

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

The Post Amerikan Project

4-1992

Volume 21, Number 1

Post Amerikan

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LOCAL ANTI-CHOICE CITIZENS DEMONSTRATE



POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 21

25¢

NUMBER 1

APRIL/MAY 1992



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

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



PAGE

2



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 21 NUMBER 1

APRIL/MAY

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About us

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

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

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

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

What's your new address?

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

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Post sellers

Bloomington

The Back Porch, 402 N. Main
 Bakery Banc, 901 N. Main
 Biasi's Drug Store, Main St.
 Bloomington Public Library (front)
 Bus Depot, 533 N. East
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main
 Front and Center Building
 Inner Connection, 802 E. Grove St.
 Law and Justice Center, W. Front
 Main and Miller Streets
 Medusa's, 420 N. Madison
 Mike's Market, 1013 N. Park
 Pantagraph, 301 W. Washington
 The Park Store, Wood and Allin
 Reliable Drugs, Oakland and Morrisey
 Red Fox, 918 W. Market
 Stars & Stripes Video, Main St.
 Susie's Cafe, 602 N. Main
 U. S. Post Office, 1511 E. Empire
 U. S. Post Office, Center and Monroe
 Upper Cut, 409 N. Main
 Wash House, 609 N. Clinton

Normal

Amtrak Station
 Avanti's, 407 S. Main
 Babbitts Book Store, North St.
 The Coffeehouse, 114 E. Beaufort
 Hovey Hall, ISU (Front)
 Manchester Hall, ISU
 Mother Murphy's, 111 North
 North and Broadway
 White Hen, 207 Broadway
 Subway, 115 E. Beaufort
 Zorba's, Main St.

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

Deborah and Scott (coordinators), Jason, Torri, John, Carolyn, Gina, Shadd, Jane, Gwin, Tracy, Saad, Angela, Bumper, Ralph, Bill, Sue, AND ALL OUR LOYAL SUPPORTERS OF THE PAST 20 YEARS!

Good numbers

ACLU	454-7222
ACT UP/CI	827-4005
AIDS Hotlines:	
National	1-800-AID-AIDS
Illinois	1-800-243-2437
Local	(309) 827-AIDS
Alcoholics Anonymous	828-5049
Bloomington Housing Authority	829-3360
Childbirth and Parenting Information Exchange (CAPIE)	827-6672
Clare House (Catholic workers)	452-0310
Community for Social Action	452-4035
Connection House	829-5711
Countering Domestic Violence	827-4005
Dept. of Children/Family Services	828-0022
Draft Counselling	452-5046
Gay & Lesbian Resource Phonenumber	438-2429
HELP (transportation for senior citizens, handicapped)	828-8301
Ill. Dept. of Public Aid	827-4621
Ill. Lawyer Referral	1-800-252-8916
Kaleidoscope	828-7346
McLean Co. Center for Human Services	827-5351
McLean Co. Health Dept.	454-1161
Mid Central Community Action	829-0691
Mobile Meals	828-8301
Narcotics Anonymous	827-3898
National Health Care Services--abortion assistance	1-800-322-1622
Nuclear Freeze Coalition	828-4195
Occupational Development Center	452-7324
Operation Recycle	829-0691
Parents Anonymous	827-4005
PATH: Personal Assistance Telephone Help	827-4005 or 800-322-5015
Phone Friends	827-4008
Planned Parenthood (medical)	827-4014
(bus/couns/educ)	827-4368
<i>Post Amerikan</i>	828-7232
Prairie State Legal Service	827-5021
Prairie Alliance	828-8249
Project Oz	827-0377
Rape Crisis Center	827-4005
Sunnyside Neighborhood Center	827-5428
TeleCare (senior citizens)	828-8301
Unemployment comp/job service	827-6237
United Farmworkers support	452-5046
UPIC	827-4026

Deadline

The next deadline for submitting *Post* material is

TUESDAY, MAY 26, 1992

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

Community News

AIDS Task Force news

The McLean County AIDS Task Force will hold its April meeting on Thursday, April 2nd at 6:00pm at the Bloomington Public Library. A short business meeting will be followed by a viewing of the movie "Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt," a documentary which follows the stories of five persons with AIDS. The meeting is open to the public.

