, affinity, a plan from what little we could gather of this Citadel city and of the activist network which we KNEW was out there, but couldn't quite co-ordinate with.

Then there were eight of us going. Then thirteen. Finally, sixteen altogether—and the first carload that pulled out from Urbana probably wasn't even sure exactly who was in the other two cars—very last-minute—conviction, impulse, diving in.

We found a rhythm for working together. We raised the funds we needed. We built on the experiences of N30/Seattle and A16/DC, and on the resources and alliances we've been building here in town since the start of this—whatever THIS is. It felt like we might just know what we're doing, this time.

Having heard that activists were being turned away at crossings into Canada, we got obsessed with the border.. Could we bring the tools we needed to express ourselves—placards, puppets, scripts—or would our artwork bar our travel across borders? Would a song-book or a map or a haircut or a particular car or a particular bumper sticker seem too subversive, too

suspect? Would we make it across? Should we be prepared to walk across the border through the Mohawk reservation in upstate New York? Would we be questioned, targeted, singled out, detained? Would they know? Could we lie to border guards, plausibly and with impunity?

The drive

As it turned out, we crossed the border without incident. Sarah, Sehvilla, Cindy, and I rehearsed all the way through Michigan for this 30-second interview—trying to adopt in full the mindset of a normal, Christian family and friends from church on our way to a 40th birthday party in Toronto. Is this how pervasive surveillance has become, I wondered, that anything outside the kind of "normal" we were trying to imagine ourselves into would forfeit its rights at an international border? Is this kind of psychological control that's required to keep goods flowing freely around this proposed "Free Trade Area?"

The border guard at Sarnia, Ontario, gave us a smile. She was in her early twenties or so. It was after one in the morning. We performed our parts and stayed pretty well in character. Whether the guard suspected that we might be anything other than what we purported seemed remote, irrelevant. We were a kilometer or two into Ontario before we realized that THAT was finally finished, and we cheered.

Toronto was great hospitality and fitful sleep. The second evening's drive was exhaustion upon exhaustion. We arrived in Quebec City just before sunrise for three hours' sleep before heading out to get our bearings and join the CLAC march to the perimeter.

In Quebec for A20

The first day, I was sleep-deprived to the point of tears, borderline psychotic—it felt like--broken-spirited and in need of care, ALREADY. I was very afraid of not being able to do what I'd come to do. Aloof from the group. Trying my hardest not to make a scene or say something really destructive to our team-work.

The convergence at Universite Laval was uplifting, invigorating. Drums, banners, megaphones, singers, chants, face painting. A carnival in the streets, against the macroeconomy of oppression. A dozen retired folks from Montreal had come to sing from a mimeo sheet, in French, "Solidarity, My Brothers and Sisters" (to the same marching tune we know as "Glory Glory Hallelujah"/"Solidarity Forever"). I imagined they had been doing this for forty years together. A thousand drummers with five-gallon plastic buckets. Scores of independent media-makers. Dozens of Radical Cheerleaders. Announcements in French, then English, then Spanish. Clowns. Super-heroes. A Revolutionary Klezmer Band.

I got to speak with medics who had trained for weeks for this event. I got to sing my "Radical Cheerleader" and "FrankenFood Toxology" lyrics for fellow-marchers. I got to interview face-painters and record drummers and singers. I spoke with independent journalists and mainstream press, and I felt like I said what I'd wanted to say. I was indymedia and a protest singer and an ordinary citizen speaking my mind—the roles I had said I wanted to play. That part was satisfying.

But now, more questions come: is there a better way to express what we want, what we propose INSTEAD of this system of racist neo-colonialism, a dictatorship of faceless bureaucrats, backed by interminable violence? Is there a way to organize ourselves such that, when we amass in the streets, we're not strangers? Is there a way to form affinity groups across the continent, across cultural divides, across generations?

None of these questions is meant to imply that I'm dissatisfied with the solidarity of direct-action mass demonstrations against global capital. It's just that I don't want to feel lonely in Urbana before I go, or alone with my guitar when I'm there, or like—in some way or another—we've come home empty-handed.

Teargas democracy

I was three intersections back from the perimeter when the teargas clouds started rising. The shock of it, to the crowds on the sidewalks at de Sallebury and Rene Levesque, was palpable: the fact that it was a sunny Friday afternoon and a parade had just gone by; the fact that locals were happily shopping, lunching, enjoying the day, when all of a sudden chemical warfare was declared on their neighborhood; the fact that 3 square kilometers of the provincial capital had been walled off, and suddenly people were forced to ask "Why is this happening?" and remember that the confrontation was for real.

When a smoking canister of gas bounces onto the sidewalk, hundreds of yards from the security perimeter, in front of a small boutique, with two stories of apartments above, and residents sitting idly by on the stoop, what changes?

The corner where the Shell gas station had been vandalized, some three or four intersections west of the perimeter at Rene Levesque, turned out to be a good vantage point from which to observe—It was just far enough away not to be cordoned off by cops; there were lots of shops which were determined to carry on with business as usual; there was almost no automobile traffic. Our group, losing track of each other in the chaos, found each other there, mostly by accident. We could see the curtain of gas rising to the east—changing direction, changing opacity, harsh, ominous.

Maybe a half-hour or so after the gassings became noticeable at this intersection, the first batch of "front line" direct action demonstrators passed us as they fell back. A small group of black-bloc retreated past us, along with the now-famous teddy bear catapult which prompted the arrest of Jaggi Singh. They received a round of applause. When an armored truck with a water cannon mounted on it barreled past us, westbound down Rene Levesque, I remember feeling sick and angry and powerless and afraid and indignant.

I yelled fuck you fuck you as loud as I could. I don't know why.

And then, I was spent, and I needed sleep, and Anora took care of me. We half-huddled in a doorway along the sidestreets and pretended we were on vacation in Indiana—the fantasy was not delirium but rather a conscious escapism, a much-needed coping mechanism. I fell asleep, fast asleep, right there on the sidewalk.



of the Americas protests

I don't want to write about the sleep-deprivation teargas-inhalation dehydration sunstroke madness I felt that evening, except to say that inside of it there was a kind of clarity in which I knew I just needed to sleep and sleep and then I'd wake up okay. The rest was bad, really bad, and I wondered how much trauma, collectively, we have to go through in order to actualize the desirable change we envision, or at least avert the nightmare century that capitalism has planned.

Back at the gymnasium where we were staying, along with hundreds of fellow-activists from who-knows-where, crashed on the floor around the boxing ring, a punk band was rehearsing just downstairs while we were trying to get to sleep. I pulled Anora's sleeping bag over my head and sobbed and sobbed like fifth grade homesick at Camp Ondessonk, but worse.

A21 more of the same?

Better prepped, better oriented, and much better rested, I started out on the second day in Quebec City. Sarah, Sascha, Jay, Anora, and I went to find a breakfast spot in the Limouilou neighborhood. We found good hospitality, a feeling of being welcomed--This neighborhood of 3-flats and small shops, populated with ordinary folks, was on our side.

The five of us drove across town to the Cote D'Abraham, where a gathering of tens of thousands was amassing just west of the Museum. This march contained a far greater percentage of Quebecois than the Friday CLAC convergence--It was tough to find English speakers outside our own group, at times. Also, Saturday saw a wider variety of folks: retirees, parents out with their kids, highschoolers in bunches, as well as the usual post-punk twentysomethings from the CLAC march.

We all got a kick out of a lone demonstrator suited up in yellow jumpsuit, red wig, striped stockings, and the golden arches logo to play the role of "Ronald McCapitalism." He told us he chose this outfit to bring a message of opposition specifically to young kids.

The five of us decided to move east on Lavesque and join demonstrators in the "Yellow Zone." This meant marching past the vandalized Shell gasstation and past the de Sallebury intersection toward the perimeter--the same territory we had covered the day before.

Here are impressions of those hours, and of getting gassed the first time on Saturday afternoon:

Losing track of one another, when we were just a few yards apart. Lines of riot cops appearing on the crest of a hill. A woman with bright eyes and bass drum breaking the eerie silence with a muffled beat. The sour sting in the eyes. Bloodshot, haunted looks all around. Patience, insistence, courage on the part of everyone who remained in the streets. Kids seated in a circle. Hearing "Don't run. Don't panic," from voices you couldn't locate in the crowd. Fear for my friends. Hoping we'd all find each other again under the green sign by the parking garage, downhill and downwind of the gas, a few yards away and safe after the chaos. Anora's there and we clasp each other. Someone I've never met, someone I never saw, douses my

eyes with "Seattle Solution" from a squeeze bottle. A mound of snow still standing on the shady side of a brownstone--A handful feels good on the neck, the top of the head, on the eyes--on the eyes, again.

Retreating. Doubling back down the sidestreet. Trying to keep hacking it and keep the numbers up, keep the intersection for us protesters. Feeling the morbid curiosity of it--wondering what will there be to see next. And the blind adventurism, wanting to be there and be able to say you were there. Trying, simultaneously, to bear in mind the real motivations: clean air, clean water, free speech and conscience, peaceable assembly, jobs with dignity and decent wages, non-violence, equitable distribution of resources, a livable planet--a desirable society...

Here's a story for the second round of gassing we got:

Jay with videocam. Anora with photo camera. Me with my guitar in a gigbag on my back. All of us in our vinegar-soaked bandannas. A moment of calm, no drumming, no chanting, for an interview with a street kid whose hand had been hit by a gas canister shard. We're all standing on the median strip. The vagabond kid is telling his story, showing us his bandage, goofing for the camera in choppy English. Now, gas is floating towards us and we all try to backpedal away from the cloud. Jay's letting the camcorder roll. The street kid hunches down, melts away. People are scattering in slow motion, silently. A bullhorn is calling out tinnily, "Don't run. Walk, please. Marchez," but we can't tell from where.

Anora hesitates, paces forward a ways--three steps, four steps, maybe--to get one last photo. A canister is arcing towards us like a softball--fifty, sixty feet in the air. For a few seconds, Jay and I can see it's headed straight at Anora. We're trying to judge how short of her, how far to the left, it might hit. I'm calling out, begging Anora to back up, back up, back up, back up! The gas lands two yards from her left shoe.

The panic is like almost drowning. A lungful of CN gas is like shrapnel in the trachea. You wish you could only ever exhale. You wish you could put your head above it, fly up to get a real breath. It nauseates you. You wonder whether you'll choke on your own vomit as you're backstriding. You're head goes hazy and you think about blacking out and you can't take another shallow, burning breath. Anora is yelling, Medic! Medic! when I say I'm going to hit the pavement. But then I'm calmer. She locks arms with me at the elbow, and it's just a matter of a dozen more steps until the air is breathable.

The Geneva Accords of 1969 declare the use of this stuff a war crime. I'm punch-drunk and I shout out, "Hoo! They served that one up extra spicy, now, didn't they?" Pretending to be a thrillseeker, talking shit like I'd go back for more just for kicks--a cartoon character voice in my head to shake the fear off with.

...It wasn't funny.

A22 a walk around the wall

Fallout from all the gassing had settled in with the street dust all around downtown. When the wind kicked up, everybody would sneeze and get teary-eyed. On the inside of the perimeter, the hotels had to install huge wind-machines on the sides of the buildings to keep the residue out of the suites.

I walked around the wall, into St. Jean-Baptiste, past the street musicians and the trendy nightclubs with the plateglass removed, past a lone white rosary protecting a basement-level windowpane near a little Lebanese restaurant, through the alleyways where one side of a courtyard was inside the perimeter, the other outside, down through the pristine tourist shopping court, where a fellow demonstrator happened to strike up a conversation with a Summit delegate from the Dominican Republic. The delegate, after a half-minute of chat and without prompting, handed the protester a copy of confidential documents from the Summit. It was a strange moment.

Heading back, I chanced across what has become my favorite part of the perimeter wall--a section which had been decorated by the children of the St. Jean-Baptiste neighborhood. I decided that the thing I wanted was a record of the security perimeter--a compendium of all its graffiti--as a 2 1/2 mile long collaborative newspoem, a cultural record of this event--before Quebec tears it down and pulverizes it into road gravel, or whatever.

