

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

The Post Amerikan Project

11-1987

Volume 16, Number 4

Post Amerikan

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Post makes public television!

See page two.

Bloomington-Normal

Nov.-Dec. 1987

25¢

POST AMERIKAN

Vol. 16 No. 4

Thanksgiving, 1987

Gee, it's great to be home!



Appreciates a quiet evening at home alone with Granny's corsets.

Has hated husband for 40 years. Is attempting slow cholesterol poisoning.

Shoplifted pumpkin pie from 7-11. Claims he baked it.

Secretly invested Auntie's nest egg in stock market in September on margin.

Plans to hitchhike to Billy Idol concert and party with band.

Was sodomized by unidentified family member, 6 a.m.

Plans to induce vomiting later in private.

Is being blackmailed by Aerobics Instructor.

Would rather go home and open a can of dog food, as usual.

Keeps kiddie porn locked in safe at office.

Reads Post Amerikan in bathroom.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 168
BLOOMINGTON, IL 61702

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
POST AMERIKAN
POST OFFICE BOX 3452
BLOOMINGTON, IL 61702

Bloomington-Normal

POST AMERIKAN

25¢

The Post Amerikan is an independent community newspaper providing information and analysis that is screened out of or downplayed by establishment news sources. We are a non-profit, worker-run collective that exists as an alternative to the corporate media. Decisions are made collectively by staff members at our regular meetings.

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

Stories solicited

Have you always desired to be a Post Amerikan writer? Here's your chance. Our next deadline is Jan. 7, Thursday. We have several story ideas without writers as yet:

1. The ten worst toys given for Christmas.
2. Book, theater, and record reviews--in fact, we have some complementary LPs here at the office, begging to be heard.
3. Investigation of the local police sex ring.
4. First or second-hand stories from the local refugee population.
5. The Eureka gang rape, done by members of Reagan's old fraternity.
6. Consumer report on local banks, comparing their rates and services.
7. Consumer reports on landlords of student apartment complexes.

If you'd like to discuss these or other story ideas, call Bill at 829-7617.

Thanks

This issue in your hands is thanks to Laurie, Val, Deborah, Cathy, Sue L., Sue F., Marty, Dave, David, Kara, Bobby, Bill, Bumper, Ralph, Bob, Deb, Joan, J.R. and Susie (coordinators), and probably others we forgot.

Good numbers

Alcoholics Anonymous.....	828-5049
American Civil Liberties Union.....	454-7223
Bloomington Housing Authority.....	829-3360
Clare House (Catholic Workers).....	828-4035
Community for Social Action.....	452-4867
Connection House.....	829-5711
Countering Domestic Violence.....	827-4005
Dept. Children/Family Services.....	828-0022
Draft Counseling.....	452-5046
HELP (transportation for senior citizens, handicapped).....	828-8301
Ill. Dept of Public Aid.....	827-4621
Ill. Lawyer Referral.....	800-252-8916
Kaleidoscope.....	828-7346
McLean Co. Health Dept.....	454-1161
Mid Central Community Action.....	829-0691
Mobile Meals.....	828-8301
McLean County Center for Human Services.....	827-5351
National Health Care Services--abortion assistance, 1-800-322-1622	
Nuclear Freeze Coalition.....	828-4195
Occupational Development Center.....	828-7324
Operation Recycle.....	829-0691
Parents Anonymous.....	827-4005
PATH: Personal Assistance Telephone Help.....	827-4005
Or.....	800-322-5015
Phone Friends.....	827-4008
Planned Parenthood....medical..	827-4014
bus/couns/educ..	827-4368
Post Amerikan.....	828-7232
Prairie State Legal Service.....	827-5021
Prairie Alliance.....	828-8249
Project Oz.....	827-0377
Rape Crisis Center.....	827-4005
Sunnyside Neighborhood Center.....	827-5428
TeleCare (senior citizens).....	828-8301
Unemployment comp/job service.....	827-6237
United Farmworkers support.....	452-5046
UPIC.....	827-4026

Apology

If you are like most of our loyal subscribers, you are probably wondering why the hell you are just now receiving your September issue of the Post Amerikan, when the September issue has been on the streets for more than a month. It would be easy for us to blame it on others--rampaging fascists, white supremacists, the contras, Robert Bork, or Jesse Smart. And while these others may be guilty of a lot of things, we have only ourselves to blame for not getting the Post to you on time.

As you know from our summer issue, we've been going through some tough times around here. Many of our long-time staffers are leaving us, and we have a small group of newcomers who have recently joined us. In the mess of reorganization, we failed to get subscribers' issues out when we should have. This is extremely embarrassing for us. After all, if you are committed enough to us to subscribe, we should be committed enough to you to get the paper to you on time.

In order to make amends, and to thank you for your support, we will be extending your subscription an extra issue. This is the least we can do for all you have done for us.

Again, thanks for your support and patience--and we promise to get our act together next time.

--The Post Amerikan staff.

Post Sellers

BLOOMINGTON

Amtrak Station, 1200 W. Front
The Back Porch, 402 N. Main
Bakery Banc, 901 N. Main
Bloomington Public Library (in front)
Bus Depot, 533 N. East
Common Ground, 516 N. Main
Convenient Mart, Emerson and Main
Front and Center Building
Hit Shed, 606 N. Main
Hungry House, 103 W. Jefferson
Law and Justice Center, W. Front St., Lee St. (100 N.)
Main and Miller Streets
Medusa's Adult World, 420 N. Madison
Mike's Market, 1013 N. Park
Mr. Donut, 1310 N. Park
Pantagraph (in front), 301 W. Washington
The Park Store, Wood & Allin
People's Drugs, Oakland & Morrisey
Red Fox, 918 W. Market
Susie's Cafe, 602 N. Main
U.S. Post Office, 1511 E. Empire (at exit)
U.S. Post Office, Center & Monroe
Upper Cut, 409 N. Main
Wash House, 609 N. Clinton
Washing Well, E. Front St.

NORMAL

Avanti's, 407 S. Main
Big Rudy's, 107 E. Beaufort
ISU University Union, 2nd floor
Hovey Hall, ISU (in front)
Midstate Truck Plaza, U.S. 51 north
Mother Murphy's, 111 North St.
North & Broadway, southeast corner
White Hen Pantry, 207 Broadway (in front)

You're invited to the Post Amerikan's

Gala Holiday Fete on Dec. 12

Join us for canapes, music, and spirits

\$10

Call Laurie at 829-8460 for tickets
...from the folks who brought you Soiree Francaise

As shown on TV ...

Like a lot of people I know, I was parked in front of the television last Wednesday night to watch "It Was 20 Years Ago Today" on PBS, captivated by the counter-culture nostalgia of the '60s.

I cheered out loud at the TV through those old film clips of all my heroes and heroines. I got a lump in my throat during the contemporary interviews with the veterans of the times. See, it didn't make me sad at all. It made me proud, proud of a bunch of people I don't even know. I thought they were just going to go on camera and reminisce, but I could tell that their commitment, their humor and the conviction of their beliefs were still in tact. Take Abbie Hoffman, for example. He's still one heck of a smart aleck trouble maker. In fact, I was so busy listening to his rap that I didn't even notice that he was wearing the Post Amerikan T-shirt that we sent him last year.

Phoebe Caulfield broke the news to me the next day, knowing I would react like a typical groupie. I jumped up and down, shouted gleefully and slapped my thigh. Dang, I was happy. Later, in time of quiet reflection, I started to feel kind of bad. Was this the crowning achievement of the Post Amerikan? That we managed to surreptitiously get our name splashed on national T.V.? There was still plenty of injustice of every variety flaunting itself in Bloomington-Normal, let alone the world. Some revolutionary I make.

Then I decided I was being too hard on myself. Some modern woman I make. No, it wasn't the crowning achievement of the Post Amerikan. It was an unsolicited show of support and respect from someone I admire. So there! And, Abbie, if you're reading, thanks a lot. Next time you're in Central Illinois...

LVD

Moving?

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

Name: _____
Street: _____
City/State/Zip: _____

ISU students protest tuition hike

Due to cuts in state funding, the ISU Board of Regents announced in September that the basic cost of tuition would increase \$150, beginning this spring semester. Expenses for on-campus room and board would also increase by about \$100 a semester. As one might expect, this news was not well received by the student body.

The immediate target of objections was Gov. Thompson, who only recently announced that the state's finances were in fine order and that all programs would be maintained at current levels of funding without a tax increase. He found it necessary to present an expanded revenue package to the legislature's spring session, however, and when they rejected it he slashed higher education by almost \$60 million to balance the tighter budget.

The student reaction at ISU coalesced around the SBBB (Student Body Board of Directors), which is the main organ of student government. As a growing number of other student and faculty organizations pledged their support, the "Day of Action Coalition" officially announced its existence on Oct. 1. SBBB president Tom Meiron said that their goal was to persuade Thompson to call a special session of the assembly to approve a modest tax increase which would restore higher education funding to the previous level.

Just about the only campus organization which didn't join the coalition was the College Republicans. They explained that they too were opposed to the education curs, but that they could not agree with the proposal of a tax increase. Judging from letters printed in the Daily Vidette (the campus paper), this decision cost the CRs a lot of popularity.

The focus of the coalition, as its name implies, was the "Day of Action," which took place on Wednesday, October 21. Students were encouraged to boycott classes that day and to attend a rally on the quad at noon. The majority of faculty members seemed ready to cooperate, agreeing not to schedule tests or other crucial events that day even if they would not cancel class entirely. After all, faculty salaries are dependent on state funding too, and have not even kept pace with cost of living increases in the past several years.

These preparations drew criticism from the Pantagraph, which suggested that students were only looking for an excuse to cut classes. There was also an editorial to the effect that ISU faculty are little more than overpaid high school teachers, considering how little research they do. Answering these poorly informed pieces of writing is not my main purpose here, but they illustrate how out of touch that paper can be with the campus community.

The big day arrived, and I managed to be on hand in the quad at noon. The crowd amounted to about 500, which seemed to please everyone--despite the fact that this number is less than 2.5% of the total student population. There were several dozen speakers, including "concerned students" (some with personal tales of financial distress) as well as representatives of various groups supporting the coalition.

Whenever someone needed a moment to collect their thoughts, they seemed to fall back on asking, "What's up?" to which the crowd replied, "Tuition!" Despite some anonymous yelling about heading over to lay siege to city hall again (as in the notorious "beer riot" of '84), the group dispersed peacefully after about an hour and a half.

ISU isn't the only school affected by this issue, of course, and similar events were held concurrently on other Illinois campuses. Students at Northern blocked highway traffic, but dispersed in time to avoid any arrests; police were videotaping them to provide solid evidence in case they decided to crack down. Events were also held in Chicago and Springfield, where about 400 demonstrated at the State House, including 75 people from ISU.

Despite these efforts, prospects of the legislature restoring the money and tuition going back down do not look good at this point. Rallying on the quad may have given the students a feeling of power, but the political reality is sobering.