Also, membership in the McLean County AIDS Task Force is open to the public. Membership dues are \$15 to be paid on a yearly basis. However, no person is denied membership because of inability to pay. General membership meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 6:00pm. Please call 827-AIDS for meeting locations.

MCATF announces new board members

The McLean County AIDS Task Force is pleased to announce its newly elected Board of Directors. Board members are elected from the general membership of the Task Force and will hold their position for a one-year term. The newly elected Board includes: Ann Leach, Bloomington and Kris Hansen, Eureka, Co-Chairpersons; Cynthia MacLeod, Bloomington, Secretary; Mike Brunt, Normal, Treasurer; Kim Martin, Normal, Publicist; Tim Mihalko, Bloomington, Phone Line Coordinator; and Gary Thiel, Normal, Newsletter Editor.

Amnesty International ISU plans events

Amnesty International-ISU will hold a group meeting on Sunday, 26 April 1992 at 7:30 p.m., Fairchild 122, ISU campus. A guest speaker has been arranged, and elections for new officers will take place.

AI-ISU possibly will be holding a benefit concert sometime this semester. If you would like to help with this, or if you know of any bands that might be interested in playing, please call one of the below listed officers. If you would be interested in helping out at the table in the Bone Student Center or any other events, please give one of the officers a call.

Lori Erickson (Group Coordinator): 828-2574
Brian Harris (Asst. Group Coordinator): 436-0584
Diane Booth (Financial Coordinator): 436-0984
Jason Smith (Secretarial Coordinator): 436-4079
Nancy Meilner (Public Relations Coordinator): 436-4146

Student Annual to begin at CVA

Opening Tuesday, April 21 at 7:00 p. m., University Galleries presents the 1992 Student Annual exhibition, which will continue through May 8.

Juried by art professionals from outside our area, this exhibition serves as an annual showcase of art created by ISU students at all levels. The exhibition will feature works in all media as well as works representing a great variety of styles, concepts and subject matter. Jurors for the exhibition are Kathryn Hixson, a writer and art critic, and Kevin Maginnis, owner of Maginnis Graphics, Inc., a design firm.

Both jurors are from Chicago, and will give presentations about their experiences in the art world on April 13 at 7:00 p.m. in The Center for The Visual Arts, room 145. This presentation will be free and open to the public.

At the April 21 opening of The Student Annual Exhibition, merit awards in a variety of categories, and Art Department scholarships will be announced. The public is cordially invited to

OR plans ecology fair

Where can you see a milk jug being turned into a toy dinosaur? Or gasp in amazement as the bumbling Tonifred B. Turnbuckle transforms into Captain Recycle? Where can you find out about endangered species, the Constitution Trail, local recycling programs that save hundreds of trees, and using geo-thermal energy?

You can do all these things and much more at Operation Recycle's first Ecology Fair at College Hills Mall on Saturday and Sunday, April 25 and 26. The fair will feature more than 30 exhibits, a "hand on" discovery area and special entertainment including the Gala environmental theatre group from Chicago. *Use it Again* will be performed at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the mall's center courtyard.

The fair sponsor, Operation Recycle, is twenty-one years old this year, making it one of the oldest continuously-running recycling programs in Illinois. The group began as a volunteer effort in response to the earliest Earth Days. Early efforts included monthly recycling drives and development of a core group of volunteers to talk to local groups and classes about the importance of recycling.

Operation Recycle currently handles materials from Normal and Bloomington drop box recycling programs and continues to provide environmental speakers, tours of the recycling center and other environmental education programs.

For more information about the fair, contact Ecology Fair chairperson Myra Gordon, 807 S. Fell, Normal, 452-8530.