Walking along the perimeter from the northeast side around to Battlefield Park, where the perimeter disappeared out of sight along a cliff facing the St. Lawrence Seaway, I managed to get a good portion of the perimeter graffiti down on paper. Included are photocopies of some of my notepad sheets from that project. For a complete listing of graffiti, please see NewsPoetry.com's entry for April 28, 2001.

Home now

We've been back almost a month and the trip still seems vivid. We need more support, more resources to make this sustainable. We need a rodeo clown bloc, whose job it is to neutralize canisters of teargas by means of fifty gallon buckets of whatever solution will work. sehvilla will invent the formula for the best way to neutralize a poison gas attack by cops. We will keep honing our skills in the streets of odd cities. I fantasize about being useful when direct action against global capital comes to Chicago, a city where I know almost every street. I want to know every IMC-sta and every radical folksongwriter in the world. I want to feel the solidarity.

I'll keep working, I guess.

lovepaulkotheimer:)

[For a text of Kotheimer's compendium of Perimeter Graffiti from the "wall of Shame" around Quebec City, see <www.newspoetry.com/2001/0428.html>.

For more articles by Paul Kotheimer and other members of the Urbana Independent Media Center's News Collective, go to <<http://urbana.indymedia.org>>



Animal abuse and domestic violence



Many people find it difficult to talk about domestic violence, but there are few that have not been touched by family violence in some way. We may have had a next door neighbor that we heard screaming for help in the middle of the night, or a co-worker with a bruise around her eye, that was visible even with carefully applied make-up. There are also many of us that

have had a close friend or family member that has been involved in an abusive relationship, and we may not have known what to do to help them. We may not have understood why they stayed in such a relationship. Many of us have been involved in an abusive relationship ourselves. The point is that domestic violence affects everyone in our society, however, one victim of domestic abuse that cannot speak out for help and is often overlooked are companion animals.

It is common for an abusive family member to use a family pet as another tool to manipulate and abuse their victim. An abuser often socially isolates their victim from close friends and family members to control them. A family pet may serve as the victims' only close emotional support system, and as many of us know the bond between humans and animals can be tremendously strong. The abusive partner will often threaten physical violence to family pets to gain compliance from their victims. When the abuser actually harms or kills the animal, they are demonstrating power and control, showing their victim what they are capable of.

Children who are victims of domestic abuse will sometimes kill their beloved family pet to spare it the torture they know it will experience from the abusive parent. Sometimes abusers force children to harm or kill a family pet as "punishment." With these forms of abuse victims often feel great shame that the abuser uses to further manipulate and control them. Some children however, will begin to reenact the abuse they are seeing at home on family pets, because they have become so desensitized to the violence. This also gives them a sense of control in a family where they have none. When



children are hurting animals it is a huge indication that something is wrong.

Many disregard animal abuse as experimental behavior that children sometimes engage in, a "boys will be boys" mentality. We should all be concerned for not only the child, but the animals as well. Animals are thinking, feeling, sentient beings; they deserve to have rights and to be treated with respect and dignity. If that is not enough for some people to care that an animal is being abused, it is also important to know that nearly all people who abuse animals eventually go on to abuse people as well. Most serial killers in history have begun by abusing animals.

When a victim has made a decision to leave an abusive relationship, companion animals can play a large factor in the choices they make. If they flee, there may not be a place to take their pets, or they may be unable to afford to kennel them. When victims leave an abusive situation, they often have to leave without anything but the clothes on their back, and with little or no financial resources. It is very difficult to find housing in McLean County that is affordable with landlords who will accept pets. A victim may not choose to leave the situation for many reasons, one of which may be that they could not bear to leave their animals behind. Most victims know that their abusers would neglect or likely kill the animal if left behind. If they do have to flee in an emergency without the animals, the abuser will often threaten harm to the pets to manipulate the victim to return.

What can we do? First, it is important to know the resources in your community, even if you do not believe that you will need them yourself. Countering Domestic Violence/Neville House has collaborated with local veterinarians and animal welfare agencies to provide kenneling services when a victim is fleeing an abusive relationship. The twenty-four hour hotline number for Countering Domestic Violence is 827-7070, for more information on services. If you witness animal abuse and neglect, please call the McLean County Humane Society at (309) 664-7387. M.C.H.S. has state-licensed humane investigators who follow up on your call. Even better, get active in your community! The McLean County Humane Society and Countering Domestic Violence are ALWAYS in need of volunteers. Any time you can spare helps makes a difference in our community.

Finally, we must not be afraid to talk about domestic violence in our schools, our churches, our workplaces and to our friends and family members. Together we can break the cycle of violence, but not if we remain silent.

-Trina

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Bark Park II--The Sequel

Local dog owners found themselves persona non grata last March as the Bloomington City Council shot down plans to convert part of Bloomington's Ewing Park into a trial period dog park.

The foiled attempt to designate a spot in town where canines could run without leash restriction was initiated when dog owners started complaining about the city's reinvigorated enforcement of leash laws in Ewing Park last fall. Long dubbed Bark Park by dogfolk who'd been part of park life for years, Ewing Park had become much more restrictive after a series of complaints from non-doggers and members of the Audubon Society.

To Audubonners, Ewing Park is as close as a natural habitat as you can find in the city (its centerpiece is a trail through Hedge Apple Woods). Within the last two years, members of the Society from all across state have trekked to Ewing for a glimpse of hard-to-see birds. To this small but avid group, the presence of loose dogs – even those under voice control by their owners – in the park has been anathema. It only takes an instant for a dog to wreak havoc in an on-ground bird's nest.

But to explain the story further, one needs to have a sense of the geography of Ewing Park. Ewing is really a series of three parks. The first and smallest contains picnic tables, a playground and a mowed area; the second, which is connected by the Hedge Apple Woods trail, has a football field, two fenced-in softball diamonds, a shelter and picnic tables, secluded benches for spooning and contemplation – plus an unmowed plot that adds to the natural habitat feel. Ewing Park III, which is where the dog park was proposed, is separated from the second park by a stream; it is a fifteen-acre area that includes a hill popularly used for sledding in the winter and a flat field used for soccer and kite flying during other seasons. There's sufficient room for dogs and these seasonal activities.

Bloomington Parks and Rec director Keith Rich proposed the use of Park III, after doing research into dog parks across the country and meeting with members of a citizen's committee. To Rich's eyes, the advantage of the proposed space was the fact that it's surrounded by barriers: the stream, a street and a series of apartment buildings. Park III is far enough away from the Hedge Apple Woods and the habitat area, so that well-trained dogs wouldn't inadvertently venture into this important space for Audubonners. Since so many Bloomington-Normalites were bringing their pets to Ewing, anyway, it seemed an ideal solution.

Parks and Rec did not reckon with the paranoid nature of Audubon's august leadership. To them, the thought of unleashed dogs in the general neighborhood was cause for alarm. Unconvinced of owners' ability to keep their dogs away from the sacred space that is the Hedge Apple Woods, they moved to block even

a trial run of leash-free dogging in Ewing III. When Parks and Rec brought the proposed park to the Bloomington City Council for approval, Audubonners were out in force.

They brought along allies, of course: park neighbors with their own complaints about loose dogs in the past, primarily – plus a would-be alderman eager to make political hay out of the fact that his opponent was the man officially introducing the dog park proposal to the city council. Now, living alongside a park and complaining about dogs is a bit like living next door to a golf course and beefing about runaway golf balls. But cranky spoilsports are part of what makes city governance so much fun.

To be fair, not all dogs – or dog owners, for that matter – are attentive to the fact that others follow them. Though the dog owner majority typically can be seen with plastic shopping bags peaking out of their pockets, an unfortunate minority has been unconcerned about the niceties of picking up after their pets. Dog park advocates see this as something that can be addressed by the establishment of a more formal leash-less area; dog opponents don't believe 'em, of course.

"The onus is on the dog owner to make it work," Parks and Rec Director Rich repeatedly emphasized. But though Rich's plan had specific guidelines for dog owners and their leash-less pets (e.g., dogs need to be under owner control; owners still need to clean up after their animals), opponents of the plan were unwilling to trust dog owners.

The Ewing Park controversy all came to a head at the March 12, 2001, meeting of Bloomington's City Council. After listening to close to two hours of community testimony both pro and con, the city council shot down the proposal. Perhaps the strongest weapon in the anti-dog camp's arsenal: the fear of dog bites. Though no statistics on whether dog parks control or increase the incidents of bites were

offered, just the possibility seemed to be enough to scare off some councilfolk. After introducing the proposal, Alderman Jim Finnegan himself proposed voting it down.

The dog park concept hasn't been totally killed in Bloomington-Normal, though it's unlikely that Ewing Park will be considered again. While Parks and Rec folk meet with community members to discuss other options, though, dog owners face the question of what to do with their pets today. Some continue to visit Ewing, risking tickets to occasionally let their dogs off-leash or just walking them on-leash through the still un-raked trails that go through the Hedge Apple Woods. Some have taken to letting their dogs loose in the fenced softball diamonds for a short run, though reportedly this too is a ticket-worthy offense. Even more have stopped taking their pets to the park altogether, which no doubt pleases area canine-ophobes.

In the meantime, Ewing Park – which once had a devoted group of dog owners helping out with some of its basic maintenance needs – is looking a bit shabby around the cuffs. The trails, which need to be replenished with wood chips at least annually, have had large heaps of undistributed chip piles on 'em since fall. An annual weekend spring cleanup never was announced, perhaps because those Audubonners who've traditionally scheduled it were unwilling (or too embarrassed) to invite dog people. In struggling to defend it, anti-doggers may have successfully worked to make the park much less hospitable for dog and non-dog folk alike.

--Bill Sherman



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Notes from the Land of Anti-Fat

Anamarie Goes Home

After several months in the custody of New Mexico's Youth, Children and Families Department, Anamarie Martinez-Regino was finally returned to her parents.

The case attracted national attention last summer when the three-year-old toddler was removed from her parents' home for alleged medical neglect. Though doctors could not explain the medical reasons behind it, the infant weighed 120 pounds and was three-and-a-half feet tall. Anamarie's parents, lower income Hispanics, were blamed for her extraordinary size - at one point even resorting to the allegation that the girl's parents were ignoring medical advice so they could receive further medical attention.

After close to three months in state care, though, the young girl was returned to her parents. The details surrounding this decision have still not been made public (thanks to a gag order placed by presiding judge Tommy Jewell), although one Albuquerque paper reporting on the child's return home from medically supervised foster care noted that she did not appear to be any smaller than she'd been before the state took custody.

As for the possible cause of Anamarie's unusual size: one possible diagnosis bandied about by the state has been leptin receptor deficiency, a rare genetic disorder that makes

people feel hungry even if they have eaten. Because of the gag order, it is unknown how much state agencies will be helping the young girl's parents now this medically complex child has returned to her family.

Gettin' In Gear

When I first heard that *Gear* magazine (one of those lifestyle periodicals for young men with lotsa discretionary income) was doing an article on "feeders," I felt some trepidation. The world of *Gear*, after all, is far removed from size acceptance - it is a place where the only ideal of beauty is a buff bod; where smoking is okay because, after all, it helps to keep your weight down; where liquor companies vie with overpriced athletic shoe ads for revenue space and nobody seems to notice the contradiction. It's a world, I suspect, that views the very concept of size acceptance as freakish, let alone something so controversial as feederism.

For those unfamiliar with the term, "feeders" are a type of fat admirer (or FA) who focus their sexual energies on aiding their partner's continuing weight gain. Even the size acceptance community has an ambivalent feeling toward feeders, and there are plenty of possibly apocryphal stories in the movement about them. From this writer's experience in the s.a. movement, while there are plenty of men and women who are attracted to larger partners,

few of them fit a feeder profile. While such creatures undoubtedly exist (any fetishistic behavior that can be imagined can be practiced, after all), they do not comprise the primary FA population.

But as the gay population has to deal with pedophilia as a demonized symbol of everything its opponents fear, so it is with the FA community and feeders. Stating that fatness may be okay is heresy in today's thin-obsessed culture; saying that a partner needs to be fatter is one step away from being the anti-Christ. Small wonder that the size acceptance has strived to distance itself from feederism.