The rate of voter registration (let alone actual voting) among college students these days is well below that of the general public. Office-holders know this, and understand that in a very real sense, students are a part off their constituency they can afford to ignore. In the shark tank of lobbying groups, students are very small fish indeed.

Is it any wonder that campus groups concerned with issues of conscience (such as U. S. intervention in Central America) find it so hard to make headway, when only 500 students out of over 20,000 will even show up to complain about \$250 more (at least) per semester coming out of their own pockets?

However, the coalition at ISU has announced that it intends to remain in existence, changing its name to the "Action Coalition," with the general goal of increasing student political participation. An immediate objective may be to attempt the election of a student to the Normal Town Council. A look at almost any issue of the Vidette will tell you why there may actually be enough student interest to accomplish this: they are angry about having keg parties broken up by the Normal PD every weekend. Now there's a lofty and selfless cause to rally behind, eh?

Yes, it's sad but true; most students are a lot more interested in securing their "right to party" than in what their government is doing to Nicaraguan farmers, for instance. But at least they're showing concern over something. It may be that learning to defend one's own interests, however selfish, must come before one is ready to stand up for others.

--Dave Thompson

Galery plus L to open... no Top 40 expected

Yes, the rumor is true: The Gallery (formerly the Galery) is preparing to open its doors by early December. Downtown Normal will once again have a commercial club showcasing live music.

Don't be misled--this will not be another incarnation of the Galery by Ray "Spike" Spakowski. Indeed, Spakowski has sold his business and the building that housed it to Kup Tcheng, an ISU administrator who, among other things, owns and operates Mother Murphy's.

Kup's approach to the Gallery is a radical one--he sees it not as a business venture, but as a way to help cultivate the music scene in B/N. As part of the effort, he plans to purchase a top-of-the-line sound system (an expensive prospect), thereby allowing fledgling bands to play on equipment currently beyond their means.

Furthermore, Kup intends for the Gallery to cater to persons of all ages. Monday through Wednesday nights will likely be sans alcohol, so that anyone may enter and enjoy the bands.

Kup leans heavily towards progressive and alternative music; he doesn't expect many top 40 groups to be playing the Gallery. Moreover, if the situation presents itself, he will book nationally recognized progressive acts.

Kup hopes to keep the downstairs Gallery more low key, as an area where people can sit and converse. He will be serving food, although he hasn't yet decided on what kinds.

Kup Tcheng's approach to the Gallery is both commendable and intelligent. As he sees it, B/N doesn't need another Bannigan's. Let's see if the community can substantiate that point of view.

--MJ



ONE MORNING, BOB BORK
WOKE UP AND FOUND THAT
THE LIBERALS HAD DUPED
THE SENATE INTO STEALING
HIS EXPECTED PRIZE

Workers taken

As the Reaganomics version of a flourishing economy becomes more and more a reality, we're seeing more and more companies that are perfectly content to take advantage of the large number of folks who can't find decent jobs and have to take what they can get.

Case in point: the thriving traffic in flesh that is the cleaning contractor's business. Specifically, a company called Professional Cleaning Systems (PCS).

PCS hires folks to do janitorial work at the businesses and homes that have contracted with them. Sort of like Manpower, only for maids and janitors. Let's see, then, what a typical employment history at PCS might look like.

Jane Doe reads the ad in the Pantagraph asking for office cleaners. The ads says she can pick her own hours. It's not really what she wants, but either she needs short term work, she needs work now, or she's a housewife who hasn't been trained to do anything else but clean, and doesn't feel like she has a choice. So she sighs and puts her job hunting clothes on and goes to the office to apply.

She fills out the application. They check her references. If they decide she's good enough to scrub the toilets of Bloomington's business elite, they call her back and set her up with a trial position. She's told that she'll be paid \$3.65/hour, which, she thinks to herself, is at least marginally higher than minimum wage. But she discovers that 25¢/hr. of that is uniform allowance. The uniform consists of her blue jeans, sneakers, and a sleazy collared T-shirt. She is charged \$11.00 for the sleazy T-shirt. For one sleazy T-shirt. And then she is told that she must wear the shirt every day, and it must be clean. She is told that many employees buy two or three shirts so as to save doing laundry every night.

She does a little math in her head. These shirts cover 44 hours of her uniform allowance. If she only buys one, she'll have to pay for soap and washer/dryer time to do laundry every night, which is not cheap. Or she can buy two or three, bringing her up to 132 hours of her uniform allowance. And she still has to do laundry two or three times a week. Add in the wear that cleaning work will inflict on her jeans, requiring replacement. Ditto the sneakers. And, lo, she discovers she'll be working for less than minimum wage.

But she really needs the job so she sticks it out. The next thing they give her is an interesting little form to sign that says if she quits without the customary two weeks notice, the pay on her last paycheck will be cut back to minimum wage--she'll lose that illusory uniform allowance. And now her warning buzzer is really beeping.

Obviously, she thinks, they must have an incredible turnover rate, or they wouldn't need the form. Even so, most companies who treat their employees fairly manage to get two-weeks' notice without resorting to coercion. So she wonders what on earth they do to their employees that makes this blackmail technique necessary. And she begins to wonder if she shouldn't get out while the gettin's good. But she needs the money, so...

The next thing the nice folks at PCS do is schedule a training session. They make it clear that



this training session is mandatory. So she goes, although it's her day off, and she has bad, almost ominous, feelings about this training.

It starts badly. It's obvious to her that these people do not, as they say, have their shit together. She does a lot of waiting. She watches a dumb video that takes twenty minutes to say "Keep those T.P. dispensers full!" She leafs through the training manual, noting that the writer of the manual is functionally illiterate, and that the writing and grammar are so bad she can hardly figure out what it says. She wonders if this is an attempt on their part to soothe her political conscience by letting her know that they hire the handicapped. But she doesn't think they're that smart.

Finally they whisk the trainees through demo of the uses of various chemicals and tools. Since this demonstration is apparently the meat of the training, she wonders why she had to be here for two hours to hear twenty minutes of information.

At the end, the trainees are all asked to fill out a quiz in the back of the manual. To Jane's amazement, she finds she's being asked to answer questions with little or no bearing on the previous lecture. So she bluffs her way through, since by this time she's not sure she cares anyway. She is especially amused by the last two questions, which ask if she thought the training session was helpful, and what she thought the best part was.

Was it good for you, too, baby?

She gives the dishonest answer they are clearly looking for, and hands in the quiz. They also collect the manual--apparently we can't have that top secret cleaning info available to the rest of the free world.

Then a brave soul from the ranks asks where to sign to get paid for this training session. And they are all informed that they had "volunteered" for the "mandatory" training session, and no pay will be forthcoming.

Can you say "contradiction"? I knew you could.

The actual job is no surprise to our Jane--they want her to do more work than is humanly possible, in less time, and for scant wages and less encouragement. Nothing new here. The thing that surprises her is that she's developing injuries. She'd always thought of vacuuming as fairly harmless work, but she's developed a nasty bruise on the palm of her hand from whipping around those industrial vacuums at superhuman speeds, and the feeling in her fingers is starting to go. The other women vacuuming tell her that everybody gets those bruises, and they don't go away as long as you're vacuuming. No one seems to find it remarkable that her hand is asleep more than awake. All in a day's work. Everyone else has similar complaints, but no one sees them as something worthy of informing the boss about. Just us slaves down here in the galley, don't you worry about us.

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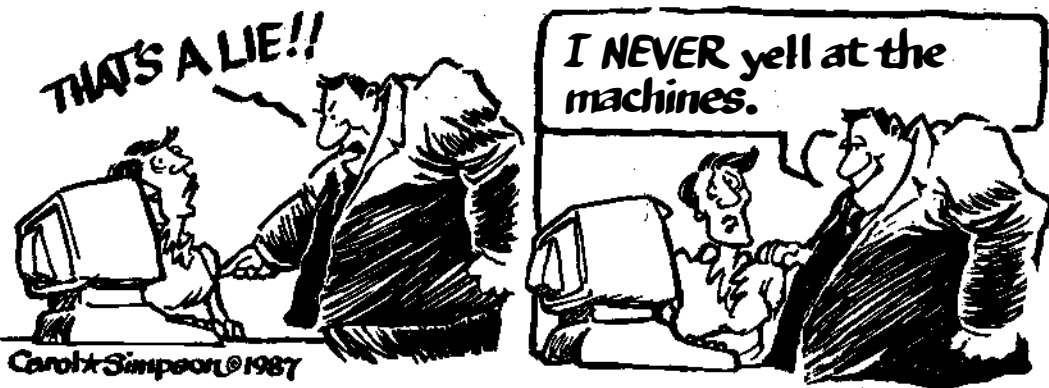
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to the cleaners



In a couple of months she's due for an evaluation, but she doesn't get one for a couple more, and the other employees see that as normal, too. When she finally gets her evaluation, and qualifies for the 25¢/hr. raise, it takes them another two or three months to actually get it to her, and even then it's not actually on the paycheck--she has to ask for it. They ask her to clean some private houses, and when she asks how much, they say twenty dollars, flat rate. For a whole house. About five or six hours work, at least. She says no thanks. (See? She's starting to get wise.) They finally offer to promote her to supervisor, at \$4.50/hour plus bonuses if she gets no complaints at all. None. She goes for that, only to discover that the job includes about two unclocked, unpaid hours of work a day. Some raise. And she has to ask for her bonuses, they're not automatically included, and it takes them a couple of months to

remember that they promoted her at payroll time.

But the real final straw is when a fellow employee says, "You know, you don't belong here. You can get better than this. Me, I can't do any better. People like me belong here. Not you."

And she remembers the BMWs and Porsches the "executives" at PCS drive. And finally she can't stand to work for a place that so gleefully encourages its employees to think they're worthless, and subhuman. So she quits. Without notice. And gets her pay docked. But she counts the cost as cheap, since she still has a vestige of self respect left. Too many of her fellow employees didn't.

While Jane is not a real person, all of the events that were described did happen. PCS may even be more abusive to its employees

than Owen Nursery. And it would be interesting to find out if the clients of PCS know how badly they treat their employees. Because one little article in the Post won't make 'em stop (Lord knows it hasn't worked for Owen Nursery), but if their clients were to find out, and decide that they can't support such an awful company, why that might have a real impact on the treatment of PCS employees.

PCS clients include: Carson's, Sears, Target, Kajima (a contractor at the Mitsubishi site), Paxton's, Country Companies, Lewis, Yockey and Brown, and many more.

--Chris M.

Classy Fried Ads



Hardworking woman, age 40, seeking woman of similar age for friendship. Interests include pinochle, music, books, movies, and camping. Write P.O. Box 936-R, Bloomington, IL 61702.

**Tell our advertisers
you saw their ad
in the Post-American**

What's wrong with this ad?

The adjoining ad appeared in The American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology (August-September 1987). At first glance it looks like a landmark, courageous enough to speak against the dangerous routine of pushing obstetric drugs. Wrong! Not only is this ad uninterested in condemning this "standard malpractice"-- it has the gall to blame the victims instead! Apparently street drug usage by women is the only drug problem they think is associated with the U.S.'s shameful infant mortality (death) and morbidity (birth defects, birth damage, and illness) rates.