Animal rights events planned

The Fourth Annual Illinois Animal Rights Convention will be held on Friday and Saturday, April 24th (evening) and 25th at the North Shore Holiday Inn in Skokie, Illinois.

Speakers will focus on grassroots activism in Illinois. Speakers include Barbara Chadwick from Animal Rights Mobilization, Richard O'Barry (former Flipper trainer) of The Dolphin Project, Terry Gips of the International Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture and Sgt. Sherry Schlueter, the first animal protection law enforcement officer in the U.S. Additionally, cooking demonstrations will be given by Soul Vegetarian restaurant and a number of bands will perform for the evening's entertainment.

The cost for both day's events is \$50.00 and includes vegan meals. For a registration form or further information, call Carolyn at 829-2224.

attend the opening reception and award presentation, which will begin at 7:00 p. m. Awards for the 1992 Student Annual exhibition, totaling over \$1,600.00 dollars, have been donated by the following local businesses and individuals:

Alamo II, Art Coop, Bernardi Printers, Camera Craft of Normal, Drake Zimmerman and Jan Elfine, Frames Unlimited, George Barford Foundation, ISU Interfraternity & Panhellenic Councils, Students in Design, Jerry J. Moore Arles Programme, JMC Productions, Mr. Lloyd Farlee, Morris Tick Co., MT Metalsmithing, Normal Editions Workshop, Professor and Mrs. Raymond E. George, State Farm Insurance Co., The Copy Shop, and Mr. Xiaowen Chen.

For the first time in its history, a catalogue of this year's Student Annual will be produced by University Galleries, thanks to a grant from the ISU Student Fee Board.

For more information, contact Peter Spooner at 309/438-5487



Support Pacifica Radio at WGLT!

As you should know, every Sunday evening at 7pm, WGLT 89.1 FM broadcasts special programs from Pacifica Radio. During the past year these programs have focussed on many important and controversial issues inadequately covered by the regular media. We have heard programs about the CIA ("Lines of Deceit: Cocaine and the CIA"), about the real legacy of Columbus (from historian Howard Zinn), about imperialism and the media (from Michael Harrington), and about South Africa (from Angela Davis).

In the next few months we will be hearing programs on "Lesbians and Gays in the Military," Emma Goldman ("The Courage to Struggle"), the future of socialism (Ernest Mandel), and "Energy Strategy for Global Survival."

If you haven't heard about this programming, if you aren't yet a regular listener, it's time to get connected. Listen. Tell your friends and co-workers about it. But most important, it is time to support Pacifica Sunday with a tax deductible pledge to WGLT. Show the programmers at WGLT that there is a large and growing audience for alternative news and news analysis programming.

Pacifica Radio News has covered:

- AIDS issues
- military intervention issues in the Gulf and Central American
- Lesbian and gay rights issues
- civil rights issues
- women's rights issues
- Native American issues

In short, Pacifica Sunday broadcasts the heart of difficult and sometimes disturbing issues and includes perspectives not otherwise heard on the airwaves.

One hour of programming material at WGLT costs the station \$78. Won't you sign on at the \$75 dollar level for next year and support one full hour of Pacifica broadcasting? If that stretches your budget too much, consider purchasing 1/2 hour of provocative news analysis for your community at the \$35 dollar level.

And thanks for caring about the political health of your community!

Please make me a Friend to Pacifica Radio:

I contribute () \$75 () \$35 () other _____

Name _____
Address _____
Phone () _____

Make check payable to ISU Foundation/Friends of WGLT and send to: Friends of Pacifica Radio, WGLT, Illinois State University Normal IL 61761. Payment by credit card and ISU employee payroll deduction is available. Cal 309-438-2255 for more information.



News from Voice for Choice



Anti-choicers violate privacy law

The two women who saw their names on protest signs outside the Women's Advisory Center in Livonia, Michigan, last June are suing abortion foes for infringement of privacy.

The Michigan ACLU will represent the unnamed women, who had abortions at the clinic. The ACLU maintains that the defendants, anti-choice activist Lynn Mills and a Felician nun, Sister Lois Mitoraj, violated a state privacy law that protects confidentiality.