Gear's May 2001 issue, though, works to shorten that distance. "The Feeders," a three-page piece of sensationalistic journalism by Lynn Snowden-Picket, purports to report on this subculture, all the while blurring any distinctions between feederism and mainstream fat acceptance. Quoting a one-time underground cartoonist and the editor of a men's magazine, Picket asserts in her piece that all adults attracted to a super-sized figure are de facto feeders. Describing the lifestyle of a bed-ridden former sideshow fat lady, Picket implies that all relationships between a fat and regular-sized partner will end the same.

It's a fairly standard conservative ploy: to use the most extreme example of human misbehavior to counteract a movement whose basic goal is simple tolerance. Considering the consumerist fratboy mentality of *Gear*, it's not surprising that they'd take this tack.

Fat Music

Occasionally, we in the Land of Anti-Fat like to recommend works that have a slightly more upbeat message. This time we wanna note Josh Max's Outfit and their CD *Make It Snappy* (Swepecat). A New York act that bills itself as "loungeabilly," the Outfit specializes in both rockabilly and Latin-flavored tunes (even does a nifty cover of "Cuban Pete"). Its male lead, Josh Max, writes most of the songs, but his plus-sized distaff partner Julie James is the band's not-so-secret weapon.

Snappy is the group's debut CD, and the reason it gets mentioned here is the disc's finale track, a live recording of Max's anthem to fat appreciation, "I Like A Whole Lotta Woman." A rockabilly romp, it's an infectious and affirming track that begs to be covered by one of the big-name r-and-r revivalists. In the meantime, you can hear the original, snappy track by ordering JMO's disc from Josh Max's Outfit, PO Box 1212 Canal Street Station, NYC 10013 or venturing to the group's website at <http://www.JoshMaxsOutfit.com>.

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Off-the beaten path: Movie reviews



Hello! Or should I say hello movie fans? My name is David, and I'd like to fill you in on some movies that might interest you or films you might not be familiar with. Sitting in a theater having the lights dim and watching a good movie or catching a great flick on video are both a fantastic way of forgetting the humdrum of everyday life. Okay, so you walk into a movie store and suddenly your mind goes blank--you have no idea what you want to watch. Hmmm. Take your *Post Amerikan* along, flip to the movie review page, and then you have at least a half a dozen choices. Just a slight warning: my movie tastes do run a tad off-the-path. With that in mind, enjoy the picks and write me if you catch any films that are must-see movies.

Nowhere to Hide--Wow! This Taiwanese martial arts film is a visual stunner with its heart in the right place. The action sequences are beautifully choreographed and flat-out crowd pleasing. Writer and director Myung-Se Lee has a vision and command over his material that is sadly lacking in his more famous contemporary John Woo (*MI:2*). A drug lord is viciously stabbed to death and a police detective pursues the killer in a maze-like chase. The detective encounters an underground world of mobsters and mysterious strangers that all play a part in his investigation. The film has an extremely high energy level that infectiously works on your senses. Action fans take note--if *Nowhere to Hide* is any indication, the director Myung-Se Lee might be the future face of action here in the U.S. ****

Grass--Highly enjoyable and informative documentary about the history of marijuana in America. Director Ron Man uses footage from American propaganda movies from the 30s through the 60s to give us a glimpse into the conflicting ways that grass has been viewed by the public and the U.S. government. The film delves into suppressed official reports that have molded the U.S. drug policy. It's a multi-billion dollar war against the "Assassin of Youth." Narrated by Woody Harrelson, *Grass* covers a lot of ground and remains very entertaining throughout. Grab some snacks and sit down for a cool ride. ***

Psycho Beach Party--Let the party begin. This party is a fantastic blend of a 60s' beach movie and a 70s' slasher flick. *Psycho Beach* goes quite a way over-the-top as a wannabe surf-girl, with a split personality, is the prime suspect after a series of humorously horrible murders plague the teen surf crowd. Like any respectable beach movie (is there such a thing?) this one has an attractive bikini clad cast i.e. a burnt-out surf guru, plenty of beach babes, dreamy surf boys and of course a stylish homicide detective. The soundtrack kicks mainly due to the mean surf chords of the band Los Straight Jackets. Hey, surf's up and the party's on--Highly recommend taking a trip to this Psycho Beach. And we'll have fun, fun, fun ... Oh, Sorry, I couldn't help myself. ***1/2

Circus--That's an appropriate title for this sharp English crime thriller. It's a four-ring circus when a con man, a hit man, a femme fatale, and loan shark each get their own ring. A husband and wife dream of escaping their everyday life of crime. They go to work on an outrageous scam weaving a web that ensnares an assortment of dangerous characters. With everyone playing their own hand, you never know who's allied to whom, or if any of the characters is ever telling the truth. The constant unreliability of the players makes *Circus* a veritable tightrope of thrills. John Hannah (of *The Mummy Returns*) and Famke Jansen (from *House on Haunted Hill*) have great chemistry as the husband and wife crime duo. ***

The Interview--An Aussie thriller that grabs you by the straps and does not let go until the final frame. A young man (Hugo Weaving from *The Matrix*) is woken in the early morning hours and abruptly tagged by the police as prime suspect in a series of unsolved murders. The detectives begin an unrelenting interrogation. And we are never absolutely sure of the man's innocence or guilt. There could be sort of a mind-game being played on the police or maybe on us. Weaving, in a riveting role, is top-notch and the movie unfolds like a cat and mouse labyrinth. Is Weaving the victim of this hell-bent interview, or is he one clever killer? MMMM.... ****

Anatomy--If you like medical thrillers with a little more bite, then sign up for this anatomy course. An impressive German import, it features rising star Franka Pontente (of *Blow and Run Lola Run*). Pontente plays an ambitious medical student who gets accepted into a prestigious medical school. Her dream school soon becomes a spiraling nightmare when several of her classmates turn up dead in the university's morgue. Troubled by the premature deaths, she begins to uncover a secret medical society that performs grisly autopsies on human subjects--while they are still alive. Not for the squeamish, *Anatomy* is definitely a creepy thrill ride. Thanks to a talented cast and suspenseful direction, *Anatomy* gets some top marks in my grade book. ***

Here's a checklist for some more high-priority movies:

1. Before Night Falls
2. Best in Show
3. Malena
4. O Brother, Where Art Thou
5. The Pledge
6. You Can Count On Me
7. The Claim
8. Panic
9. Essex Boys
10. Hard Core Logo
11. Requiem for a Dream
12. State and Main
13. Yi Yi

--Dave McBride

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Human rights campaigns: Closing the gap

The experiment

Last Spring, following students' demand of opportunities for linking theory and practice, I decided to offer a course in the Department of Politics and Government of Illinois State University titled Human Rights. The purpose of the course was to learn about human rights by putting human rights into practice. At the beginning, the concept seemed clear enough. The complications came afterwards, with the implementation of the experiment. In this article, I would like to present my thoughts about the experiment and some valuable lessons I learned that could help improve the course in the future.

I want to thank the Post Amerikan for the opportunity to share these ideas with the Bloomington-Normal community. For many of us in the course, getting involved in local human rights campaigns was a first-time experience. At the end of this first experiment I can confidently say that there is a significant number of ISU student and faculty who are convinced of the educational value of participating in local human rights campaigns. However, along the process we encountered what many described as a "gap" between ISU and the local community. I believe the Human Rights course has contributed to bridging the "gap" not only between theory and practice, but also between ISU and the community. Actually, I learned that bridging the gap between theory and practice depends on being able to bridge the gap between ISU and the community. Participating in local human rights campaigns requires establishing lines of communication between ISU and community organizations. I hope readers will contribute to this dialogue with their criticisms and suggestions.

The gap between theory and practice

A major concern I hear from ISU students is the lack of opportunities for linking theory and practice. "Linking theory and practice" is, I believe, a concept students use to encompass a variety of demands. What I pick up is that many students are looking for avenues for activism. There are some students that want to do something about what is wrong in the world around them. They want to do more than just absorb knowledge; they want to apply their knowledge and learn from experience, not just from the books and the faculty.

Human rights campaigns

Inspired by student activism, I designed a course in which students were going to learn about human rights by taking part in human rights campaigns. I believe that human rights campaigns are not only a method of bridging theory and practice, but the definition itself of a human rights campaign is a way of closing the gap between the theory and the practice of human rights, between ideals and reality. Human rights campaigns are developed in order to prevent or eliminate human rights violations.

In the last twenty-five years, the world has experienced a proliferation of human rights legislation and organizations. The development of human rights language, legislation, and organizations has provided million of activists the framework for the implementation of human rights campaigns. The activism of the people involved in human rights campaigns is not new, however. Similar to past and present activists, human rights activists want to change the world.

The philosophical framework of human rights campaigns can be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR, announced on December 10, 1948 by the United Nations, states that "the recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." The declaration contains thirty articles with civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights.

Article 1--All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscious and should act toward one another in the spirit of brotherhood.

Article 13--(1)Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State. (2)Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 15--(1)Everyone has the right to a nationality. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 23--(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

Article 26--(1)Everyone has the right to education . . .

Article 27--(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community . . .

Every government in the world now accepts the validity of UDHR. However, because the declaration does not have enforcing mechanisms, the United Nations has prepared and submitted for ratification to its governments members a number of international covenants that require signatories to take positive measures to ensure the enjoyment of the fundamental rights stated in the UDHR.

The U.S. government's record

In order to attain the ideals stated in the UDHR, the United Nations asks its governments members to ratify international covenants by making them part of their national legislation. Ratification is critical because it gives human rights organizations a leverage to put pressure on governments and other powerful domestic actors in order to strengthen, protect, and guarantee the enjoyment of human rights for all. A government that does not ratify international covenants or ratifies them with reservations is denying its population the enjoyment of fundamental human rights.

The U.S. government is known for its pattern of rejection of international standards of human rights. The U.S.'s rejection takes the form of delayed ratification, ratification with reservations, and non-ratification. Non-ratified documents include, among others, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the

Rights of the Child. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was ratified in 1988, forty years after its announcement. The following were ratified with reservations: the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Some readers may find surprising that the United States resists the internalization of international standards of human rights. The issue is complex and fascinating and would require a lengthier explanation that what is possible in this article. However, some ideas could provide a sense of what is at stake. While international standards emphasize both "negative" and "positive" rights, the United States prefers to emphasize "negative" rights, only. "Negative" rights are rights that protect individuals against government abuse. "Positive" rights are rights to a certain quality of life. While the first protect the person against society, the second calls upon society to protect the person. International standards of human rights emphasize the universality and interdependency of rights. They place emphasis on the responsibility that we all have toward each other. In the United States, the idea of rights is often associated with "the right to do whatever I want."

Based on the U.S. record, students were asked to reflect on the following questions: What consequences, if any, can result from the U.S. government's rejection of international standards of human rights? Do violations of international standards of human rights have tangible consequences for the welfare of the population under U.S. jurisdiction? Could students do something about it?

Designing human rights campaigns: Conceptualization, implementation, and evaluation

Students of the Human Rights course were asked to design human rights campaigns. For practical purposes, three stages of a human rights campaign were identified: conceptualization, implementation, and evaluation.

In the conceptualization phase, the objectives were: understanding the idea of human rights, what causes human rights violations, and what can be done to strengthen human rights and prevent and stop human rights violation at the local, national, and global level. With hindsight I now realize that I could have done a better job in explaining the interrelation between the local, national, and global levels of human rights campaigns.

Initially, I told students that human rights campaign had to be implemented at the "local level" and gave them several justifications. First, I argued, human rights campaigns should be implemented at the local level because it allowed hands-on experience. Somehow, I envisioned that doing something about human rights violations in Colombia, China, or Nigeria was fine but too detached from actual practice. Second, an emphasis on the "local" was necessary in order to challenge the standard view in the United States that human rights



between I.S.U. and the community

violations is a phenomena that only happens somewhere else. Third, reflecting on Martin Luther King's words, I argued that progress in human rights anywhere is progress everywhere. Success at the local level eventually would have national and global repercussions.

For the implementation stage, four international covenants/conventions were selected: the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Two sections of approximately twenty students each were organized in eight groups, two groups per covenant/convention. The task was to apply international standards of human rights to Bloomington-Normal and design and implement campaigns to address human rights violations.