No drug has ever been proven safe for the unborn. Period. This widely-accepted statement should be included in every anti-drug presentation to school kids. That means over-the-counter, prescription, and street drugs from conception on. Anything less is always playing the odds.

I'd also like to see hospitals show just how much they care by implementing programs for the prevention of obstetric drug use. They should have bright, cheery posters with the caption "Just Say 'No' to Obstetric Drugs!" Alongside these would be even bigger posters illustrating the many effective alternatives for preventing or relieving discomfort. The long list includes: warmth or cold, massage, upright positions of the woman's choice, stroking, hugging, acupressure, deep breathing, relaxation, visualization, kissing and breast stimulation by her partner, rest, food and drink as wanted, lots of pillows and other comfort measures, using orgasmic sounds, the mother's touching the baby's head as it comes down her vagina, verbal encouragement, constant companionship and nurturing.

The other really outrageous thing about this ad is the word order in the sentence "And knowing about it may prevent problems for you, mother, and baby." Notice who comes first. Advertisers in medical journals know their readers. Unfortunately they reinforce the paternalism, selfishness, and sometimes misogyny (hatred of women) so many women complain their obstetricians display. If we are to retain a few good obstetricians in our coming mostly-midwifery system, we want them to be decent and caring, as well as skilled. Ads like this one are not in the public interest!

--A Local Birth Activist

HOW MANY NEW DRUG ADDICTS HAVE YOU DELIVERED?



Even one more addict adds to the staggering number of drug abusers in our society. You, as a physician, are in a unique position to help reduce this number. Just ask your patient a simple question during her initial workup: *Are you using drugs?* Asking about drug use is no more an invasion of privacy than asking about exposure to German measles. It's just as important to her baby's health. And knowing about it may prevent serious problems for you, mother, and baby. Help free this generation—and the next—from drugs. Remember...

You'll never know unless you ask.

PARTNERSHIP FOR A DRUG-FREE AMERICA

AIDS didn't just happen

As early as 1981, Don Francis, a retrovirologist who directed AIDS research at the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, suspected that the strange variety of symptoms seen in gay men were all caused by "something new, maybe a retrovirus." But the researchers at the more prestigious National Institute of Cancer (NIC) did not listen to Francis. Instead, the NIC held useless seminars that assumed that whatever AIDS was, it was not infectious.

"The bitter truth was that AIDS did not just happen to America--it was allowed to happen by an array of institutions, all of which failed to perform their appropriate tasks to safeguard the public health," writes Randy Shilts in his recently published book And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic. "This failure of the system leaves a legacy of unnecessary suffering that will haunt the Western world for decades to come."

You keep wishing that Shilts' book were fiction, like The Andromeda Strain or some medical sleuth story with people's lives interwoven with political deception and scientific discoveries. But it isn't fiction. It's a well documented (630 pages), honestly presented history of our country's failure to deal with AIDS until "it was too late to do anything about it."

No money

Don Francis had spent the early months of 1982 agitating for more money for lab research into the epidemic of immune deficiency. Francis wanted to start injecting primates to see whether he could track down a virus; he was convinced that some virus was behind the disease, and scientists would never get to controlling it if they didn't first prove this key point. He wanted to use chimpanzees because their immune systems were most like humans'; chimps also were the most expensive lab animals. The chief of the Center for Infectious Disease had to give Francis the depressing news on the phone: "There is no money."

The culprits that Shilts castigates in his book are many--the Reagan administration, the federal scientific and health agencies, the blood-banking industry, feuding scientists, the media, some gay leaders.

And the heroes he depicts are people fighting within and against institutions that did not want to be bothered with whatever this new disease was because it was just "a gay problem," or affected only "a bunch of drug addicts."

Through more than 900 interviews and extensive Freedom of Information requests to obtain documents, Shilts shows that the Reagan administration ordered top public health officials to tell Congress they did not need any more money for AIDS even when they were writing memos to their supervisors begging for more funds.

The supplemental appropriations bill of 1982 set the pattern for how Congress and the Reagan administration would deal with AIDS for the next three years. The administration opposed the extra money, dispatching its agency chiefs to argue that they had all the funding they could use. Once the money was passed by Congress, however, the administration would not put itself in the politically delicate position of actually vetoing it. Ultimately, the money was made available, usually much later than the scientists needed it. The Reagan administration would never ask for it and insisted it didn't want it, but the money would be thrust upon the government anyway. It was a ritual of force-feeding.

Shilts points to epidemiological research that could not be completed because there was no money for clerks to tabulate the results of surveys, to lab work that could not be done because scientists could not afford a ventilated hood to pull contaminated air out of their laboratory.

Greedy bankers

Some of the sharpest criticism is directed at the blood-banking industry. Shilts claims that private blood banks resisted for nearly two years tests that could have screened out most infected blood.

Although no test for the AIDS virus was available until 1985, scientists knew two years earlier that people were getting AIDS from blood transfusions and blood-clotting products. Officials of the CDC urged blood banks to screen blood for hepatitis core antibodies, because a study had shown that 88 percent of the blood from gay AIDS patients and all the blood from IV-drug-using AIDS patients carried the antibodies.

The blood bankers refused, Shilts says, because such "surrogate testing" for AIDS would be costly and would force them to seek more blood donors to make up for the discarded blood.

Even when a test for the AIDS virus was developed, the Reagan administration delayed for two months the release of \$8.4 million that Congress had appropriated to speed the test to blood banks.

When the Office of Management and Budget released the proposed AIDS budget for the 1986 fiscal year, AIDS spending was reduced from the current level of \$96 million to \$85.5 million. At the CDC funds would be cut back by 18 percent, to just \$18.7 million. The government's planned appropriation for education aimed specifically at the gay community was \$250,000, which was to be channeled through the U.S. Conference of Mayors in an effort to ensure that no federal agency was in the business of telling gays how to perform sodomy safely. Altogether, not even 5 percent of the AIDS budget would go to prevention and education efforts.

Shilts, an openly gay reporter for the San Francisco Chronicle who has covered the AIDS epidemic since 1982, also criticizes the nation's newspapers and television stations for ignoring AIDS or only writing about it when a heterosexual angle could be found.

"The one institution with the most blood on its hands," says Shilts, "is the media. In a democracy, you depend on the media to tell you what's going on. I'm not an investigative genius. Anybody could have typed a letter and received half the documents I have in my book."

The May 1984 memo by Dr. Edward Brandt, assistant secretary for health, lifted the camouflage off administration claims that doctors had all resources they needed. Here was the Reagan-appointed assistant himself seeking \$56 million in new AIDS funds for 1984-85. Brandt's 22-page memo was leaked to the Washington Blade, a gay paper that specialized in investigative articles on AIDS funding, and to other major East Coast papers. The Blade ran the story on page one. But the eastern newspapers weren't printing stories about AIDS, so it was ignored.

Tragic lives

Shilts tells the story of the evolving epidemic through the lives of the people who were caught in it, as

victims, healers, or obstructionists.

One of the ugliest characters in the book is Gaetan Dugas, a French-Canadian flight attendant whom epidemiologists named "Patient Zero," because he is thought to be one of the first people with AIDS in North America. Even after he had been warned that he could be spreading a lethal disease, Dugas continued to jet across the continent, frequenting bath houses and infecting others.

Angered that someone had given him the disease, which was spreading purple lesions across his body, Dugas would turn up the lights after sex and say to his amazed partner, "Gay cancer. Maybe you'll get it, too." Dugas died in 1984.

One of the most moving portraits is of Gary Walsh, an Iowan who went to San Francisco in the 1970s to pioneer gay psychotherapy. Walsh thought nothing of his "funny skin rashes" in 1981, when AIDS was still called "gay cancer." He pulled inside himself when he realized that he had the same sickness that felled many of his friends.

Walsh contemplated suicide but decided against it, became celibate, and organized a candlelight march for people with AIDS that was imitated across the nation. The book tells of his final hours when he told his brother he loved him, and confided to a colleague: "I finally got it. I am love and light, and I transform people just being who I am."

On February 21, 1984, Walsh became the 164th San Franciscan to die of AIDS. More than 2,000 have now died in that city.

Shilts ends his book with the thoughts of gay activist Cleve Jones, as he leads a demonstration in front of the White House in May of 1987: "The United States, the one nation with the knowledge, the resources, and the institutions to respond to the epidemic, had failed. And it had failed because of ignorance and fear, prejudice and rejection. The story of the AIDS epidemic was that simple," Cleve felt; "it was a story of bigotry and what it could do to a nation."

Reagan speaks

On May 31, 1987, President Ronald Reagan delivered his first speech about the epidemic of acquired immune deficiency syndrome. When he talked about the victims of the disease, Reagan mentioned hemophiliacs, transfusion recipients, the spouses of intravenous drug users, and even their children. But he did not even allude to gay men, the people who made up over 70 percent of the nation's AIDS cases. They were also the people who had done virtually all the work to secure AIDS research, education, and prevention programs. It was as if gays were what was embarrassing about the epidemic, not an administration that had done so little to prevent its spread.

On the day President Ronald Reagan delivered his first speech about AIDS, more than 36,000 Americans had been diagnosed with the disease; over 21,000 had died.

"The legacy of the nation's shame could be read in the faces that Cleve always carried in his memory, the faces of the dead. Cleve could see those faces now as he led the chant at the wrought iron gates of the White House. Tears streamed down his cheeks as he raised his fist toward the Oval Office and shouted: 'Shame. Shame. Shame.'"

--Ferdurke

And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic, by Randy Shilts. St. Martin's Press, 630 pages, \$24.95.

Falwell needs money, bashes gays

Faced with a multimillion dollar shortfall and the IRS breathing down his neck, Jerry Falwell had to find a surefire fundraising scheme. So he resorted to his old stand-by--homophobia.

In a fundraising letter which sounds like a lost chapter of *Mein Kampf*, the self-appointed Don Corleone of the electronic bible-beaters served up his usual mix of lies, distortions, and non sequiturs in his effort to incite fear and loathing of homosexuals. His letter talks about demonic "homosexual AIDS carriers," whose "perverted lifestyles . . . originally spawned the AIDS epidemic."

Falwell accuses "gay-influenced" media and politicians of covering up the "truth about AIDS," which now menaces everybody--"even innocent young children"--because nobody listened to Falwell's warnings about "the gay plague." But, of course, that can be fixed. If you'll just send Jerry some money, he promises to go "nationwide, on prime-time television" to expose this foul conspiracy.

Falwell paints a lurid picture of gays as wild-eyed "sexual terrorists" who donate blood three times more often than the general public because "they know they are going to die--and they are going to take as many people with them as they can."

In the medical gospel according to Jerry, homosexuality is presented as the cause of AIDS; the spread of the virus through heterosexual contact is ignored.