In June, Ms. Mills said the protesters put the names on placards because police barricades prevented them from speaking to women as they entered the clinic. The tactic has not been used since then.

Source: Insider

VFC to boycott College Hills Mall?

Mark Widell, Marketing Director of College Hills Mall, recently informed Planned Parenthood that the mall was refusing Planned Parenthood's request to have booth space in the Mall during Illinois' "Start Talking Week."

The goal of Start Talking Week is to focus attention on child/parent communication. Last year, Planned Parenthood had a booth at the mall where they offered copies of their parent newsletter which focuses on how to talk with your children about sex, other Planned Parenthood brochures, and a display with the winning essays from a contest sponsored in the schools.

Widell told Kim Martin, Planned Parenthood health educator and coordinator of the event, that after last year's event he received several phone calls from people who were unhappy that Planned Parenthood had a booth in the mall. The calls were not directed at the available materials or the topic of the event. Instead, the calls were made by opponents of Planned Parenthood.

We at Voice for Choice think that Widell's decision was wrong. An appropriate response would have been to open space up to other organizations as well, not to censor all information.

We are asking our supporters to call or write Widell to express support for the Planned Parenthood booth. This year's proposal included other agencies that deal with other types of prevention, including alcohol and substance abuse. Unfortunately, there will be nothing.

If the mall refuses to reconsider granting space to Planned Parenthood, we will be adding College Hills Mall to our boycott list. Please drop Widell and the stores you regularly shop at a note expressing your disappointment and your intent to support the boycott. Or call Widell at 454-1300.

Let your fingers do the walking

After the deceptive practices of "fake" abortion clinics were aired in a congressional investigation earlier this year, the publishers of the Yellow Pages directories created a new policy for abortion clinic listings. The Yellow Pages will now have a heading, "Abortion Alternatives," to distinguish anti-choice counseling centers from actual abortion providers.

The "Abortion Alternatives" heading will carry a disclaimer that the agencies listed do not provide or refer for abortions. Further, centers or groups that do not provide medical services will not be listed under "clinics," "medical clinic," or "birth control."

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MOSELEY
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FOR CHANGE

We can help make history.

Carol Moseley Braun is trying to become the first African-American woman to ever serve in the United States Senate. Carol is a strong candidate with a record of supporting — and leading — progressive causes. She is not a typical politician; she represents you and me and the things in which we believe.

And she needs our help. If you are willing to donate your time, your money, or your resources (copier, computer, etc.), please call McLean County Citizens for Carol Moseley Braun at 828-3108 or 828-1065.

Local anti-choice citizens target condom shop

Protection Connection strong despite protest

BLOOMINGTON--Carrying signs with slogans such as, "Condoms are not the solution," "15% failure rate. Would you risk it?" and "Condoms kill," local anti-choicers continue to protest Bloomington/Normal's new condom shop, The Protection Connection.

The Protection Connection, sponsored by Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois, is a store that specializes in condoms and offers a unique variety of personal protection products for both men and women. The Protection Connection is located within the offices of Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois in Bloomington.

The Protection Connection cites three main objectives in serving our local community:

1) To make condoms and other over-the-counter contraceptives more ACCESSIBLE.

2) To make condom use more ACCEPTABLE among sexually active couples by promoting an attitude that condom use is normal, necessary, and fun.

3. To EDUCATE people about making healthy decisions about sexuality (this includes supporting a person's decision to abstain from sexual activity, and countering unhealthy sexual images often associated with sexuality: sexism, exploitation, objectification, and humiliation).

Karen Cody Carlson, President of Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois, says, "We know that issues surrounding sexuality can often be intimidating and therefore decided to make The Protection Connection as comfortable as possible."

But the demonstrators, who say that they are not affiliated with any organization but instead are "individual concerned citizens," feel that the shop's setting is a bit *too* comfortable.