In the evaluation stage, the assignment was to write a report containing the following: a) an explanation of how the international document was used to illuminate an aspect of Bloomington-Normal; b) a preliminary explanation of the causes of human rights violations; c) the campaign implemented to address those violations; and d) suggestions to continue the job in the future.

On the basis of the above guidelines, the following human rights issues and campaigns were identified for Bloomington-Normal:

SECTION I

- a) Multi-cultural education in high schools
- b) Housing and health
- c) Racial profiling
- d) Violence against women

SECTION II

- e) The Department of Children and Family Services
- f) Homelessness
- g) Jail sentencing and excessive police force
- h) Women's health

several private organizations and local activists committed to closing the gap. Students were surprised to find out that there was homelessness, child abuse, racial profiling, and women abuse in Bloomington-Normal. At the same time, however, they were inspired by the number of people in the community dedicated to providing services for people who were not enjoying certain rights or whose rights were violated.

For several students, interacting with government agencies was an eye-opener. The issue of racial profiling required students to interact with police departments, while the issue of child abuse brought students in contact with the DCFS. Students experienced first-hand the institutional and mental barriers that citizens have to cross when they want to investigate the government's responsibility in human rights violations.

In several cases students argued that "lack of awareness" was a major contributor in explaining why people in the community were not enjoying their rights. In some cases, "lack of awareness" was understood as people not knowing their rights. For example, some parents were afraid of the DCFS because they did not know the proper procedures. In other cases, "lack of awareness" was conceived as denial that a problem existed, to begin with. For example, students learned that according to the Bloomington and Normal police departments "racial profiling" did not exist because no written complaints had been filed.

The gap between I.S.U. and community

One major unexpected obstacle complicated the experiment from the beginning: the gap between ISU and the local community. I had heard about the "gap" in the past but did not factor it into the planning of the Human Rights course. In practice, explaining the gap became a major task of the semester. How could I ask students to design human rights campaigns for Bloomington-Normal if, to begin with, they were disconnected of Bloomington-Normal?

The sense of disconnection or gap was formulated in different ways. Mike Matejka, from the Bloomington and Normal Trades and Labor Assembly, placed the responsibility squarely on the feet of ISU faculty. He said that ISU faculty was mentally detached from the local community and more in tune with national and global events. He vividly described them as individuals who say, "I don't read The Pantagraph. I only read The New York Times. John Elliot, from the NAACP, described the gap differently. For him there was a "cultural gap" between ISU students and community people. ISU students are a transient population. They come for four, five years and then leave. The community is for students only a service provider and they never get to develop an emotional attachment to place. Community people, on the other hand, are a permanent population with a strong attachment to place. They don't like university people coming to their communities to tell them what is wrong and how to do things right, because while university people come and go, they have to stay and live with the consequences of the changes.

Critical evaluation

What changes could be made to improve the course? First, I believe that it was too much to ask students to design local human rights from scratch. Instead, next time I will ask students to join an already existing human rights campaign and demand from them a certain number of hours of community service as a requirement. In this way, they will be able participate and analyze a campaign with the purpose of learning to design and implement one by themselves; while their contact with community organizations and leaders would unfold less stressful without the pressure of having to implement a human rights campaign.

Second, next time I should do a better job of explaining the relationship between local, national, and global human rights campaigns. A "local" campaign does not have to be a campaign "for" the local community. A local human rights campaign can be a group of people in Bloomington-Normal participating in a national or global human rights campaign. I still believe that it is important for participants in this course to be aware that the United States is criticized for their willingness to apply human rights standards to everyone but themselves. However, one must be careful the introspective focus does not turn into isolationism. In other words, the criticism that the United States should be looking to its own internal problems before nosing around in someone else's business, should not be used to cover up the responsibility of the United States in human rights violations abroad.

Third, continuity is crucial for the success of the course. The contacts between students and community organizations and activists need to be solidified and expanded. Human rights campaigns not only help in closing the gap between ideals and reality, but also between ISU and the community.

--Carlos A. Parodi
Department of Politics and Government
Illinois State University

Suggestions for further reading:

Amnesty International. *United States of America. Rights for All* (New York: Amnesty International Publications, 1998).

Allen McChesney. *Promoting and Defending Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: A Handbook* (Washington D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 2000).

Kerry Kennedy Cuomo. *Speak Truth to Power. An Educational and Advocacy Package* (Umbrage Editions Productions, 2001)

Useful web sites

www.amnesty-usa.org--The home page for Amnesty International USA

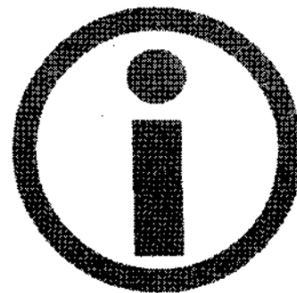
www.hrusa.org--Human Rights USA Resource Center, Minneapolis

www.hrw.org--The home page of Human Rights Watch

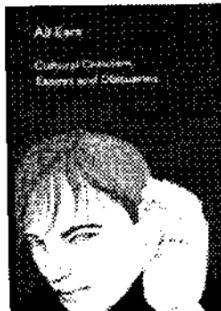
www.unhchr.ch--The home page of the United Nations High Commissioner

Among the several things students discovered from designing human rights campaigns for Bloomington-Normal was, on the one hand, how the city fell short of international standards in many areas but, on the other, the existence of

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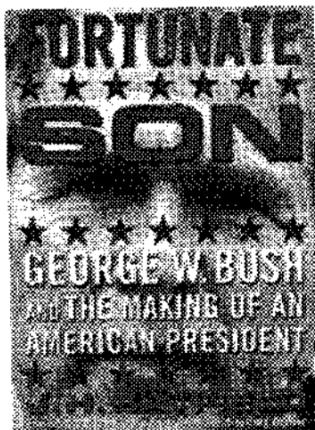
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Fortunate Son
J.H. Hatfield

Prior to recall by St. Martins Press, *Fortunate Son* was #30 on the New York Times Best-Seller's list. What caused this book to be censored?

J.H. Hatfield's *Fortunate Son* presents George W. Bush haunted by the specters from his past. It researches the allegations of GW's abuse of extreme privilege, draft-dodging Vietnam and a past cocaine habit, and comes up with almost 400 pages of more startling information. And there's more. The Bushes' anti-Semitism, their connection to the BCCI Scandal, GW's SEC investigation for insider-trading, and the cronyism practiced with business associates while Governor of Texas.

Banned Book (Go ahead, try to buy it at Amazon.com)
Our price: \$12.00

Online Diaries
Various

Online tour journals of Lollapalooza Tour Artists. An interactive space where fans could communicate with artists such as Courtney Love, Beck and Thurston Moore.
Our price: \$5.00



Saving Private Power
Michael Zezima

The Hidden History of the "Good War." *Saving Private Power* is the most provocative history of the "Good War" ever published. It questions the ultra-patriotic assumptions we have been taught since birth.
Our price: \$13.00



Republican Like Me
Sparrow

Sparrow lost the GOP presidential nomination to Bob Dole. "How? Why? Uh...What?" asks a tearful, angry America. Finally, an answer in this poetic record of Sparrow's campaign trail.
Our price: \$5.00

Bomb the Suburbs

William Upski Wimsatt
Most books are suburban books. Neatly designed, neatly packaged, and automatically produced. The author chooses one topic, one voice, one style, one audience, one point of views, and lays out the book according to plan.
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Mental illness awareness

Illinois Department of Human Services funds mental health/juvenile justice initiative

The Illinois Dept. of Human Services (DHS) is funding a new initiative to help identify community services for mentally ill minors being released from juvenile detention centers. For this new initiative DHS selected seven detention centers in Illinois as demonstration sites including Boone/Winnebago (Rockford), Macon (Decatur), Madison, Peoria, St. Clair (East St. Louis), Will (Joliet) and part of Cook (Chicago) Counties.

Whenever a minor who is in detention is identified by the court as possibly being mentally ill, a clinician from a community agency is available to assess that child. Should that child have a major illness, the clinician works to identify appropriate community services, including mental health, medication, substance abuse, special education and public health services. The clinician identifies funding sources and has some additional money for recommended services when public funding is unavailable the clinician then works with the court staff to implement an approved plan.

The clinician is not intended to be the therapist for the minor. Also, the clinician is not to get involved in the delinquency matter. Further, this is not a crisis intervention service, but rather, long term treatment planning. DCFS minors are not eligible for the service.

The project is overseen through DHS Office of Mental Health's Juvenile Forensic Program and is being evaluated by Northwestern University. Begun in January, 2000, the Initiative has successfully started up at all seven sites. by December, 170 clients referred through the court systems had been found eligible for the Initiative due to their mental illness.

—from NAMI of Livingston & McLean Counties newsletter

Surgeon General's suicide prevention plan

Every year, more than 30,000 Americans take their own lives. Suicide is the eighth-leading cause of death in the United States, and the third among our youth, ages 15 to 24. Most suffer from treatable mental illnesses, biological-based brain disorders that can lead to tragic consequences. The majority suffers from some form of depression.

In 1999, the Surgeon General, David Satcher, M.D., issued a Call to Action to Prevent Suicide. Today, this Call to Action has been followed up with the release of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP), the result of a two-year collaboration between advocates, clinicians, researchers, and survivors of suicide. The National Strategy addresses the very serious public health problem of suicide with a community-based public health approach that calls on a variety of organizations and individuals to become involved in suicide prevention.

The Surgeon General and a coalition of public and private groups introduces an outline of goals and objectives as the first part of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. These goals and objectives highlight NAMI's position that the best way to prevent suicide is through early recognition, diagnosis, and treatment. There are 11 broad goals and 68 more specific objectives in the first part of the Strategy. These can be accessed, along with a summary of NSSP, at: <http://www.mentalhealth.org/suicideprevention>

Anxiety disorders: A major problem to society

Anxiety disorders are illnesses that fill people's lives with overwhelming anxiety and fear that are chronic, unremitting, and can grow progressively worse. Tormented by panic attacks, obsessive thoughts, flashbacks, nightmares, or countless frightening physical symptoms, some people with anxiety disorders even become housebound.

How common are anxiety disorders?

Anxiety disorders are considered the most common mental illness in America with more than 19 million Americans affected by these debilitating illnesses each year. Anxiety disorders cost the U.S. \$46.6 billion in 1990.

What are the different kinds?

*** Panic disorder**—Repeated episodes of intense fear that strike often and without warning. Physical symptoms include chest pain, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness, abdominal distress, feeling of unreality, and fear of dying.

*** Obsessive-compulsive disorder**—Repeated, unwanted thoughts or compulsive behaviors that seem impossible to stop or control.

*** Post-traumatic stress disorder**—Persistent symptoms that occur after experiencing a traumatic event such as rape or other criminal assault, war, child abuse, natural disasters or crashes. Nightmares, flashbacks, numbing of emotions, depression and feeling angry, irritable or distracted, and being easily startled are common.

*** Phobias**—Two major types of phobias are social phobia and specific phobia. People with social phobia have an overwhelming and disabling fear of scrutiny, embarrassment, or humiliation in social situations, which leads to avoidance of many potentially pleasurable and meaningful activities. People with specific phobia experience extreme, disabling and irrational fear of something that poses little or no actual danger. The fear leads to avoidance of objects or situations and can cause people to limit their lives unnecessarily.

--Generalized anxiety disorder—Constant, exaggerated worrisome thoughts and tension about everyday routine life events and activities, lasting at least six months. Almost always anticipating the worst even though there is little reason to expect it; accompanied by physical symptoms such as fatigue, trembling, muscle tension, headache or nausea.

How effective are treatments?

Treatment of anxiety disorders is a three pronged approach: drugs, behavioral techniques and psychotherapy. There are many antidepressants, anti-anxiety and other drugs on the market that provide a wide range of therapeutic effects.

Behavior techniques include relaxation (especially effective in controlling the physiological symptoms), desensitization (gradual exposure to less threatening anxiety-producing situations), and emotive imagery (imagining the anxiety-producing situation while learning to relax).

Relaxation is key to all three behavior approaches.

There are many ways to learn how to relax, including medication and some types of yoga. In all cases, however, you will have to practice frequently (often on a daily basis) to get the full benefit.