Homos taking over

In true Joe McCarthy style, Falwell warns of invasion and infiltration. He reports that the Atlanta police department plans to actively recruit homosexuals. Homosexuals are taking over our towns (well, West Hollywood), while other "perverts" have established gay resorts in hundreds of cities "which have become nothing but breeding grounds for the deadly AIDS virus."

Falwell's logic is, as usual, stunning--like a severe blow to the forehead. He talks about AIDS as if gay people had invented the disease just to foist it on heterosexuals when, in fact, gay men suffer most from it. But the suffering of gays is of no consequence to Falwell, who has apparently ripped the parable of the Good Samaritan out of his bible.

Falwell's exploitation of the AIDS crisis comes at a crucial political time (Jerry is nothing if not an opportunist). A split in the conservative camp has developed between Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and Secretary of Education William Bennett. Just as Koop appeared to make good the Reagan administrations' pretense of concern by launching an AIDS education program, Bennett and other ultra-right officials renewed their campaign of moralistic propaganda.

Mandatory modesty

Bennett, who has no medical or scientific credentials, has become the administration's new point man on AIDS. Koop has been abandoned; the White House won't return his calls, and conservatives from Kemp to Dole cancelled their reservations for a testimonial dinner in Koop's honor.

The Surgeon General's "safer sex" guidelines have been branded "condomania" and "a species of self-delusion." Bennett's approach to AIDS education--to be done, if at all possible, by parents and not by schools or government agencies--calls for "abstinence" and encouraging "young people, especially young women, to be modest." For those who refuse to be "modest," Bennett has proposed mandatory HIV-antibody testing.

Bennett's position has been opposed by the Public Health Service and the Centers for Disease Control, who agree that mandatory testing will drive people who might test positive underground. But the Secretary of Education doesn't care for logic any more than Jerry Falwell does. Bennett's scheme would impose mandatory testing on persons entering hospitals, prisoners, couples applying for marriage, aliens seeking amnesty, and anyone entering the U.S. Bennett has declared that confidentiality should be ignored.

It's possible that Falwell's tirade, along with Phyllis Schlafly's latest AIDS-as-gay-plague campaign, is part of an overall strategy to make Secretary Bennett look reasonable by comparison. Certainly the recently appointed presidential commission on AIDS policy is stacked heavily in favor of the Bennett-Falwell-Schlafly camp.

Devastating effects

Some gay activists see Falwell's attack as a positive thing--the virulence and clear lack of charity expose the true character of the so-called religious right. But David Wertheimer of the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project says that attacks like Falwell's can have devastating effects: "The Anti-Violence Project has observed a direct connection between the public's panic reaction to AIDS fueled by the homophobic activities of the religious right, and a marked increase in violence against gays and lesbians." (Five thousand cases of antigay violence were reported nationwide last year, but an estimated 80% of all such incidents go unreported.)

"Clearly if this mailing attacked Blacks or Jews in the same virulent terms, it would have been a front-page

scandal," added Wertheimer. "But Falwell obviously calculated the risk of gay-bashing for gain and found it negligible."


The public proclamations of people like Falwell, Bennett, and Schlafly suggest that we could be entering a new age of AIDS surveillance and repression, bred of ignorance and fear and used by those in power for their own ends. It will take a strong, organized response to fight off this homophobic AIDS backlash.

--Ferdydurke

Source: *GALA Review*, July 1987

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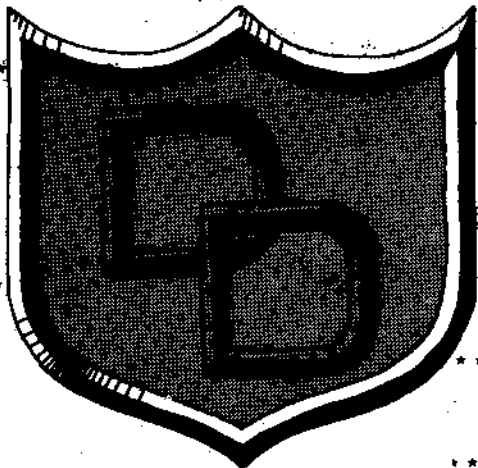
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Dear Mr. Helms

Calling a Bigot a Bigot

One of the things that has impeded the fight against AIDS is the way that right-wing bigots have exploited the epidemic for their own gay-bashing purposes. These are the people who pretend that AIDS is just like tuberculosis or whooping cough and suggest that measures like quarantine and mandatory testing are reasonable, innocuous steps to contain the spread of the disease.

What gives these hypocrites away is the tone of their rhetoric: they talk about imposing drastic measures, not with regret, but with glee. Their hope is that the battle against AIDS can be used as a vehicle for their own intolerant political agenda, which has "squash gay rights" in big black letters right at the top.

The latest example of this deadly hypocrisy came when Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) railed against an AIDS education comic book put out by the Gay Men's Health Crisis, which featured explicit depictions of homosexual activities. Helms pretended that he had never heard of anal intercourse, saying that the publication was "so obscene, so revolting, that I'm embarrassed to discuss it."

Perverved spades

Nonetheless the Senator managed to discuss it enough to get the Senate to bar the use of federal funds for materials that "promote" homosexuality or drug use. Helms was less interested in protecting taxpayers--who didn't pay for the comic book in question--than in making his point that "we've got to call a spade a spade and a perverted human being a perverted human being."

Originally, Helms's amendment, which was attached to a \$310 million AIDS education bill, would have kept all money from being used for materials that promote, encourage, or condone homosexuality, illegal drug use, or any sexual activity outside of marriage.

But as Sen. Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.) pointed out, the toned-down amendment isn't much of an improvement. Government workers could still lose their jobs and organizations could still risk losing their grants if they so much as suggest using clean needles or condoms to protect against getting AIDS.

That's all right with the Jesse Helmses of this world, who are clearly more interested in persecuting people they hate than in saving lives, but the policy won't do much to promote AIDS education. It's exactly those two categories of people--gay men and intravenous drug users--that an AIDS education will have to reach in order to be effective.

Education helps

The preliminary results from a blood testing program in San Francisco indicate that the spread of AIDS among gay men in the bay area has dropped radically since 1981. Much of the credit for that drop can be given to programs that have heightened awareness of the AIDS threat.

But there is still a lot of educating to do, especially among gays and drug users who are also black and Hispanic. (Can you imagine how Jesse Helms feels about people who are black and gay?)

If this amendment becomes law, there will be a lot of needless self-censorship by health officials and AIDS activists who might be afraid of losing their funding. And since there is already plenty of irrational fear surrounding AIDS, the last thing we need is for the federal government to add anxiety to the very programs that are supposed to protect people and dispel fear.

Oh, yes, there is one more thing to consider here: Jesse Helms has long been instrumental in making sure that the United States government continues to subsidize the production and sale of tobacco. How's that for being a perverted, obscene, revolting, hypocritical bigot?

--Ferdurke

News Briefs

Beauty Secrets of the Straight Male

"Eyes," says Michael Caine, the actor, "are all-important when filming. If you've got blond eyelids, like I have, then you must wear black mascara; otherwise, you might as well be in radio." Caine's tip appeared in Liz Smith's column in the New York Daily News.

The Village Voice quoted a representative from Chevrolet, which was filming a commercial with Ron Darling, the New York Mets pitcher, as saying, "We shouldn't have put so much lip gloss on him."

A man in Holyoke, Massachusetts, wrote to Ann Landers: "I am a 31-year-old happily married man. . . . I have been wearing a long-leg panty girdle for some time. . . . I'm not gay and I'm not a transvestite. . . . I wear this thing for the same reason my wife does. It holds my stomach in, smooths my backside, and makes me look better. I see nothing wrong or perverted about a man wanting to look neat and trim."

A woman has to be careful who she picks up in a poorly lighted bar these days. She could take him home and find that his "backside" and stomach swell out when he removes the long-leg panty girdle, or that he is wearing mascara or too much lip gloss.

They Probably Deserve Each Other

Mary Ellen Pohl is an ex-nun. As a Bride of Christ, she apparently found her heavenly Husband a bit too liberal. But she should be happy with the honky she's married to now: Judge Robert Bork, ex-nominee for supreme court justice.

Both of the above items come from Christopher Street, #115 (Sept. 1987).

The Incredible Shrinking American Dream

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On the campaign trail

Pat Robertson's Mein Kampf Pitch

Republican presidential hopeful and sometimes tv evangelist Pat Robertson says Amerika is facing an imminent danger that could destroy our civilization as we know it. AIDS? The deficit? The stock market crash? The return of Jim and Tammy Bakker?

No. It's our birth rate. Pat Robertson thinks Amerikans should have more babies.

I am not making this up. In two speeches and a television interview in New England during the last week of October, Robertson said Amerikan women must have more kids or there will not be enough productive folks around in the next century to pay our bills and maintain "our culture and our values."

Amerikans are having only 1.8 live births per 1,000 population while aborting 1.5 million every year, Robertson told an anti-abortion group in Vermont. At that rate, "by the year 2020, we are not going to have enough money to take care of all the retirees, there won't be enough money for government, there won't be enough people to expand the markets."

Squeezed out

That also means, according to Robertson, that the portion of the World he calls "the total West" will have shrunk in 100 years from 33 percent of all the people in the world to 7.5 percent, all because today's women refuse to bear more children. How unpatriotic!

"That not only means," says Robertson, "that we will no longer have any dominance in the world, but our culture and our values will at that point be squeezed out by many other conflicting ideologies, by other national interests." (Remember: all those little dark-skinned people don't have any culture or values. Well, not as good as ours.)

Sounds like Robertson has been reading The Birth Dearth: What Happens When People in Free Countries Don't Have Enough Babies by Ben J. Wattenberg, senior fellow at the Amerikan Enterprise Institute. Wattenberg's figures show birth rates in the "free," westernized nations to be shrinking, while just the opposite is happening in Third World and communist-bloc nations.

Wattenberg was perhaps just a tad more direct than Robertson in declaring that government must encourage the better-off classes to reproduce themselves before those who are not so well-off take over.

Master race approach

Judging from the reviews of The Birth Dearth, I'd say that most populations experts think Wattenberg's predictions are an exaggeration, at best, and a justification, at worst, for a master-race approach to social problems. For one thing, you can't forecast politics from population data. Population alone does not equal power. If it did, China and India would be leading the world, instead of nations whose fertility rates are lower than Amerika's--like Japan and West Germany.

Besides, any efforts to boost the birth rate would probably include programs too liberal for Robertson's blood--day care, child allowances, lengthy paid maternity leave, and special housing. NOW might be delighted, but Robertson prefers that moms stay home.

Of course, the ultraright could quit opposing efforts to export birth control methods (including abortion) to those dark-skinned, valueless folk who are not in "the total West," whatever that phrase means. But that would make too much sense. Better that the Catholic Church continue to tell those huddling, starving masses not to use artificial birth control. They have nothing to lose but their hunger.