We spent two weeks talking to the demonstrators. We had to admit that our image of these people was quickly changed after meeting them. They were kind. They were eager to speak with *Post Amerikan*. They wanted the opportunity to "make a quiet statement."

So Operation Rescue they were not. But non-threatening? No. Well informed? Absolutely not. Logical? Yikes. Hidden agenda? You bet.

After our second visit with these folks, it became pointedly clear that they, by their mere presence alone, hoped to dissuade people, particularly teenagers, from even entering the building. It became pointedly clear that they were not in touch with basic information about unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. And indeed, they found yet another way to attack Planned Parenthood.

Fortunately, we had the opportunity to hear from Karen Cody Carlson, who is fairly new to her job as President of Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois. Her responses to our interviews with the demonstrators have been added below. She and the staff at Planned Parenthood should be commended for the uncompromised, unwavering service they provide for this community.

Post Amerikan: What is your goal for being here today?

Susan: I'd like to see the sale of condoms stopped. I think it's a dangerous practice for our kids. Condoms aren't safe. They don't prevent AIDS. The pores in the condoms are large enough for the AIDS virus to go through. And I think it's a lie to tell our kids that they're safe.

Anne: We hope to discourage the teenagers from coming in and to make them aware that there is another viewpoint on what's happening inside Planned Parenthood. They are being led to believe that they are having safe sex. We would like to let them know that there is someone else who cares about them.

Jan: They say that they promote abstinence. But when the kids go up there, there is no abstinence counselling given to them whatsoever. There aren't even words being exchanged. These kids just put what they want in a basket, they pay for it, it goes in a paper bag, and out the door they go. What have we told them? Here's a

(Continued on next page)

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condom. It's perfectly ok for you to go out and do this. But what about all the risks involved? Not just the physical risks but the emotional risks as well. If they are going to have this condom shop, if they are truly concerned with stopping sexually transmitted disease and pregnancy, then let's sit down and talk to these kids instead of promoting these things as little toys and novelties.

(Carlson: Planned Parenthood has always suggested that young people seriously examine the option of abstinence. Any education which we provide regarding sexual decision making is designed to help our audience to make responsible, thoughtful decisions. We also believe that we have some obligation to help those young people who have chosen to be sexually active to protect themselves from both unintended pregnancy and disease. Turning our backs on the young people who have made such a decision would be irresponsible and uncaring.)

PA: Last week we heard that there was a man here with a video camera. Why was he here with the camera?

Susan: Primarily for the safety of the demonstrators. Because there have been some strikes against the picketers. And also to make the teens going in and out aware that they could be on camera.

PA: What do you offer as an alternative to The Protection Connection's merchandise?

Susan: Education. More facts than deception. And teaching kids new ways of doing abstinence. Most kids don't know how to go about abstinence. We need to stop dismissing abstinence as an impractical way of dealing with it. We ought to be teaching kids ways of maintaining their status and teaching them how to be abstinent. What to say, what to do. How to reason and how to think about it.

PA: Do you favor sex education in schools?

Susan: If it's an abstinence-based education with an emphasis on sex as a part of a long-term relationship in marriage--not non-marital, but in marriage--with the responsibilities of sex encased in that relationship.

PA: Let's say, just for instance, that Planned Parenthood asked you, as a volunteer, to come in and talk to the people who work here about doing some abstinence type counselling, and let's say that Planned Parenthood said everything that you want them to say, but the end result is that the young people still have the choice to buy the condoms, and they make that choice and leave with condoms in their pockets. Would you be satisfied?

Jan: Well they can purchase the condoms anywhere they want. They can go to a drug store to get condoms. But they are just not getting the truth.

PA: Why not protest at a drug store then? They most certainly are not getting that type of information at a drug store. I just visited the Protection Connection, and I saw a lot more information about abstinence and safer sex practices than I have ever seen at any drug store.

Eileen: They are just giving condoms away. The whole purpose of this shop is to give condoms to young people who would not go to a drug store to get them. The whole purpose is to lure teens in to get these items. The whole purpose of a drug store is not to sell condoms.