Psychotherapy, especially in combination with drugs, has been shown to be more effective than either one alone. Peer support groups also can be very helpful. Practicing relaxation is a very effective tool for everyone in being able to cope better with daily stresses.

—from NAMI of Livingston & McLean Counties newsletter

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Citifinancial office occupied in downstate Illinois May Day protest

Seventy-five members of the Central Illinois Organizing Project (CIOP) occupied the Citifinancial office in Decatur, Illinois in a protest against its predatory lending practices. The Decatur demonstration was the third in a series of confrontations CIOP initiated against Citifinancial this year. Joining clergy and NAACP members in Decatur were two buses of leaders from Champaign, Bloomington and Springfield, Illinois.

CIOP leaders continued to press the Citigroup subsidiary on three main points:

- Renegotiate Citifinancial and Associates borrowers into reasonable interest rate and term loans.
- Market Citibank prime rate loans in Illinois communities currently only served by sub-prime Citifinancial.
- Meet with Citigroup CEO Bob Rubin in conjunction with the larger campaign sponsored by National People's Action (NPA).

As part of the NPA campaign on Citigroup, CIOP representatives met last winter with Citigroup executive Charles Prince and Citifinancial head Martin Wong to seek policy changes in sub-prime lending. The meeting resulted in Prince's reiteration of existing lending practices seen by the community groups as predatory. A critical issue for downstate Illinois is the marketing and branch locations of sub-prime Citifinancial offices without access to prime rate Citibank housing credit access.

As a result of the breakdown in talks with Citigroup, CIOP led the downstate Illinois effort in passage of tough new anti-predatory lending regulations in the legislature. But according to CIOP spokesperson Phyllis Washington, the focus needs to stay on Citifinancial. "As good as the new state regulations are, they don't help the thousands of central Illinois families that today have

bad Citifinancial and Associates loans," said Washington. "Citifinancial needs to make whole these families right now and stop what amounts to lending apartheid in which our communities only have access to sub-prime loans and not traditional financing," continued Washington.

CIOP is a faith-based, regional community organization in central Illinois. The group successfully negotiated downstate Illinois' first two Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) agreements with National City Bank (1996) and Bank One (2000). These regional CRY agreements serve the communities of Bloomington, Champaign, Decatur, Danville and Springfield.

-Tony Eckert

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Sweatshops at Home: When a sweatshop is investigated in the USA, 1 out of 3 multinational corporations care

For nearly two years Daewoosa Samoa Ltd., a Korean owned factory in American Samoa, made clothing for JC Penny, Target and Sears that was labeled "Made in USA." The clothing was made using 251 Vietnamese "guest workers" that had obtained work visas from their government to work in the United States.

According to the National Immigration Forum, an employment-based immigration system allows immigrants who have skills and talents needed in the United States to be admitted to work. Under some circumstances, The U.S. Department of Labor must certify that there are not sufficient U.S. workers who are able, qualified, and willing to perform the work.

The situation in American Samoa at the Daewoosa factory clearly fits these requisites. U.S. citizens do not want to work in a sweatshop and have their basic human rights taken away. The National Labor Committee, an independent, non-profit human rights organization focused on the protection of worker rights, has released the details of worker complaints and human rights violations in American Samoa as well as updates when news breaks.

Human rights violations in the USA

Why is clothing for JC Penny, Target and Sears being made by Vietnamese women on U.S. territory and labeled "Made in USA"? This distortion of reality is made worse by the human rights violations that took place at the Daewoosa Factory. The National Labor Committee reports that the workers have been held as indentured servants, locked in the factory behind barbed wire, cheated on wages, worked twelve to eighteen-hour shifts, beaten, lived in rat infested barracks, malnourished, and suffered from substandard living and working conditions, as well as sexual harassment.

Detailed reports about these violations can be found on the National Labor Committee's website. These facts also come from reports by

the U.S. Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. OSHA cited Daewoosa in 1999 because:

"The employer did not furnish employment and a place of employment which were free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees in that employees were exposed to: (a) Cafeteria/Dining Room: Migrant workers were not fed or served with food on March 28, 1999, exposing these employees to hunger and starvation. Among other methods, one feasible and acceptable abatement method to correct this hazard is to provide sustenance for the employees."

The Department of Labor reports that "Numerous workers are suffering serious health problems from the malnutrition. Some are walking skeletons. Almost all the others have either blood in stools, pruritis, continual headaches, irregular menstruation, hives, and constipation." The Department of Labor concluded:

"This is an employer who has not been persuaded by DOL enforcement nor the orders of Samoan High Court to comply with basic minimum standards of safety and health and payment of wages. He ignores court orders and Wage and Hour [DOL] orders to pay his employees, intentionally creates a facade of payment, and has paid virtually no penalties assessed by the DOL. And somehow he happens to have \$60,000 in a paper bag to flaunt in front of his investigators. This employer provides substandard food and housing, and again, flagrantly ignores court orders to correct these problems."

Daewoosa factory closed down, owner arrested

In March 2001, The FBI arrested Daewoosa's Korean owner, Mr. Kil Soo Lee with charges of involuntary servitude and forced labor. The FBI complaint also charges that Kil Soo Lee "defrauded, failed to pay and at times deprived of food, beat and physically restrained these workers to force them to work." Mr. Kil Soo Lee and the Daewoosa factory failed to pay into Social Security for his employees, despite the fact that this money was deducted from their

wages. This has left beaten and injured workers without workers' compensation.

After two investigations in 1999 and 2000, the U.S. Department of Labor assessed the Daewoosa factory \$604,225 in back wages and penalties. The minimum wage in American Samoa is just \$2.60 an hour. However, the women were not even paid the already very low \$2.60 an hour minimum wage in Samoa.

After the DOL embargoed Daewoosa's goods, blocking shipment under the hot goods act, Kil Soo Lee withdrew all the funds, leaving the factory bankrupt. Right now, the Vietnamese workers are suing Daewoosa for payment of all back wages, which amounts to approximately one million dollars, and they are likely to win. However, this may be an empty victory, since Daewoosa's owner, Mr. Lee, has bankrupted the factory.

Corporate responsibility

Clearly, Kil Soo Lee and the Daewoosa management are to blame for the horrible treatment of their workers. The corporations who received clothing from Daewoosa do not want you to know that they are involved in this kind of business. The New York Times wrote an article about this issue on February 6th, 2001 following a response by JC Penny. The Department of Labor and the National Labor Committee sent letters to JC Penny expressing concern and JC Penny has agreed to pay the workers for the clothing they made. The New York Times failed to name other corporations receiving clothing from Daewoosa, specifically the corporations who are not paying back the workers. The New York Times does not want you to know that Target and Sears are involved and are not doing anything.

If the U.S. multinational companies do not immediately intervene to pay all back wages, damages and debts, then the Vietnamese workers will be left stranded and penniless. If this happens, the National Labor Committee along with Sweatshop Watch and others will immediately launch a campaign to raise funds for these workers. Illinois State University's United Students Against Sweatshops is planning a campaign to raise awareness about this issue next fall and will be putting pressure on Target

who has been involved in other sweatshop issues. We are asking for Target to publicly respond and apologize to the Daewoosa factory workers, give back wages to the workers, and make a commitment to end sweatshop abuse by full disclosure and independent monitoring.

The full National Labor Committee report on Daewoosa is at www.nlcnet.org/samoa

--Nick Berveiler



THE CALL/cpf



The time is right for a rebirth of health care reform

Corporate America never had it so good. In the 1990s, business thrived and the stock market reached new heights. Along the way, 10 million more Americans became uninsured. Managed care bulldozed its way across the landscape. And community-centered health care providers were hijacked by corporate hospitals and for-profit HMOs.

The plan is ready

The Illinois Campaign for Better Health Care--a state wide coalition of nearly 300 grass-roots organizations and thousand of individuals --is already revitalizing health care reform.

Our Action Agenda for Illinois is focused, realistic, and powerful. Its priorities:

- Protect the rights of health care consumers and workers.
- Make hospitals and HMOs accountable to the communities they serve.
- Provide quality, affordable health care to all Illinoisans.

Issue: Growing numbers of uninsured

One in every 6 Americans -- 43.4 million people -- were uninsured in 1997. And the ranks of the uninsured are growing by more than 1.2 million a year. In Illinois, the number of uninsured rose 30 percent during the past decade.

Think low unemployment levels will help? Think again. Only 4 in 10 Americans have health insurance paid for by a private employer--picking up barely one-fourth of the nation's trillion-dollar health care expenditures.

And those expenditures are soaring again.

Issue: Patients at risk

Unregulated. Unpredictable. Profit-driven. The growth of managed care has put a growing number of Americans at risk.

Plans employ non-medical personnel who often reject claims for emergency services and limit access to specialists. The plans market aggressively to the elderly and the poor, then abandon them as "unprofitable."

Hospitals, too--even nonprofit hospitals--have joined the march toward the bottom line, taking registered nurses out of patient care...assigning more patients to each nurse...and replacing RNs with unlicensed, lower level workers. The result has been a rise in medical complications, readmissions, and complaints. Employees who blow the whistle put their careers on the line.

Issue: The invasion of corporate health care

Decades of taxpayer dollars, charitable contributions and devoted volunteer work built and supported our non-profit hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care facilities. In return, the institutions promised to provide community benefits, free care and health education.

During the 1990s, Illinois communities have witnesses a massive restructuring (mergers and acquisitions) of their health care facilities, primarily by for-profit corporations. Typically the community was not informed.

Today, the health care needs of our communities are taking a back seat to corporate health care's bottom line. In case after case, with no public accountability or input, vital services are being eliminated while corporate health care is profiting from decades of community investments.

Action! Quality, affordable health care for all
The Campaign for Better Health Care is working toward universal health care on two fronts.

The Bernardin Amendment. This proposed amendment to the Illinois Constitution, founded on Cardinal Bernardin's 1995 pastoral letter, defines health care as an essential safeguard of human life and dignity. It requires the General Assembly to enact a plan ensuring decent health care for everyone in Illinois. The Bernardin Amendment received an overwhelming 83 percent of the vote in Cook County in 1998. The people are ready!

Illinois Universal Health Care Plan. This comprehensive, consumer-driven proposal to enact universal health care provides:

- Universal access to a full range of health care services
- Improved quality of services and consumer protections
- Local and regional consumer participation in the system
- Affordability and cost control mechanisms

Action! Consumer and worker protections

The Campaign for Better Health Care has launched a two-pronged attack on those who compromise the quality of patient care in Illinois.

A strong health care Consumer Bill of Rights will:

- Require information enabling consumers to judge and compare the quality of plans
- Eliminate financial incentives for providers to deny care
- Provide access to specialists and emergency services
- Establish effective grievance procedures, and the right to sue when all else fails
- Enact strong monitoring and oversight by the Department of Public Health

A Patient Protection Act will allow health care workers to alert authorities to dangerous understaffing and other situations that compromise patient care--without the risk of losing their job or suffering other recriminations. It provides a care delivery model based on patient needs and quality outcomes.

Action! Public accountability

The Campaign for Better Health Care is backing legislation to ensure that all health care institutions are held accountable to their local communities.

The Local Public Health Accountability Act:

- Establishes standards and a public certificate-of-need process when health care facilities are sold or restructured, ensuring that proposed changes to service delivery will not adversely affect the community
- Strengthens the oversight role of the Attorney General, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and local health districts
- Prohibits executive bonus payments and financial kickbacks from sales of health facilities

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Update on Witte/Doyle case

Since the *Post* broke the story last issue about Judge Charles Witte's (Judge of the 11th District Court of McLean County) inappropriate comments to Dora Baker-Doyle much has happened, but not enough--not yet. For those of you who may not have read the story (see April/May issue) Judge Witte told Doyle--in court-- concerning her biracial son, that "You gave him a tremendous disadvantage in life that he is multiracial and that in the history of this stage of our life in this country was a terrible burden to put on him."

After the *Post* printed the story other news media began to give it coverage. It was discussed on WJBC, with most callers supporting Doyle. A couple of the TV news shows picked it up and it eventually made the wire service out of Springfield. Finally, *The Pantagraph* printed the newswire story. Several letters to the editor were printed in the *Pantagraph* all supporting Doyle and condemning Witte's remarks.