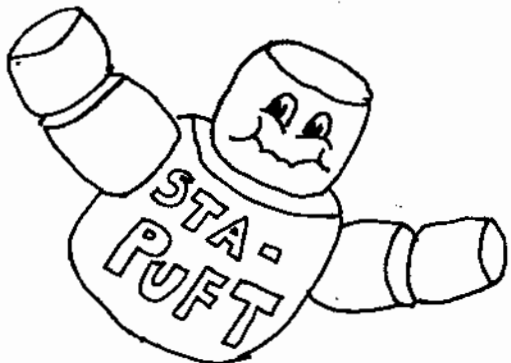
Land of the free, home of the rich

Or, perhaps, we could return to the concept that Amerika is the "land of opportunity," not a place of privilege by birth. We have no dearth of poor, immigrant, or minority kids. Maybe we could invest in today's poor through educational and career opportunities rather than stir up the reproductive juices of the middle and upper classes.

Somehow I don't think that's what Robertson's "culture" and "values" are all about. I think he wants white, well-to-do, English-speaking, religious women to stay home, have lots of babies, and keep their mouths shut.

Of course, if that would include Phyllis Schlafly. . . .

--Ferdurdurke



Welcome to the big marshmallow

When we moved here over a decade ago, we spotted the Post American and noted that this was one place that definitely still needed an underground newspaper! Bloomington-Normal more and more over the years has come to be symbolized for me by a giant marshmallow. If you're a change bringer, a reformer, your ideas are deliberately, complacently ignored--the energy absorbed the way a marshmallow is outwardly affected by something poked or passed through it.

The Post provides a chance to stick it to a smug power elite puffed up with a sense of self-congratulations. Once a month the exploiters--insurance corporations, medical doctors and hospitals, developers, lawyers, landlords, bureaucrats, etc.--get roasted, held up to the heat of public scrutiny and shame. The toasting scent of just deserts--how sweet it is!

-A middle-aged cultural revolutionary-

Post-American Nov.-Dec. 1987 Page 9

Alternative schools info available

There is a new National Directory of Alternative Schools available. This is the first and only such directory printed in the last four years and it lists information on 460 schools in 47 states and 16 countries, with special sections on home school resources and innovative projects and ideas. The retail cost is \$12.50.

They also produce a regular newsletter containing information about alternative education and home schooling from all over, and a journal, SKOLE, which presents scholarly articles about the alternative school movement. The address is: National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools, R.D. 1, Box 378, Glenmore, Pennsylvania, 19343.



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One way to secure the coveted status of "cool" is to sport a Post Amerikan T-shirt. Just wear it and keep your mouth shut. A Post T-shirt speaks for itself. In tie-dyed colors (if you're lucky) or bright solid colors, it's a great way to say, "Hi. My politics are exciting."

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III. Supreme Court denies law license

Why Loss Lost

Surprising as it may seem, some of the justices on the Illinois Supreme Court may have been influenced by Lenny Bruce. Lenny once said that in our judicial system "justice" is just that--"JUST US." Illinois' highest court seems to agree wholeheartedly with that observation. The problem here appears to be that Ed Loss is someone the Supreme Court does not consider as "US," no matter what he has accomplished, period.

Ed Loss' accomplishments in recent years are actually quite remarkable. This would be true of anyone who has done what he has, and given his background is even remarkable.

In his late teens and early twenties Ed Loss was a drug addict and petty thief. Since that time, however, nearly 15 years ago, Ed has managed to turn his life around in ways that have not merely been to his own benefit, but to the benefit of many of those around him as well.

Ed has overcome his earlier drug dependence, started what is today a very successful moving company, put himself through school at the same time, and in 1984 graduated from the DePaul University College of Law.

After graduating Ed took the next step toward becoming a licensed attorney in the state of Illinois. This involves being approved by the

Illinois Supreme Court Committee on Character and Fitness. Ed appeared before the committee and was approved.

Up until Ed's case, everyone who has applied to the committee and been subsequently approved has then been granted a license by the Supreme Court to practice law in this state, without exception.

The Illinois Supreme Court, for the first time ever, ignored the decision of the committee (which incidentally functions under the auspices of the court), the testimony given to the committee in Loss' favor by U.S. District Judge George N. Leighton (under whose guidance Loss did his internship) and Vincent Vitulo, Dean of the College of Law at De Paul, and denied Loss' application for license. In order to do this, the court has changed the rule about granting a license to everyone the committee approves.

According to Illinois Supreme Court Justice Joseph Goldenhersh, the reason for such an abrupt and radical change in policy is that the old rule forced the court to "blindly admit" into the legal profession anyone the committee approves. Now, if this is the real reason, then why has it never been a question before Ed Loss' case?

What makes this situation even stranger is that of all attorneys who, for whatever reason, are convicted of a crime, even sent to prison, and disbarred, the overwhelming majority are later reinstated to the bar simply by applying for reinstatement. By comparison to some, Ed's teenaged

transgressions were minor.

It seems that there is a state lawyer whose major ambition in life is to stop Ed Loss from practicing law. His name is David Holtaway. The fact that he is out to get Loss is not a secret. What is a secret is his motive for wanting to do so.

Another question is how. How was the Illinois Supreme Court convinced that this case was of such importance that it should ignore precedent and disregard the decision of its own committee?

The establishment of such disregard as a practice, allowing someone like Holtaway to privately and unofficially influence decision-making, subverts even the semblance of the court's ethics. The applicant's approval or denial to practice law can be influenced by a phone call instead of public and official channels, regardless how well the applicant did in school or on the bar exam.

If this new practice goes unchallenged, I think that two other measure should also be taken in keeping with its spirit. First, it should be named the "Ed Loss Rule," since it appears to have been originally designed strictly for application to his case. Second, the judicial system should be placed on the stockmarket, along with all the other commodities for sale.

--M. V.

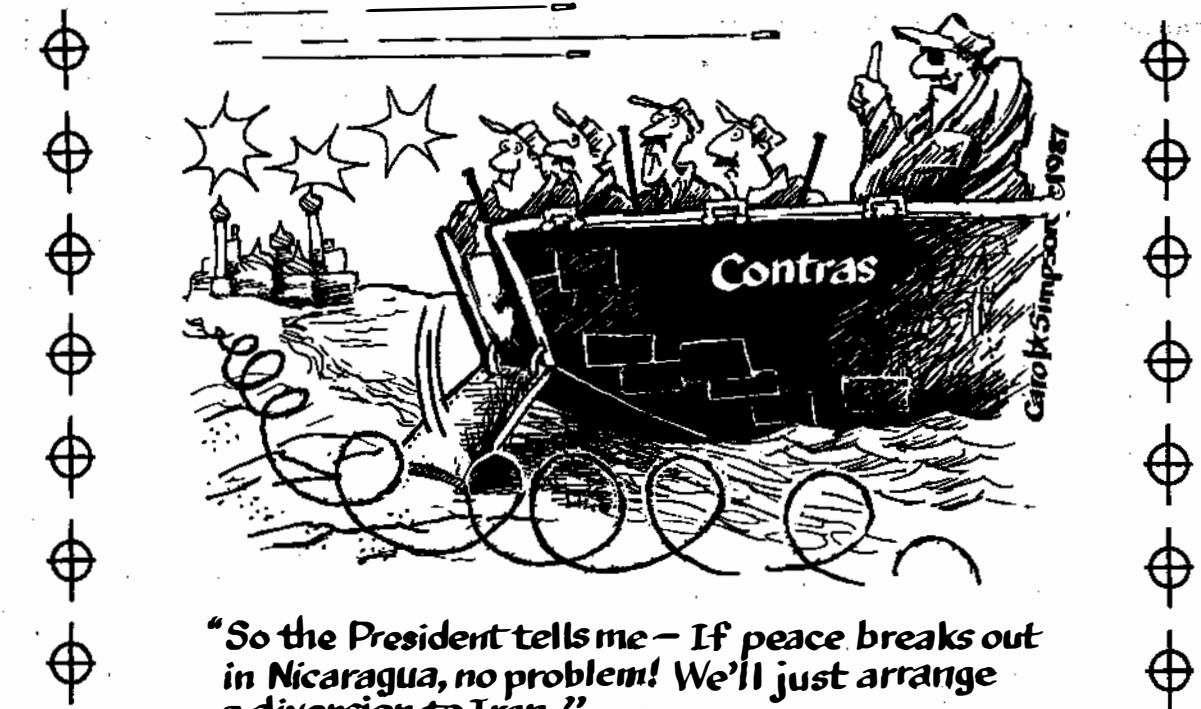
(Information from Chicago Tribune, Mike Royko's column 8/19/87, 8/20/87, and 9/1/87.)

Central America support groups walkin' n' rockin'

Local Central America support groups have been quite active so far this fall. Here is a summary of our more recent events:

Walk-A-Day for the People of El Salvador. This 10 kilometer walk was part of a national effort to raise humanitarian aid for El Salvador, a country which ranks third in the world in receiving US government and military funding. Although turnout for the walk was low, pledges and donations enabled CISPES to raise over \$1000 for the project.

Dave Lippmann Concert. Once again, topical songwriter/singer Dave Lippmann entertained a warmly responsive crowd at ISU's Global Review. For his first set, Lippmann's satirical CIA character, George Schrub, kept the audience in stitches with his political parodies and sharp-witted musical commentaries.



His second set took a more sensitive and mellow tone as he did a series of

songs for Central America, made all the more touching by the slide-show background from his last trip to Nicaragua. Those who missed Lippmann this time around should definitely plan to attend when he comes back this way.



Pledge of Resistance Garage Sale/Benefit Concert. The Pledge launched two major fundraising efforts in October, and both were highly successful. The Pledge garage sale, held at the Newman Center, raised almost \$300.00. The Benefit, held at Robinson's, featured two very exciting and popular local bands--The Patchouli-Scented Crazies and Little Nook and Cranny--as well as a slide show and videotape about the Nicaraguan revolution. The Pledge made another \$300.00 and a good time was had by all! Thanks to all who participated in the success of the benefit, and a special thanks to Robinson's for again providing a wonderful place for us to gather.

Local credit bureau and you

Credit where credit is due

Lightning strikes twice

Unit 1 of the Byron Nuclear Plant was "tripped" (shut down automatically) shortly after 10 pm on July 29 after what Commonwealth Edison officials called a possible lightning strike which hit the plant, causing the control rods to unlatch and fall into the core. An identical "trip" then occurred some time on July 31, causing the reactor to again shut down. According to a Nuclear Regulatory Commission letter dated Aug. 20, 1987, both "Lightning-induced trips" will be reviewed in a subsequent report.

Unit 1 was operating, according to the letter, at 98% power when the first trip occurred, knocking out the prime and the process computers as

The New Neighbor



well as shutting down the plant. The second strike occurred as the Unit was again trying to achieve full power, at 30%.

Mississippi Alliance spokesman Stanley Campbell recalls that "this happened once before in 1985. The utility assured us that it couldn't happen again. I personally think this proves the God doesn't like Byron any more than we do."