PA: What about something like a college campus. I know that there are college campuses that are doing the same exact thing as The Protection Connection. They have a mail order service at ISU, for example. Is this actually for you an issue about age? It seems to me that there seems to be a fine line between someone who is a senior in high school and someone who is a freshman in college. Are you drawing a line between ages and making distinctions?

Tony: There is a big difference between a senior in high school and a thirteen year old girl. Not to belittle the situation of the high school senior, but thirteen is a long way from seventeen or eighteen. We were just talking today about two guys who sexually molested a junior high kid. I'll tell you, junior high is not a good age for these kids to be getting into this. They'll tell you upstairs that it's sociologically hurting the child who has sex at that early age. And then, you know... a senior in high school can analyze this information and process it a lot better than a thirteen year old girl. It's creating a safety net situation. They think it's a safety net, but they might not understand the rest of the story. You know, we are dealing with thirteen year old kids here, thirteen year old minds. You know, a senior in high school, or a senior college, they're a little older. You're old enough to analyze the information, but the kids?

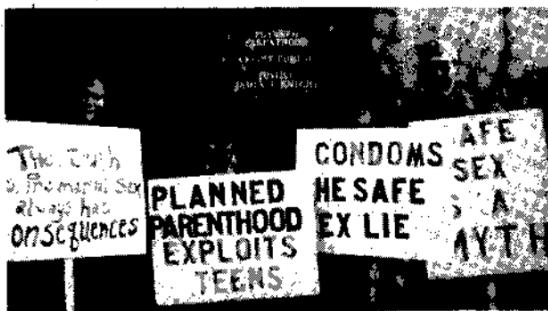
Eileen: Right. A teenager's body may be mature, but in many ways their mind is still in many ways very much that of a child. You cannot expect them to be able to make the decisions that an adult can make.

(Carlson: Although we anticipated that the primary customers of The Protection Connection would be college-aged men, in fact, the greatest number of customers have been adult women. I think that we can safely assume that these women are coming to The Protection Connection because they do not have to feel embarrassed to purchase condoms, and because they can

ask questions of the staff, and receive accurate information).

Roger: I read something the other day that I thought was interesting. I haven't had the time to analyze the accuracy of it yet. The failure rate of condoms is in the neighborhood of 15%. That's 15% each time. That's if one kid had sex one time, there's a 15% chance that time that there is going to be a failure--a pregnancy, whatever, a sexually transmitted disease, who knows. But if you compound that and continue to trust in that 15%, that 15% multiplies to the point that over a period of time that you're pushing 80 or 90% certainty that at some time your whole safe sex thing is totally destroyed. You are talking eventually, if you keep it up, 80 or 90%. You will be getting into an enormous likelihood that it's going to happen. That's something to think about. I can't point to a study right now, so you don't have to take my word for it. But we, all of us here, have heard that where ever Planned Parenthood goes, that the things that they are trying to reduce and discourage actually increase so the barometer for measuring these things is how successful they are. If the things we have read are accurate, then Planned Parenthood, they are a total failure.

(Carlson: Those individuals who are picketing The Protection Connection seem to have jumped to some erroneous conclusions. Overall, condoms are approximately 84% effective in preventing pregnancy, and we have indications that they are no less effective in preventing AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Effectiveness rates are gathered on the basis of consistent use over the period of one year. The more consistent the use of condoms, the greater the effectiveness rate. Those people who are indicating that there is a 10% or greater risk of pregnancy or disease each time a condom is used are misinterpreting the data. (Family Planning Perspectives, Vol. 24, Num. 1, Jan-Feb 1992).)



Roger: The only reason that they would give any information about abstinence is my understanding that they are required to by the State of Illinois. They have to give lip service to abstinence. I don't think abstinence is important to them. I don't think they are anything about abstinence. There is also a moral and spiritual aspect to this, a Biblical viewpoint that we come from. And we are trying to make a statement.

PA: Here you are, week five of demonstrating outside of Planned Parenthood's Protection Connection. Have you brought about any changes? They're still open.