People began to talk. They began to tell their own "Witte stories" to both Doyle and myself. They began to tell stories of inappropriate comments by other judges as well. Talking is good, but in order for anything else to happen we need to do more than talk to each other.

People need to talk to the Judicial Inquiry Board (JIB). Doyle filed a complaint, but unless the Board hears from more people it is not going to file a formal complaint with The Illinois Courts Commission (the next step in the process).

Doyle would like to ask people in the community who have a complaint with Witte (or another judge) to file a complaint with JIB. To do this you can go to their web site www.state.il.us/jib/. If you do not have a computer or the Internet at your home you can use the Bloomington Public Library's computers for no charge.

Once on the web site there will be a list of options on the left side of the screen. Click on the "Request for an Investigation Form." You print the form and then fill it out and mail it in. It helps if you have some documentation, such as transcripts, to send with it.

To get your court transcripts you need to go to the courthouse and get them from the court reporter in your case. Each judge is assigned a court reporter. Diane K. Whitwood is Judge Witte's. Unfortunately transcripts cost money, possibly \$80.00 for 40 pages. If you can't afford

to get your transcripts don't let this discourage you from filing a complaint. Simply tell what happened to the best of your ability.

Also on the web site is the Code of Judicial Conduct. You could click on this to see which code your judge may have violated. For example: "A judge shall perform judicial duties without bias or prejudice. A judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, including but not limited to bias or prejudice based upon race, sex, religion, or national origin, and shall not permit staff, court officials and others subject to the judge's direction and control to do so."

What's next for Doyle? On June 8th representatives from the NAACP will meet with Judge Freese (Witte's boss) to discuss Witte's comments.

The Post will report on this meeting and any other developments in our next issue. If you have a story about the biased behavior of a judge in our town let us know.

--Sherrin Fitzer

No more hiding in American Samoa

Good news. The long nightmare for the Vietnamese workers in American Samoa is almost over.

For nearly two years more than 250 Vietnamese workers--90% of them women--have been held as indentured servants in a Korean-owned factory in the U.S. territory of American Samoa where they sewed clothing for Wal-Mart, Target, J.C. Penney and Sears--clothing, carrying the label "Made in the U.S.A." The women were beaten, cheated on well over one million dollars in back wages, housed in overcrowded, rat-infested dorms, starved, threatened with deportation and imprisonment and sexually harassed.

For this entire period, the Daewoosa factory violated these workers' rights with complete impunity.

Those days are over. Two FBI agents are on the island of American Samoa now with an officer of the U.S. Justice Department. They are investigating the illegal trafficking of workers, corruption, and a money laundering scheme which siphoned money out of the factory leaving Daewoosa bankrupt and the workers penniless.

J.C. Penney has agreed to pay all back wages owed to the workers who sewed garments for Penney. Congressman George Miller met with Labor Secretary on Monday March 11 to discuss the violations at Daewoosa. Even the Vietnamese government, which ran the recruitment agencies that sent the women to American Samoa, has now significantly changed its attitude, saying that Vietnam will pay all transportation costs to return the workers home and guarantee their safety.

The Governor of American Samoa, who called the NLC report "Bull," has been conspicuously quiet of late. Still remaining to be done: five workers who are seeking asylum need help; and Wal-Mart, Sears and Target have yet to follow J.C. Penney's lead in paying back wages. Still, the worst part of the nightmare is over.

Thanks to everyone who helped.

Go to the NLC's website for details on the Daewoosa case.

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Email: nlc@nlcnet.org
Website: www.nlcnet.org

--from Union News

Karen Schmidt
Alderman ~ Ward 6

409 E. Grove St., Bloomington

home: 829-6318

work: 217-244-2070

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The Dance: Depth, Movement, &



Earth & Spirit Part 5 by Jesse Wolf Hardin

"The idea that the Earth is alive is becoming an acceptable intellectual philosophy. Scientists have conferences on the Gaia hypothesis without acknowledging that this is exactly what people in tribal cultures, what witches, shamans, and psychics have been saying for thousands of years. But there's a difference between accepting it as a scientific philosophy and really living it. Living with the knowledge that the cosmos is alive causes us to do something. It challenges us."

-Starhawk
Truth or Dare

"We are dancing on the brink of world which we know so little of; we are dancing the dance of life, of death; dancing the moon in celebration of dimly remembered connections with our ancestors; dancing on the brink of ecological awareness; dancing for the sake of dancing without analyzing and rationalizing and articulating; without consciously probing for meaning but allowing meaning in being to emerge into our living space."

-Bill Devall
Rich In Means, Simple In Ends

The best of what we do, and the worst-- is but a gesture. No matter how great we perceive our impact to be, the results are secondary to the truth of our gestures: the grace, intent and integrity of our individual dance.

A dance is a series of unfolding, rhythmic motions. Rhythm is a process of repeating cycles that propel the participant, the vehicle, in an ascendant spiral enjoining them to Earth and cosmos. All the rhythmic variations in a natural, balanced life are like flourishes and frills on the high drum, delivered on beat within the overall energetic patterns of a dancing

universe. Everything we do or fail to do is part of our individual dance, and both our personal and ecological dysfunction results from our failure to remain within the greater Earthen choreography. Our inability to lock on to the universal "down-beat." The hesitation to commit to our authentic dance.

Truly, the whirling/evolving universe is the original dancer. Within this galactic body dances the planets, fecund Earth, her winds, waters, lifeforms, and spinning DNA molecules. Quantum physicists have begun to understand what every child or "primitive" takes for granted: the unseen rhythmic basis of life itself, the "dance of the atoms." A child will roll and shimmy while still forming in the womb, and come out rotating their arms in time with the kicking of their legs. Take my word for it: they're not trying to swim, crawl away or escape. They still hear the beat of the original drummer, the heartbeat of the living planet, and they are born determined to dance to it. Somewhere between the cave and the skyscraper, between our days as dancing toddlers and rigid adults, humankind agreed to quit listening.

The sorcerers (source-ers!) of the Paleolithic caves are all portrayed as dancing, and before them the earthen floor is worn smooth by the ritual shuffling of feet. Dance was one of the earliest forms of conscious integration with the unconscious. With the shared dreamstate of clan and planet. And with the source of primal bliss. Dance as an energy exchange...

"...between humans and transhuman powers a vibratory field-communication that must go both ways for the connection to work. Chimpanzees do rain dances, for no logical reason other than to reconnect their animal energies with the transhuman energies of rain, thunder, and lightning: the original chemical dance of life..."

-Barbara Mor
The Great Cosmic Mother

The two primary qualities of dance, as of a deep-ecology lifestyle, are depth and motion. There is motion, even within the stillness of meditation-- in the active intercourse of unbound spirit, in the full actualization of the natural self, in the deliberate and energetic manifestation of conscious Being. The dance is our motive response to an ever-shifting field, inner self realized through grace-filled action.

What determines the character and nature of any dance is the depth of experience-- and its rhythmic expression. Whether we're talking about this symbolic dancing of our being or literally the moves executed on some ballroom floor, a worthy dance grows out of the deepest experiencing of life, creatively and fully expressed in movement. Every dancer has a finite period of time for their demonstration of self, a specific period of time allowed on the mortal stage. This would suggest we maximize every moment as if it were our last, dancing each step as if it were to be our one final gesture.

"The sacred dance takes us beyond the God of Morality and back to the Goddess of Ecstasy; beyond obeisance to social hierarchy and back to an original communion with sheer evolutionary energy."

-Barbara Mor (ibid.)

To maintain that obeisance the dominant paradigm has felt obliged to eliminate every gesture, smash every symbol, and disrupt every ritualized motion related to that realized, native way of being we're calling dance. Repeated on continent after continent, century after century, there's no more literal example than in the early 1870's, when the entire might of the U.S. army was called to bear on the visionary "Ghost Dance."

Those agents in charge of keeping the tribes subdued and placated were characteristically unnerved by the Indians rapidly spreading new practice: stripping down to a painted, brain-tanned shirt and dancing to the beat of the drums for days and nights on end! It began with a Paiute healer named Wovoka. Sickened by the wretched life of the reservation and both the cultural and real genocide of his people, he prayed and fasted for a vision. The spirits told him that by singing certain songs and dancing a particular dance they could bring back their slain families, as well as resurrect the decimated herds of deer and buffalo. It was for this reason that the authorities named it the Ghost Dance. Wovoka additionally promised that no white man's bullet could penetrate the medicine shirts, prompting the soldiers to laugh. But they nonetheless feared this act of earthen empowerment sufficiently to move one sick and starving band in the middle of a winter snowstorm, and then kill them all without mercy at first slightest provocation.

In this country the massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1873 is considered to have been the final chapter in the nearly four hundred year long Indian wars. It was the traditionally civilized response to a tribe's entrenched connectedness to the Mother Earth. Chief Big Foot's entire band was slaughtered. Men, women, children, and even their horses and dogs-- ultimately killed because of their participation in a dance! The oppression of primal peoples parallels the accelerating repression of women, Nature, individual freedoms, and finally of personal visionary experience in whatever form. The authorities feared the life-affirming power of the Ghost Dance-- and our kind has earned a reputation for killing that which we fear most.

And yet somehow still-- by dancing in the moment, purposeful and committed, beyond all considerations of success or failure, the dancers always win. On some level the oppressors of every place and time have understood this truth, and have done everything possible to separate them from their actualization, their natural rhythm, their motion.

"Where we see no image of justice the word INJUSTICE reminds us of what we want. Inside, this word makes circles like the hungry who cannot



The Greater Choreography

stop seeking, who stumble
over mountains, through deserts.
Inside me this word
is like a lover
seeking the dimensions
of love."

-Susan Griffin
Unremembered Country

For most remaining land-based tribes dance is life, and life is prayer. Primal dance creates a visible plane of contact between the dancer and the forces that enliven and animate them. It involves a coming-into-power that the cultures of oppression have long feared. As the "licentious" drum has been repeatedly outlawed throughout the history of western civilization, so have various dances been indicted for their role in arousing primal, pagan, ecstatic, undisciplined and therefore subversive inclinations and instincts.

As a child I remember the fundamentalist and conservative attacks on the then popular "twist," a dance feared to unbridle the sexual appetite of the innocent teen and inspire debauchery among the audience. Eventually becoming a Las Vegas pitchman for the interests of the status quo, a younger Elvis Presley was initially filmed from the waist up. The television executives feared that the "wild gyrations" he executed on his Ed Sullivan Show debut might have a revolutionary effect on the prevailing social and sexual mores.

And to some degree, they were right. For a contemporary society modeled on stability and reserve, dependent upon repressed animus and instinct-- primal dance itself becomes an act of defiance, and a harbinger of change. A reaffirmation of the power of our connection to our natural bodies, and by extension to the shimmying natural world. After many centuries of our dominant cultures preaching the mortification of the flesh, anything that strengthens one's experience of their sensual bodies becomes simultaneously a spiritual and political act.

In the 21st Century we will face not only the destruction or assimilation of primal peoples, but also the potential extinction of existing higher lifeforms. The struggle to overcome the inextricably related social and environmental degradation is popularly referred to as a movement, implying advancement and change. We stand now at a historical confluence as never before, posited in the middle of a busy intersection with opposing flows-- and inaction, or even the slightest hesitancy, could cost us everything. It's surely time to move, to flow, to accelerate, to communicate with our every bodily movement and every personal/political act our intent to defend and resacrament the wild.

AC-TI-VATE: tr.v. 1) To set in motion; make active. 2) To create or organize. 3) To purify (sewage) through aeration. 4) (Chemistry) To accelerate a reaction, as in turning the heat up.

Activate. Set into motion. Create and organize. Purify. Turn the heat up! What we are called on to do, through whatever means and with whatever particular talents we're given, is to

bring about a one hundred and eighty degree turn-around in the direction modern society is taking us. It requires not a return to what they are calling "antiquated barbarism," but a moving ahead to a more intimate, place-based relationship with the living Earth. Dance as relationship.

Once engaged, once integrated into the circuits of the whole, once wholly feeling, considerations of success or failure fall to the side, and we go on in affirmation of and defense of life no matter what. From then on, we do what we do because we have to.