Seriously, SAFE believes that the Byron Nuclear Plant should be able to withstand lightning, especially since it's located here in the mid-west. SAFE calls on the NRC to force Com Ed to install proper equipment to make the plant more lightning proof.

If you've been having trouble obtaining credit, there's a good chance your credit history is to blame. Potential lenders and creditors usually look at two things to determine your credit worthiness: their own credit applications, which you usually fill out and submit yourself, and your credit history, provided by one of seven major credit bureaus. In McLean County, they'd look to Credit Bureau of Bloomington, Inc.

A trip to the bureau

Since, by law, consumers have the right to review their own credit histories, I made a trip to the credit bureau to see what it was that has been making me so unattractive to creditors.

The cost to see one's credit history is \$6.00 for one person, and \$7.50 for both husband and wife. This fee is allowed by federal law, which also specifies that there is to be no charge if the consumer has been turned down for credit because of the contents of his or her credit history in the last 90 days.

I paid the \$7.50 fee for me and my wife, even though we'd both been turned down for credit recently. Knowing there was a chance that our wouldn't-be creditors hadn't reported that we'd been turned down, I didn't want to tell the bureau anything it didn't already know.

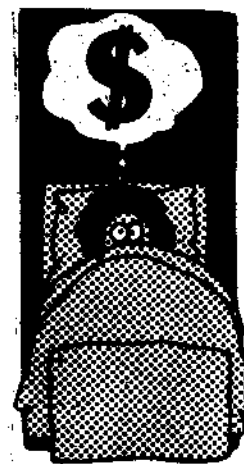
As it turned out, this was a good idea. The fact that a department store had recently turned down my application for a credit card did not appear on my credit history. This was just one of several inaccuracies in the reports on me and my wife, and it was the only error that fell in our favor.

Historical errors

Neither of our credit histories had our correct employers listed, making our income appear much lower than it actually is. Many of our other sources of income, which are not job-related, also failed to appear. Two collection agencies in town had failed to make the proper communications, so some bills we had paid off a while ago were still listed as unpaid.

My credit history had a long list of banks and numbers indicating that the bureau had been searching for some accounts that didn't exist. What had happened is that somebody had given them the word that I have some kind of account in the Quad Cities and they were trying to verify it by searching Moline and Davenport for checking and savings accounts in my name. I do have an account there, but it is a trust fund and not a checking or savings account. To look at my credit history, a creditor might think that I had lied about having a savings account in Moline because the credit bureau had tried to verify one and couldn't find it.

And finally, sexism rears its ugly head. With the exception of one joint checking account, every positive financial venture my wife and I have entered into together appears on my credit history and not hers. She is given no credit for having obtained a mortgage loan or financing a car, even though both our names appear on our loans, licenses, and accounts.



Rewriting history

Even though all of these errors have appeared, it's never too late to fix them. Federal law allows you to challenge any statement on your credit history, and that's just what I'm doing.

The credit bureau won't take my word for anything, so I'm having my employer, my banks, and my former creditors contact the bureau with the corrected information. I have some accounts the credit bureau didn't know about. We bought our wedding rings on credit, but the stores didn't report it to the credit bureau. Our banks have only reported our joint accounts under my name. Having these things properly listed will boost our credit ratings.

The credit bureau itself promised to wipe out the list of nonexistent accounts from my history when I explained the misunderstanding.

The collection agencies have promised to correct the listings which claimed that our accounts with them were still unpaid, although the fact that a collection agency was used will still appear. The law allows me to submit up to a 100-word explanation of any item on my credit history and requires the credit bureau to include it in all future reports. I plan to submit a brief explanation of the reasons we failed to pay these bills before they were placed for collection.

While our credit rating will not be exactly squeaky clean, taking these actions will clear it up a lot. Once I'm finished, I think our would-be creditors will look at us a little more kindly.

Check yourself

I'm sure we're not the only people in McLean County who have been turned down for credit and we're probably not the only ones whose credit histories are in error. To check your credit history, contact the Credit Bureau of Bloomington, Inc. at 318 West Washington in Bloomington.

--J.R.

K-scope foster program

With recent newspaper publicity about the ongoing shortage of foster homes under the Department of Children and Family Services, similar area programs are in danger of being overlooked. One such program is being managed by Bloomington Kaleidoscope, and in the wake of recent negative publicity about the agency's group home program, agency staff has been gearing up for some energetic bush beating.

The foster home program, which includes individual families outside of Bloomington-Normal proper, needs parents for adolescents aged 10-17.

The program is ideal for those spouses or single individuals who wish to work out of their homes and feel they have something to offer needy children. Generous reimbursement for time and energy--as well as room, board, and other needs--is provided. So is ongoing training and support.

The foster program is planning a round of orientation sessions near the end of November or beginning of December. For more information, call Bettye Jo Isherwood at 828-7346.

APPLES family dinner Dec. 13

Planned Parenthood's APPLES (Adolescent Parent Program for Learning Essential Skills) will hold its third annual Family Holiday Dinner on Sunday, Dec. 13, at 2:00 p.m. Any area teen parents, their partners, their parents, and their children are welcome.

The dinner will include turkey and dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, salads, vegetables, and desserts. The real fun starts with the party after dinner--games with prizes for the kids and the adults, presents, and, of course, a special appearance by Santa Claus.

If you, or someone you know, would like to attend the dinner, please call Cathy at 827-4368 to find out the location of the dinner and to make your reservations by Dec. 8. (They need to know how many turkeys to roast.)

Remember--APPLES Holiday Dinner, Dec. 13, 2:00 p.m. Santa will be watching for you.

Operation Recycle update

Operation Recycle has moved to a new location at 923 East Grove, Bloomington. The recycling center is located in the quonset hut behind the brown office building.

The recycling buyback will be open at the Grove Street address from 9 am - noon Mondays through Saturdays. The buyback will be closed from November 26-28 for Thanksgiving. Operation Recycle buys newspapers, aluminum cans, container glass, and bimetal cans at the buyback.

OR has also opened its eighth drop-off location in Maxwell Park on Parkside in Normal. The drop-offs are open 24 hours a day for recyclers to bring their newspapers, plastic milk jugs, container glass, beverage cans, and food cans. Call 829-0691 for more information about other drop-off locations.

The next recycle drives at Sears in the Eastland Mall parking lot and at the ISU parking lot at the southwest corner of College and Main will be Saturday, November 21 and Saturday, January 16. Operation Recycle is a not-for-profit community recycling center and a part of Community Action.

Unemployed Families Christmas Party

A Children's Christmas Party for unemployed families will be held Saturday, December 19 at 10 A.M. at Bloomington High School.

The program will feature carnival games, karate demonstrations, Disney cartoons and a visit from Santa Claus. It is sponsored by the Bloomington and Normal Trades and Labor Assembly (AFL-CIO) and the McLean County Chamber of Commerce.

To register for the event, send your name and address and the number of children attending to Children's Christmas Party, P.O. Box 3248, Bloomington, IL 61702. Tickets will then be mailed to you. Children 12 and under only.

Post-Amerikan

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Bloomington Railroad Shops Book Published

From the 1850s through the 1950s, Bloomington's center of employment was the Chicago and Alton Railroad Shops on the west side. Here locomotives, passenger cars, and freight cars were built and repaired, employing thousands of workers as boiler-makers, machinists, electricians, carmen and clerks.

The McLean County Historical Society is publishing "Bloomington's C&A Shops: Our Lives Remembered", a collection of 24 oral histories from these former rail workers, spiced with over 60 period photos.

The interviews were collected during 1982-84, under a grant from the Illinois Humanities Council to the Historical Society, the Bloomington and Normal Trades and Labor Assembly (AFL-CIO) and the YWCA. The new book is also funded through the Illinois Humanities Council.

In this volume, the workers recall their apprenticeships, neighborhood life on the West Side, ethnic rivalries, working life and labor unrest.

The book was edited by Union News editor Mike Matejka and Historical Society Acting Director Greg Koos. It also features an introduction from ISU History professor Mark Wyman and a foreword by Don Munson of WJBC-AM.

The book will be released around November 20 and will sell for \$10.95. Various stores in town will be carrying it, as will the Historical Society at 201 E. Grove, Bloomington.

Tina has never had a teddy bear...



...A mother's love. A doll to cuddle. Conservative political ideas. But she does know fear, rejection, and disconnection notices.

For just \$4 a year, you can help a hippie like Tina.

Through our subscription program you can help provide a hippie with access to radical ideas, alternative life styles, and wild propagandistic opinions. And even a laugh or two.

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Time Out groups for teen moms

Time Out--the weekly APPLES groups for teen moms--will begin new sessions in late September. All teen moms and pregnant teens in McLean County are invited to become a part of Time Out.

Time Out offers a place for teen moms to get together every week to talk with other teen moms, to learn about themselves and their children, to have a time just to have fun. Again this year, both an afternoon and an evening group will be available. Transportation to and from the meetings will be provided for any teen mom who needs it.

Time Out offers the moms a choice of topics so that they can learn about

what most interests them. Through Time Out, teen moms can learn about child development, home safety, parenting, discipline alternatives, relationships, contraception, and meal planning. Teen moms can learn to make toys, exercise with their babies, find a job, fix nutritious snacks, and choose a babysitter.

Time Out provides a hot, nutritious meal during the meetings and gives the teen moms the recipes for easy replication at home. Child care is provided during the meetings by trained child care specialists. They will work with the children during the Time Out meetings and will give the teen moms special activities to use

with their children at home. The activities may enable the teen moms to help their children develop hand-eye coordination, muscle tone, language skills, or self-esteem.

Time Out offers special family holiday activities in addition to the weekly meetings. Activities include Halloween parties for the children, a Father's Day picnic for teen dads, and a Christmastime dinner for everyone.

If you, or anyone you know, is a pregnant or parenting teenager, please call Cathy at Planned Parenthood, 827-4368, for more information about the groups or to sign up for Time Out. Groups will be starting at the end of September, so call soon. Time Out: It's free, it's fun, it's for you.

Coffee and culture downtown

Bloomington/Normal's artistic community has long been hard to locate. Outside of the two universities, culture (much less subculture) here has often seemed nonexistent. This is an odd state of affairs, considering the number of creative and talented persons residing in B/N.

Now, things are about to change.

By the third week of November, B/N's art community will have a place to congregate and show itself. Electric Coffee is the name of a coffee house/art gallery/performance space opening on the second floor of the Eddy Building, 427 N. Main, Bloomington.

Electric Coffee is the cooperative effort of a group of individuals seeking to enhance and accelerate the cultural growth of B/N. The group includes visual artists, writers, performance artists, dramatists, filmmakers, and musicians. Throughout each week, these and other artists will present their works to the public. Also, Electric Coffee will have tape and book libraries, a video night, and community jam sessions.

Beyond just providing an exhibition space, Electric Coffee hopes to become a meeting place for artists and other creative individuals. Moreover, it hopes to become a conduit between B/N's art community and those of other cities and towns.