Jan: We're trying to start somewhere.

PA: Do you think that maybe you are having the opposite effect on this place, that maybe people are supporting The Protection Connection more now that you are protesting against it?

Eileen: It's possible. I sure hope not. Then we'd surely quit tomorrow.

Jan: I don't think that we are making an impact one way or another.

Roger: It's just a statement that we don't approve of the free and easy, permissive position that Planned Parenthood has always taken. Very indulgent, permissive free sex for all without moral implications--moral, spiritual, or otherwise. And Planned Parenthood didn't just start doing this. They have been in this business for 50 years. They get tax money, they get United Way money. And things are only getting worse nationally. And where ever they go, things get worse. If they are doing any good, let's start having some results.

(In their latest newsletter, Voice for Choice pointed out that The United Way of McLean County funds Planned Parenthood for sex abuse prevention programming in the schools and community and for gynecological exams for low-income women. United Way money is not used for any other Planned Parenthood services.)

PA: What do you see as Planned Parenthood's motive?

Roger: We can only speculate. I would say money is one of them.

Jan: They are the biggest abortion providers in the United States. And ultimately, when these failure rates come through, they are going to get some significant kick-back. There is no secret about that.

(Carlson: Planned Parenthood affiliates do not provide even close to the majority of abortions performed in the United States, although each Planned Parenthood Affiliate firmly supports a woman's right to choose.

option when dealing with an unintended pregnancy. In 1989, Planned Parenthood clinics performed 121,967 abortions, approximately 7.6 percent of the U.S. total)

PA: But if we don't make available different forms of birth control, aren't we going to see an increase in pregnancy? You already said that you can't completely stop young people from having sex.

Tony: Not that this is an addictive situation necessarily, but they say if they are going to have sex anyway why not provide them with condoms. With a co-dependent situation, for example, you do not want to be enabling that situation. If you were an alcoholic, I am not going to hand you a beer, and I am not going to say, "Come with me to this bar." I'm going to find an interesting thing for us to do.

Eileen: It's like saying that people are going to use drugs anyway. Are we going to hand out drugs to them and show them how to use the needle and keep it clean?

Jan: There are always going to be those who choose to do what they want to do. We have a great policy in Bloomington/Normal: Say no to drugs. Why? Because it's destructive to our teens. We want to do the same thing here. Promote sex in a monogamous, lifetime commitment-type relationship. We are not against sex. Sex is wonderful. But it's destructive to those who get into these one night stands. We've got people walking around scarred, physically, emotionally, and spiritually because of this mentality.

-- S. Lloyd DeWitt
Vinnie the Queer

VFC sponsors contest

As if having to walk past picketers to get to your appointment at Planned Parenthood were not intimidating enough, the protestors have adopted yet another tactic--videotaping clients entering and leaving the building. According to the picketers, they are trying to get pictures of the teenagers utilizing Planned Parenthood. For what purpose? Who knows. All we know is that we don't trust these folks at all.

We at Voice for Choice are very concerned about this development. We are seeking some way to discourage the picketers without increasing the discomfort level for Planned Parenthood patients.

One Voice for Choice supporter suggested that we find someone willing to rent an Elvis costume who would go in and out of the building waving at the camera. The tactic may work. Anti-choicers have little if any sense of humor, and we doubt they will know how to respond.

Send us your ideas on how to chase away the protesters, or how to stop the camera man. We'd love to hear them, and we'll print them in our next newsletter. VFC, PO Box 905, Bloomington, 61702.

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When crime really does pay

You don't really need to pick up a *Post Amerikan* to know that it is time to re-examine the purpose of this country's fascist war on drugs -- that becomes apparent every time you read the *Pantagraph*. But, I'll remind you anyway, in case such masochism isn't your bag

In April, UPI described "the most comprehensive and unprecedented police operation in the history of (Chicago)," the (yes, this is what it is called) "Weed and Seed" anti-crime program.