"From a certain point onward, there is no turning back. That is the point that must be reached."

-Franz Kafka

And that is the point at which the most mundane of daily acts can serve as a mindful exercise in intent and style. Even the most pragmatic of our work may begin to demand the element of art. Even our activism becomes a dance: a dance of resistance. Dancing petitions and legislation before the powers that be. Dancing between the last fields of California broadleaf sage and the marauding bulldozers. Dancing before the nuclear storm, dancing along the precipice of human overpopulation, dancing under threat of confinement or ruin, dancing the death of our illusions and the rebirth of our truths.

At the heart of the most humanitarian career or gut wrenching environmental activism is a core of spiritual connectedness: one's conscious, deliberate joining in on the intraterrestrial, interstellar boogie in progress. It's the human assignment. It's our homework.

All the rest of Nature is inherently in tune, rhythmically in beat, in step with the delight of shared existence. But of us more is required: deliberate intent and conscientious follow through. My friend Ed Abbey wrote that "Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul." And somewhere beneath his curmudgeon exterior, he knew also how ruinous action can be-- absent the redemptive qualities of sweet sentiment. Truly, both are equally essential to the dance.

Our strongest sentiments demand action, and most artistic expression of being requires we respond assertively. But likewise, our most practical or political efforts can benefit from the highest requirements of dance: fluidity, grace, subtlety, power, evoked images, awakened mythologies, the invocation of spirits, the uncompromised demonstration of self in movement that's neither rushed nor delayed. Of self in step with the rest of native creation, going with the flow, entraining with the rhythms of life itself.

"In its most fundamental form this spontaneous link between sentience and movement is called dance-- a direct, nonverbal, unreasoned assertion of ideas and sentience expressed in forms of motion... Dance is the inclination of primal peoples to idealize action as a magical force."

-Jamake Highwater, The Primal Mind

The test for any human act or activity could be: Does it resonate, is it in tune, is it in time and step with the larger choreography? The answers come not through any exercise of logic, but through the give-and take feedback of movement within a natural continuum.

No one has to teach you how to move to different styles of music. As soon as the song comes on, your body bypasses the brain with the help of pleasure-enhancing endomorphins, then immediately synchronizes its corporal and spiritual relationship to the beat and sound. No one has to tell their body not to waltz to a reggae skank. Nor can we tell our bodies that everything's okay when they know better, or not to feel good just because our social selves are ashamed.

On the other hand, our minds tend to be the handmaidens of the dominant paradigm-- mirroring its constructs in the rigid mechanizations of rational, Cartesian thought. No matter what the other benefits, objective thought takes us out of body, out of time, out of the immediate experience of the dance. The

Cont'd

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dance, to the contrary, takes us gratefully out of our minds.

In dance, the motion of our becoming links us with the groove, frees us from our century's militant march. Dance celebrates the physicality of our is-ness-- body inseparable from spirit, lovingly and rhythmically coupled in the grasp of eternal present-time. If we're fortunate or diligent enough, if we're really blessed we may each begin a process of dancing our way back into being, doing, meaning. A dance of reconnection and responsibility. Of sensuality and sacrament. And of re-membering: learning to become plain members again.

But immersion in the dance, whether through design or enchantment, can be a mighty difficult personal process to go through. Full engagement with reality is threatening not only to the dominant structures, but also to many of us seeking an alternative way. After all, it begins with the pained stripping away of the opaque film, exposing the explicit colors of our wounded world. And the shredding of protective layers of insulation, layers separating each acculturated human from the direct experience of the world surrounding and containing us.

Our reinitiation may come the day we first learn to hear the cries of other humans, chewed up and spit out by some heartless mechanism of modern society. Next, perhaps, we may come to sense the anguish of the grass cropped and

poisoned in every yard, begin to visualize the lush green world that once existed beneath the concrete and asphalt of our structures and roads, and to mourn its tragic absence. The sad fate of people in the next restaurant booth over begin to have an effect on your meal. Once we make the "agreement" to really engage, to really feel, we may begin to pick up on the pain of ancient forests felled several states away. Or sense the panic of those species pushed through the wall into bleak and irreversible extinction.

Some of you may wonder why you seemed to feel disproportionately tortured by concerns of life and death and fulfillment at such an early age. Or why some of your brothers and sisters, the friends and peers who watched the same television programs, attended the same schools, and hung out in the same places never seemed to experience things in the same intense, personal way. Others were likely shutting themselves off to their dreams at a time when you began to live your life according to your visions.

You've probably felt, or continue to feel as Aldo Leopold described it: "alone in a world of wounds." In time however, our allegiance to the Spirit, our adherence to the beat put us in the same energetic channel as others like us, people of like heart that we seem to have known forever the first time our eyes meet. We begin to run into our totems and allies with amazing and

unpredictable frequency, temporal and spatial juxtapositions beyond any theory of "synchronicity." It seems like magic, but it's all a part of becoming enjoined, trained, and assigned.

For me it's a process that's well worth the pain! Embracing the potential agony of awakeness, one is simultaneously rewarded with the rich bounty of mindful sensations. We become freed up from the dynamic of endlessly "going mental," become engaged instead in the truth and intensity of immediate experience. No longer is the flesh and fancy of the moment lost to objective evaluation or past and future scenarios.

We are, in fact, given a capacity for ecstasy equal to our capacity for suffering. The agony of feeling what's being done to us and to this Earth is accompanied by sensual immersion in animal bliss. And with the experiential joy that comes from acting as a conscious, proactive agent of this living planet.

Putting the finishing touches on this manuscript, I find myself coaxed outdoors by a pair of attention loving ravens, taking turns executing loop-dee-loops above my wife's brimming compost pile. The trees are all stretching, first one way and then the next, in perfect rhythmic union. Tall winter grasses do the Hawaiian hoola, and the Sweet Medicine River undulates to a beat that even I can hear. And there, in the trees of your own yard, in the spinning moves of your gleeful toddlers, in the gesticulating clouds and the movements of your conscious human allies: an invitation to the dance.



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A Wild Women's gathering

The end of every July finds a circle of women getting in touch with their wilder selves, deep in the mountains of New Mexico's Gila wildlands.

The first lesson I learned doing groups, was that form doesn't really matter. Or maybe it matters, but it keeps changing. Either way, I did way more worrying about the particulars of our activities than was necessary. An opening talk ended up a grieving circle, clearing the way for the deepest experiencing of awe, love and joy! A moonless hike turned into an opportunity for all of us to exceed our imagined limitations!

Like everything else in this magical canyon, events unfolded according to the needs of the participants, the influence of our experiences, and the direction of Spirit. The wildflowers bursting with color, the shade of the cottonwood trees and the coolness of the water are all unplanned, but they're perfect nonetheless! The kinds of delicious wild greens I add to our meals, will depend on what's growing at the time. One of my first lessons in facilitating, then, was to not let schedules and ideas get in the way!

If I'm anxious, it's only because I want the women making their pilgrimages here to get the most out of their time here. It seems to take a whole day just to slough off the vibe of airports and cars, to still the mind enough to begin noticing where we are in the now! There are just so many waking hours in a lifetime, and so few are allotted for solitude or prayer, getting together with our fellow sisters, or soaking up the lessons of Nature, dancing and cuddling in the arms of sweet Mother Earth! But here we were, welcomed by an ancient place of power, encircled by a protective river, feeling safe enough to take risks. And to face truth....

The maps list this as the San Francisco River, named after the only Saint I could ever relate to, that lover of animals: St. Francis. But to the "old ones" it was the Sweet Medicine, and together with the echoing cliffs it both mirrored and amplified truths. Even the ones we don't really want to hear. We don't have to say a thing to people for them to feel it themselves, being brought face to face with suppressed fears and unfulfilled dreams! For tens of thousands of years this bend in the canyon was a ritual center for the Mogollon people, pit-house and cliff dwellers who needed their own ritual time and focus in order to stay in alignment with their spirit filled environment. Like us, they used ecstatic dance, solo quests and the heat of the sweat lodge to help keep their evolving left-brains in check.

I admit it's not as hard for me to stay present and joyful as you might think. I had to struggle to fake any degree of competency in college and at work, and seem to naturally loiter in the here and now. Like some canyon animal, whenever I'm not having to focus on real pains, I'm blissed out watching butterflies do loop-dee-loops in the sky! If the right-brain is like a little girl's sandbox, or like a big box of colors, then that's where I want to be! It's this trait that makes it easier for me to teach by example, than to write an article like this! It's so easy for words to intrude, when it's time to connect or grieve or play!

Connection was the first thing I thought of, when the idea for a women's gathering came up. I love the company of women, and wanted to connect with others who love Nature and life and being a woman as much as I do. And most importantly, I wanted to help connect them to themselves through this special place and the energy of our sacred circles. It's like you can access the magical caves of Ireland and the ruins of Machu Pichu by going deep enough in a single place anywhere, but especially through this canyon doorway to the all!

When I decided to call these annual events The Wild Women's Gathering, I didn't mean "wild" as in out of control, or a "wild party" or whatever. I meant wild like "authentic, original nature," moving to the rhythms of a wild, wild world! Being wild is being in touch with our hungers and hurts, needs and desires, moon cycles and life cycles. Being wild is passionately valuing the living Earth we're a part of, nourishing her, and then standing up when she's threatened.

The results, if we can even talk about results, have seldom been what anyone expected. One woman remembered what she loved most about her husband, and others have found the strength to leave unsatisfying relationships. One young girl came to terms with her attraction to others of the same sex, teens have considered this their rite of passage to empowered adulthood, and my elders have used their time here to accept and "own" their cronehood. And everyone gets the benefit of feeling their truest hearts, together with other heart-full women! For months and years afterwards I get letters saying what a strong experience someone has had here, and all

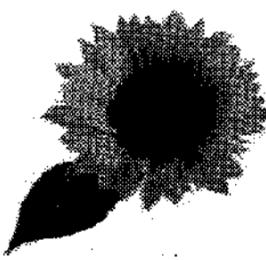
the ways that she has found to act out her dreams, or fulfill her "most meaningful purpose" since her days in the canyon. I love what we were able to give, and I so appreciate what each gave me in return.

When the swimming and dancing are done, the tears are all soaked up by the ground, and the songs and laughter of re-wilded women continues vibrating off of the holy crimson cliffs. One by one the sisters pack up, and wind their way down the canyon towards their cars. I watch until they are out of sight, waving like the wind swept pines. Once the last seeker has gone the river seems to wrap around me like a cushy comforter. And in the stirrings of the current I can feel the movement happening in these sisters' lives, growing and flowing wilder than ever!

I hold tight to the way our farewell hugs felt, and hold tight to everything we shared and learned. But it isn't long before I've lost track of time again, bending over to lift and fluff the grass that marked the circle where we'd sat.

Loba is currently looking for a publisher for Lob's Loving Kitchen, a book of recipes for both great eating and a mindful life. Throughout the year she facilitates women's quests and wilderness retreats. Contact: The Earthen Spirituality Project, Box 516, Reserve, NM 87830 <earthway@concentric.net>, or check out their website: <www.concentric.net/~earthway>. This year's Wild Women's Gathering will be held July 29-August 5, in the mountains of SW New Mexico.

-Loba



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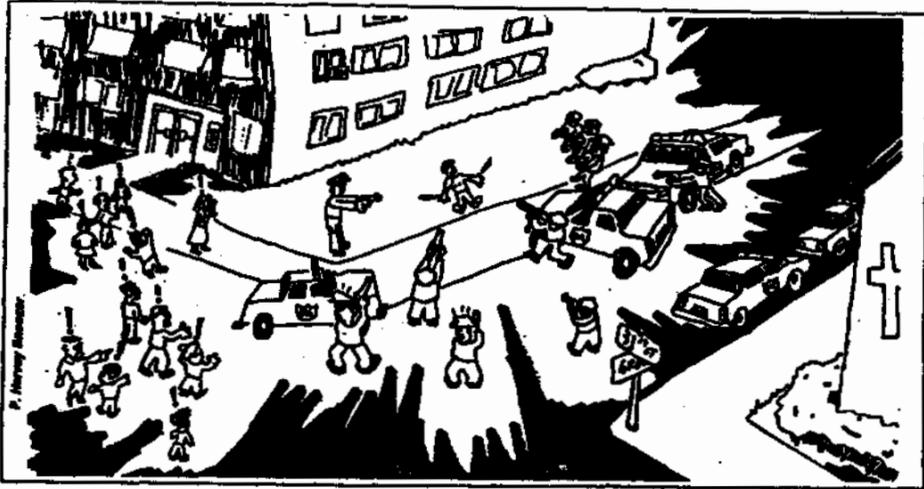
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Not in our town ?