Electric Coffee will be open seven days a week, M-F from 5-10 and weekends from 1-6. It will open on Nov. 23. Artists and non-artists alike (and those who debate the distinction) are invited to come and commune. There will be coffee (and tea). For more info, call 829-4377.

--MJ

PPMCI closings

Planned Parenthood of Mid Central Illinois (PPMCI), 318 West Washington, Bloomington, will be closed for observance of the holidays. There will be no services of any kind on the following days and times:

Thursday, Nov. 26, all day;
Friday, Nov. 27, all day;
Friday, Dec. 11, from noon on;
Thursday, Dec. 24, all day;
Friday, Dec. 25, all day;
Thursday, December 31, from noon on;
Friday, Jan. 1, all day.

The teen raps scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on Nov. 26, Dec. 24, and Dec. 31 will not be held. However, the teen rap scheduled for the first Saturday of every month will be held on Saturday, Jan. 2.

For more information, call the PPMCI administrative office at 827-4368 or the PPMCI clinic at 827-4014.

The Wrath of Grapes

Sulfur dioxide is a known killer. At least 16 people have died since 1983 from eating foods on which sulfur dioxide was used.

In July 1986, the federal Food and Drug Administration banned the use of sulfites as a preservative on fresh produce because it believes sulfur dioxide can kill those who are sensitive to its effects. Approximately one million consumers in this country may be sensitive to sulfites, particularly asthmatics. Reactions range from nausea, rashes, and headaches, to death.

However, because the FDA ruling did not apply to sulfur dioxide as a post-harvest fumigant, the Environmental Protection Agency assumed control. Last December, the EPA ordered grapes growers to certify that 75% of their grapes contain sulfite residues of less than 10 parts per million.

EPA fails to protect

Growers, faced with the prospect of testing their grapes to meet the EPA residue standard, petitioned the EPA for a waiver of the regulation. It is almost impossible for them to meet that standard because table grapes are kept in cold storage for long periods of time and are gassed with sulfur dioxide every seven to 10 days. After two to three sprayings, the residue level exceeds 10 ppm. Practically all grapes sold at the market, therefore, contain excessively high sulfite residues.

The EPA gave in to the grape growers' demands. The agency granted grape growers permission - as of September first - to market their grapes with excessive sulfite residues as long as 40% of them - two out every five bunches - carry labels saying: "Grapes Have Been Treated with Sulfites." The additional words, "To Ensure Freshness & Quality," were

also allowed. And on the back side is printed the grape growers' advertising slogan: "Grapes, the Natural Snack."

Unseen danger

As more and more people change to a healthier diet that includes more fresh fruits and vegetables, they are demanding to know what is on their food. Just because they can't see the threat of pesticide residues doesn't mean it isn't there. An estimated 400,000 to 2 million people are poisoned by pesticides in the world each year, and between 10,000 to 40,000 of those poisonings result in death.

A spokesman at the Center for Science and the Public Interest, which has been trying to get a ban on sulfites for the last five years, said, "It is ridiculous to wait for a body count before some protective policy is put into effect." As it stands under to EPA waiver now, consumers will be eating grapes in December that were picked in June or July and in the meantime gassed with sulfur dioxide up to 30 times.

When asked what it would take for the EPA to introduce proper protective legislation, the CSTPI representative said, "We will have to wait for confirmation before we will see any action."

Don't buy Grapes

It seems clear that the EPA has no intention of protecting consumers against sulfur dioxide residues. The only way for consumers to protect themselves - and help farm workers at the same time - is not to buy contaminated table grapes.

by Cesar E. Chavez, President and Founder of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO



Dungeons and Dragons: Harmless pastime or Satanic sex ritual?

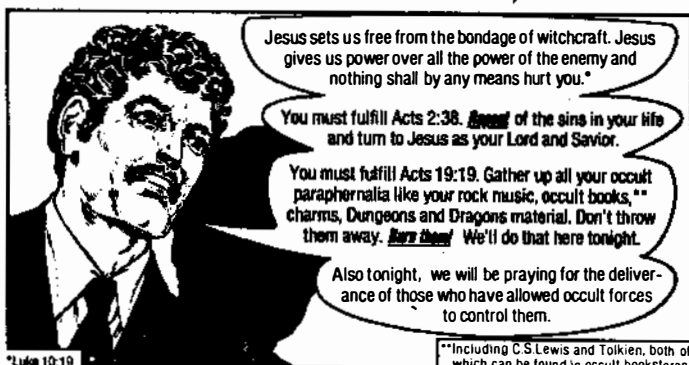
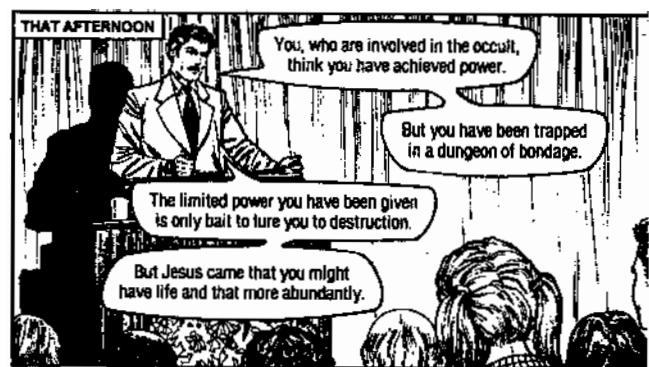
Most people these days have at least heard of "Dungeons & Dragons," called D&D for short--or seen it in a bookstore even if they haven't tried the game themselves. D&D is played using paper and pencil to keep track of statistics which represent imaginary characters, whose roles the players assume. The action takes place in a fantasy world where there is magic instead of science: dragons and brutal humanoids replace nukes and the IRS as society's big worries. It can be a powerful escapist vehicle.

Actually, there are many similar games set in a variety of different worlds. If you'd rather pretend you are a pirate rather than an ancient barbarian, no problem. Some even take place with "real life" as the background. What all the role-playing games have in common is the structure they provide for people to play out their fantasies, allowing their imaginations to interact.

It may all sound pretty harmless, but there are a lot of people who don't think so.

In 1979, a student at Michigan State named James Egbert III disappeared for several weeks. It turned out that he had been hiding in the steam tunnels below the campus after suffering some sort of breakdown related to a fantasy game that he and his friends has been acting out. He committed suicide not long after his reappearance.

Even before the Egbert case, there was a good deal of concern expressed over the "satanic" elements of Dungeons & Dragons. The characters in the game must often deal with some sort of god-like mythological being to accomplish their tasks. The whole business reeks of enough blasphemy to set a fundamentalist's hair on fire.



At least one religious group distributes little comic books which show how D&D leads to pacts with the Devil. The one I found is called "Dark Dungeons," and it involves a real-life witch who runs a D&D game as a front for her coven!

Clearly there was something wrong with Egbert and his friends. And while I can't imagine events happening quite like in that creepy fundamentalist comic book, it is true that many gamers suffer very real disappointment when things in the game don't go the way they want.

But the accusations of Satanism directed at the game fall far from addressing the real issues involved. Religious fanatics are afraid of anything involving the human imagination the way D&D does, even if it doesn't happen to include mysticism. Their own beliefs are so fragile that they won't stand up to self-questioning; the only way to maintain them is to remain constantly on the offensive and to externalize their doubts. D&D is just one of the convenient targets they have picked.

Nonetheless, there are some considerable risks involved with getting into role-playing games. I personally know a pretty large number of gamers, and a lot of them fit neatly into a certain stereotype. Their foremost trait is their lack of basic social skills. They tend to be very self-centered, and seem to be almost universally unable to take on the role of an active listener. A snatch of typical conversation between two of them might be:

"I have this 23rd level cleric with ..."

"Yeah, my 18th level fighter/20th level magic-user is..."

"-289 hit points, and a ring of unlimited wishes, and..."

"-so awesome, he's got a rod of lordly might, and..."

Well, you get the idea. They don't really care what the other guy is saying. But, then, why should they? The action is all in a person's mind anyway, making it a little hard to share without writing a novel about it.

I don't mean to suggest that all gamers are like this. Even though I've slacked off in recent years, I'm still a gamer myself. And I like to think that I'm fairly well balanced.

But is it the games' fault that a lot of their players are self-absorbed? Do role-playing games actively draw people away from the "real" world? Or do people who already have problems relating to life turn to the games in recourse?

My opinion favors the latter situation. One important clue is that one does not tend to find many traditionally attractive people among gamers. Where "good looks" are a prerequisite for a popular social life, what is there to lose in turning to a private, self-rewarding ritual like D&D?



My greatest concern over role-playing games (and "war games," a closely-related genre) is their potential for dehumanization. One of the most popular themes of these games at present is a scenario where the Commies have taken over most of the world, and only a few hardcore American patriots remain to carry on a guerilla war (remember "Red Dawn"?).

Of course this idea is hardly limited to the games: it pretty much pervades popular culture. But these games are an intense manifestation, and they tend to absorb a very high proportion of their players' attention, to the exclusion of other sources which might temper their opinions.

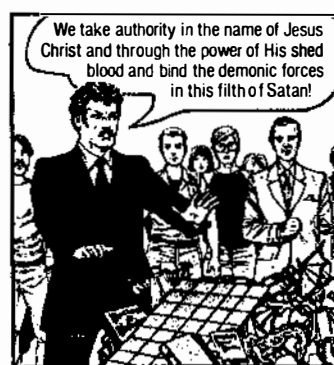
Watching the news evokes different reactions, depending on the viewer's background. When I see something about Nicaragua, I think of my friends who have been there, and what they have told me, as well as what our esteemed Chief Executive says.

But what do self-absorbed, vicarious Commie-fighters who spend almost all their free time playing an "Invasion U.S.A." role-playing game think? They think, "Wow, we'd sure better keep supporting the Contras, or else it'll be just like in the game." They have wandered into an intellectual deadend, where any additional information received will only be considered in the context of the imaginary world where they spend so much time.

By these comments, I do not mean to criticize the idea of role-playing games. I remain an enthusiast, and the people at the Game Designers Workshop in Normal should know that I'll be continuing to help feed them in the future. What I mean to do is to point out the pitfalls of giving one's imagination such license.

Like a traveler on the ethereal plane, a gamer must be careful to maintain the spirit cord which connects us to the physical world. Keeping this in mind, role-playing games can unlock a virtual infinity of fresh ideas; it's simply a question of using them responsibly.

--Dave Thompson



Mom, Dad, do you know where your children are?

For years the right-to-life people have fought the abortion issue, tooth and nail. Years ago, I disagreed vehemently with them, believing that it was a greater sin for an unwanted, unloved child to be born and subjected to possible neglect or abuse. I didn't consider abortion to be child abuse. Having escaped abortion myself, I felt I knew firsthand about this situation. (Mother and Father, for financial reasons, consented to this method of birth control twice but not three times.)

Later, when we experienced the joyous birth of our daughter at home, I knew abortion would never be a solution for me. Let other people do what they want, but it's not for me. I was exposed to x-rays when I was about six weeks pregnant and still believed that abortion was not for me--no matter what.