An ugly little incident occurred in Normal last February. Not the sort of thing to come to the attention of the mainstream press, but that certainly does not make it insignificant, or the *Post Amerikan's* coverage of it now less than timely. Race still matters, no less than manners and common decency.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Bloomington-Normal area, Other Ports, is an import and gift store on Normal's main downtown drag of North St. Other Ports offers a culturally diverse range of gift and decor items--jewelry, clothes, personal care, furniture, decorative items, books --You get the idea. The store features goods representing five continents, a dizzying number cultural and ethnic traditions, and price ranges, running from 50 cents to hundreds of dollars, with many items being museum quality. In other words, owner Bob Steinman seems as committed to including as much of the Blooming-ton-Normal community as possible, with something for every wallet size.

Unfortunately, diversity attracts all types of people, and not all customers bring their best behavior with them when they go shopping.

Whether the stone strikes the pitcher, or the pitcher strikes the stone, it's bad for the pitcher

Brent Rusk, one of Mr. Steinman's full-time employees, happened to be staffing the store alone, when a middle-aged woman, her teenage daughter, and a friend came into browse. While the mother selected some *bendios* (small rocks, pebble really, meant to bring good fortune), and wanted to buy a bamboo plant, the daughter moved over to the personal care section. Picking up a bottle of body lotion, she called over to her mother "Mom, this is what niggers use!"

Mr. Rusk, who is African-American, was standing about 8 to 10 feet away, close enough certainly to hear the insult, but chose to ignore the first insult. Certainly, you would expect the mother to reprove her daughter; calculated insults, racial or otherwise, should constitute very bad form in anyone's book. Furthermore, shop employees may be there to serve customers, but accepting abuse most assuredly is not in anybody's job description.

Since her mother ignored her, the daughter called out again "Mom, this is what niggers use!" At that point, Mr. Rusk asked, politely but firmly, that the party leave the store. The mother became belligerent, resistant, and apparently tried to justify her daughter's appallingly rude, insensitive, racist behavior by claiming her daughter is biracial, as if somehow that gives license to casual racism. If her daughter, whom Mr. Rusk judges to be somewhere between the ages of 14 to 16, is indeed biracial, that makes this incident all the more disturbing.

By that time, Mr. Steinman had returned to the store, heard Mr. Rusk's story, and told the police that if he, Mr. Rusk, had not asked them to leave, he would have fired him. One suspects, however, that Mr. Steinman is adverse to customers abusing his employees period, whether the insults are racist or not. In the meantime, Mr. Steinman advised Mr. Rusk to talk to his attorney.

Help! It's the police!

It gets nastier, folks, because the police came by the next day, around lunch time, as Mr. Rusk had arranged with them for their follow-up, cuffed him, took him to the station, and booked him. An irate Mr. Steinman, fortunately present at the time, bailed his employee out. He then went through the credit card receipts from the date of the incident, hoping he could find a witness. Luckily, a young woman, an ISU student, willingly testified that, in her opinion, not only did Mr. Rusk give an accurate description of the incident, and he showed remarkable restraint, given the level of provocation specifically, not to mention the way he was being treated generally. The upshot was that the prosecutor dropped the charges. Eventually, officials with Bloomington's police department apparently told Mr. Rusk, on the q.t., they thought that, from a law enforcement perspective, the whole incident very badly handled.

"Poor self-esteem"--more than just an annoying '90's buzz phrase

When interviewing Mr. Rusk for this story, I asked him if he thought he had been set up, if this was deliberate racial provocation:

"No, I think that's just the way they [these customers] talk in their house. I've never had

any [racial] harassment in town before. When the police *have* pulled me over a couple of times, it's always been for legitimate reasons."

When ignorance reigns, the ignorant go shopping

Given their resistance, Mr. Rusk simply reiterated that they would have to leave, first by laying his hand gently on the woman's back to escort her out. When she started making more of a scene, he tried to take her by the elbow. She pulled back, which made him tug at her sleeve. She was kicking at him by that point, but finally she, her friend, and her daughter did leave. The mother's parting shot was "You haven't heard the last of this."

The Normal police did eventually come to the store later that day, to get Mr. Rusk's statement, and apparently advised him that he should have handled things differently, as by touching the customer, he left himself open to assault charges, even though her gestures were violent, though his weren't.

"So," I asked, "you don't believe you were stopped for driving while black?"

"No."

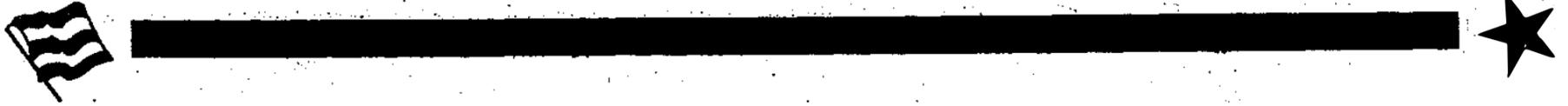
Get an agent, ladies. Jerry Springer should be calling soon

Many people of color toss the "n-word" around pretty freely, of course, but, I must say, even though I'm white, that it offends me. I know it's supposed to mean something different when one black person uses the slur to the other, just like gay and lesbian people calling each other "queer" is qualitatively different from a straight person using the epithet. I find that offensive too. Insults are insults; words do wound and hurt; it's nonsense to pretend otherwise. I for one am highly suspicious of recuperative arguments. Using a self-identifying insult supposedly takes the sting out, becomes empowering. In my opinion, however, it just plants, however unconsciously, little seeds of self-hatred.

My kid's never wrong! Because if she is, I might be too

More than that, there is no justification for abusing another person, whether you've had a bad hair day, or think that your genes or marriage entitle you to indulge in bad language. I do wonder about that young girl though, and the lessons she culled from this incident. That her mother will excuse and justify any sort of behavior on her part, to the point of physical retaliation, and even an abuse of legal process? That shopping at a store frequently grants you liberty to treat the employees with an appalling lack of respect and courtesy? That she won't have to take responsibility for her actions, since her mother won't take responsibility for either hers or her own? And that it's okay for her to define herself by that hateful racial slur, the "n-word"?

--Dr. Attitude



John Lennon and the IRA

The following appeared as a letter in the web magazine Seeing Red.com Roger Collins is a veteran Irish Red who writes regularly for the zine. Roger heard the story directly from Joe Cahill, a ranking member of the IRA.

Around the anniversary of John Lennon's murder there was a minor polemic about John's attitude towards the Irish struggle. Both "Marxists" and "tough" militarists denied a story that John and Yoko had supported the IRA. The denial was based on "logical" grounds, i.e. the pacifism, the life style....

Anyhow the polemic was between an anonymous figure and several well-known radicals. To cut to the chase; the unknown "Lennonist" turned out to be Joe Cahill, he who from 1984 until retirement at age 82 in 1998, had served as "P. O' Neill." [sender/signer of IRA official bulletins --ed. note] Didn't the old man post on the web site an autographed photo of John and Yoko picketing #10 Downing Street, while carrying placards calling for victory to the IRA?

Then Joe posted the story of the secret meetings with John & Yoko, of the million pounds in cash and the request that it be used to buy arms. It seems that a few months before the murder John came to Joe Cahill with an offer of a world tour to raise funds for the IRA. The tour was blocked by various figures on the Army Committee; figures that Joe regarded with utter contempt for their political and cultural sectarianism. A few months later and Lennon was gunned down by the archetypal lone, mad etc. Odd to say, but the old fella suspects the fine hand of MI5 or the CIA behind the murder....

Slan,

Roger Collins

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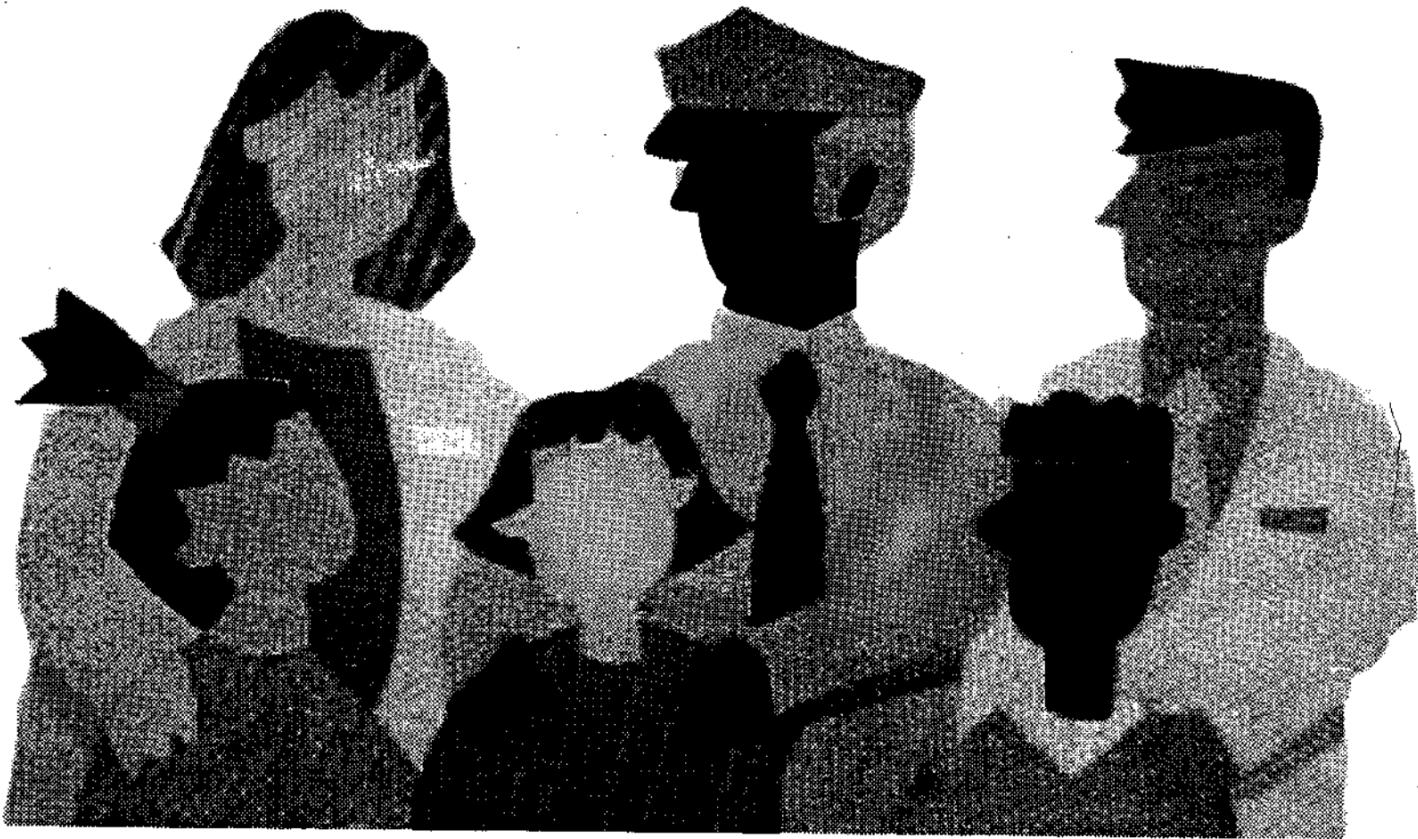


Nice slogan, but...

We need to realize what's really *not in our town* is a racially balanced police force. If our slogan really matters, then we all need to work to change the racial make up of our local law enforcement agencies.

Public confidence in policing comes in part from seeing people like yourself on the force.

Tolerance and respect of diversity can only permeate a public institution if it is racially integrated and reflective of the community it serves.



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