Apparently, a lot of other people are doing what they want or what they think they want. If they only knew abortion is not the end of a "problem."

subhed: "Igor, I've created Life in the laboratory."

Scientists are now experimenting with a procedure which would put Dr. Frankenstein to shame. They are taking tissue from aborted fetuses and transplanting it into people to cure them of various diseases. For example, as reported in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on September 27, 1987, "scientists have reported 'encouraging' results among their first 17 patients," after having received a fetal cell transplant. "In one case, a diabetic patient was able to reduce insulin intake to less than 50 units a day from 90 units three months after a transplant." Sounds good, doesn't it? So did atomic research a short time ago.

On July 27th and 28th of this year, the Chicago Tribune ran a series of articles about new reproductive technologies. Doctors involved in fetal cell research were interviewed.

"We are confronted with a biological revolution which is going to be just as important as the nuclear revolution was for physics," declared Dr. Antonin Scommegna, chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Michael Reese Hospital. "I realize this opens a Pandora's Box, a can of worms, or whatever you want to call it, but I foresee growing fetuses someday for spare parts."

Plots of science fiction movies race through one's mind: Frankenstein, Brave New World, Soylent Green. Also, a vague memory of an ad for whole hog sausage comes to mind. If memory serves me correctly, it said: "Nothing wasted. Nothing left out but the squeal." Is the public also aware that when a male child is circumcised, cells from the foreskin are cultured and are used to test for herpes virus? So nothing will be wasted, human or otherwise. Is nothing sacred, anymore? All life is sacred, is it not? Maybe not. Maybe we only want perfect human beings, healthy perfect babies. How often have you heard parents-to-be say, "We don't care if it's a boy or a girl, as long as it's healthy." Are we subtly saying as a society that we wish to see no imperfection, no illness?

Case in point: As reported in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on July 14, 1987, a woman sued three doctors, "claiming that they failed to tell her that she could abort her fetus, which was developing without arms." What made this woman feel that an imperfect baby was not acceptable? What's love got to do with it? Is a person suffering a serious illness or "deformity" unlovable? Society needs to reconsider its priorities. Science wants to create perfection by solving

the problem of the unwanted or imperfect pregnancy through abortion. Then it uses fetal cells to correct other imperfections such as diabetes, Parkinson's disease, etc.

Late in September, Phil Donahue presented a panel discussion with three doctors and author Jeremy Rifkin discussing the pros and cons of fetal tissue transplants. The other panelists consisted of Dr. Robert Peter Gale, who performed bone marrow transplants in Chernobyl, Dr. John Wilke, pro-life advocate and Dr. James F. Childress, professor of Religious Studies and Medical Education at the University of Virginia. (Recently, Rifkin banded with former surrogate mother Mary Beth Whitehead to denounce the surrogate mother programs as exploitive and deceptive practices.)

Rifkin believes that fetal tissue production could be turned into a money-making business. Wilke agrees but concedes that it would be all right to use tissue from miscarriages. Gale and Childress believe that biomedical ethics would not allow exploitation of pregnant women for fetal transplant purposes. Yet, the transplant advocates seemed to raise the hopes of a woman in the audience who suffered from Parkinson's disease. If fetal brain cells could be transplanted into her brain, the chemical dopamine would be produced which would eliminate Parkinson's disease.

What if a Parkinson's sufferer was wealthy and desperate for a transplant? The rich could exploit the poor for spare parts. Couldn't this become a profit-making business? Wilke stated that "the fresher the tissue, the better." The chance of a transplant rejection is less and the chance for cell growth enhanced if the tissue is fresh. Would babies born with abnormalities be encouraged to die sooner if a transplant recipient were waiting?

Other thoughts about deceptive practices come to mind in connection with the Parkinson sufferer. It was finally admitted that fetal brain cells have never been transplanted before, so it may or may not work. (Parkinson's disease or experimental surgery. What a choice?) Also, brain surgery, in general, is very high risk, and that fact was never addressed.

One member of the audience questioned whether researchers could tell if fetal cells were good ones or not. That question was not completely answered, but it was mentioned that AIDS could be in fetal tissues. (In Gena Cora's book, The Mother Machine, which deals with reproductive technologies, she mentioned that several women have contracted AIDS from artificial insemination by donor [AID]. If this can happen, why couldn't fetal cells be dangerous, too?)

Some babies are miscarried because they are defective, and nature takes care of them via spontaneous abortion. What if we are causing some unknown mutant gene to develop in an adult host when it normally wouldn't have survived? OH, THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES . . . During the height of the ecology movement, we were warned that because of the pollution of the earth, the human race might end "not with a bang, but with a whimper." Perhaps, humankind should look at this quotation with new eyes.

Jeanne D'arc

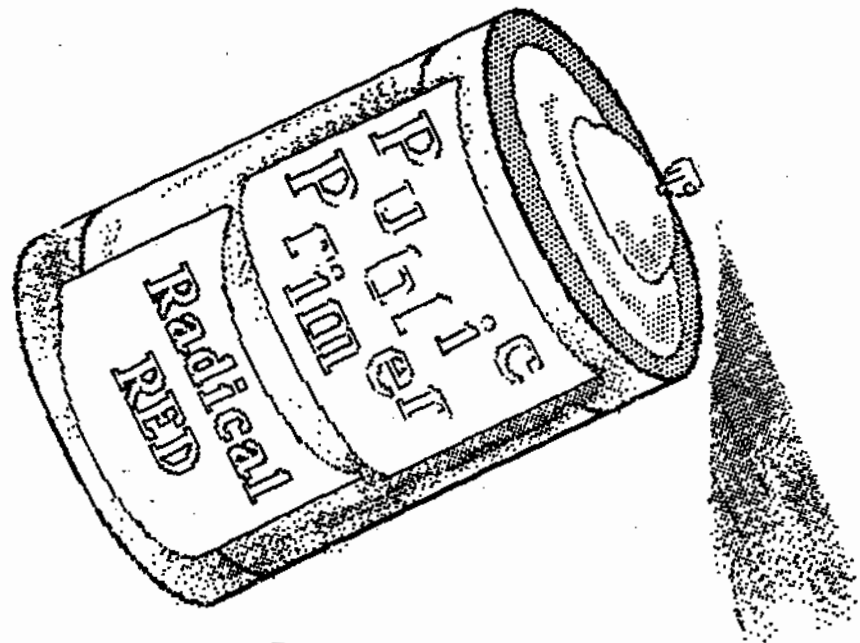
**COMICS AREN'T JUST FOR KIDS
ANYMORE**



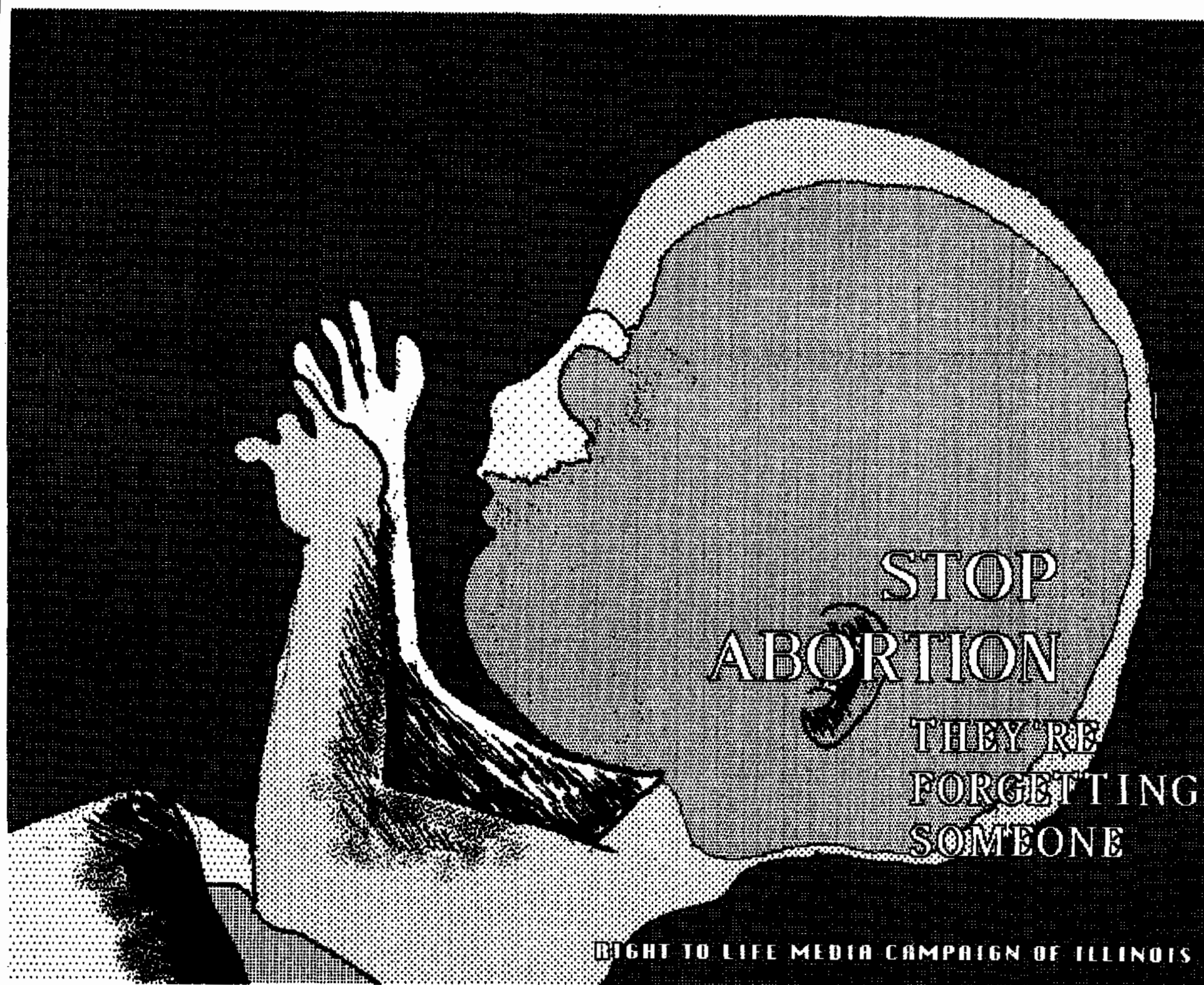
DREAMTH

11-6 pm Mon.-Sat. 101 S. LINDEN NORMAL IL 61761 454-4571

Deface This



Billboard! (a contest)



Billboards like these have appeared recently in Bloomington. While we don't have the courage to go deface them, maybe someone out there does. We do have the wit to figure out some appropriate additions to the poster, like:

"At this stage, this fetus has the reasoning power of an average Republican."

and

"I remember Mama!"

and

"Free recipe booklet!"

How about you? If you, too, have more cleverness than bravery, write your ideas down and send them to

Post-American Billboard Contest
PO Box 3452
Bloomington IL 61701

The winner, chosen by the Post staff, will receive a year's subscription.