Talk about your tax money well-spent. It seems more than 300 of Chicago's finest dropped in over the Ida B. Wells housing project on the South Side in *helicopters* and arrested 65 "suspected drug dealers and other criminals" in this enormous raid.

Weeds instead of seeds

"Comprehensive," they say? Are we to believe these 65 persons, who had their rat-infested, under-funded state apartments and belongings "thoroughly searched," are the sources of the terrible crime in Chicago? Hardly. This group is nothing more than the product of a society that has lost its priorities.

The question is not whether or not the police found any drugs in their thorough search. Of course, they did. The question is what good will this "Weed and Seed" raid do?

Will life on the South Side be safer for its residents? Doubtful. The 65 will be arrested, humiliated, fired from their jobs if they held them, and separated from their families. In all, the group will probably spend a few hellish months overcrowding the state prison system.

While in the can, they will learn more about violence and anger than they ever could have in the projects, then they will be thrust back out on the streets penniless and told "now you be good boys."

So, each one takes a job at State Farm and decides to clean up their lives from now on, right? No, they return with their new prison-morals and make their neighborhoods more dangerous and more violent. So, the police can hold more of their little raids the next week and everyone can pat themselves on the back and say, "Hurray for us, we've wiped out the criminal element."

This is not just a horror story, this is the norm. Almost two-thirds of those released from prison are rearrested later for committing another serious crime. Far from deterring crime, the Amerikan prison system seems to actually encourage the continuation of this behavior. At least the country presents no other viable options (besides returning to crime) for those who survive jail.

Real crime prevention

"Weed and Seed" will do very little to "prevent" crime in this country, but, of course, this is not the objective. The objective is to control and discipline African-Americans and the lower class. To pit American against American and to convince voters that the government is trying to do something to stop crime.

If controlling crime was the point, police would focus on the sources of drugs. They wouldn't waste their time roughing up junkies and street punks, who have benefited so greatly from their crime spree that they live in the luxury of the housing projects.

They would "thoroughly search" the belongings of the CIA, the grotesquely rich, and the police officers themselves. I dare say they would

uncover more incriminating evidence than they would busting those in the welfare lines. Street junkies do not have the fleets of private jets necessary to import millions of dollars of cocaine onto our streets. They are just nice, easy targets to pick on, targets who lack the political and economic clout to fight back and demand their rights. There is no way these small-time pushers are the ones producing, importing or even distributing drugs in this country. The real drug sources are living easy in limousines or the White House.

If the government wanted to discourage this sort of ghetto crime, the "War on Drugs" would become the "War on the Reasons Life Seems So Bleak in our Ghettos and High Schools (Same Thing Really) that Millions Escape to Narcotics Every Year."

Even our fair city

Same thing can be seen right here in Bloomington-Normal. The Bloomington police recently made a lot of noise about gangs in our schools. Gangs, they said, have already infiltrated our high schools but have not worked their way to Illinois State.

This sort of stuff always makes me wonder. What is the Bloomington Police department's definition of a gang? A "group of individuals that hang out together, wear similar clothing, have a tendency toward violence, intimidate and terrorize the community at large and engage in excessive drug or alcohol use?" No, that can't be it, or else that would include every fraternity on the ISU campus, as well as the Bloomington-Normal police departments.

No, the definition must be something more like, "Poor, minority students who are uninterested in sports or the prom, who do the same things as the fraternity kids but have better haircuts." The Bloomington Anti-Gang task force tends to lose a little bit of its appeal, doesn't it?

Blaming the victim

Everything about the American criminal justice system is geared toward terrorizing the poor. There is a population of something like 850,000 American citizens living in cages all over the country right now, up around 75 percent from before Reagan was elected. That is a higher percentage of our population than any other industrialized nation except South Africa. We also share the distinction with our friends in Pretoria as being the only government in an industrialized state barbaric enough to continue to execute its citizens accused of crimes. The similarities just don't seem to end between our two countries.

Not only is this inhumane, it doesn't seem to deter any crime. The United States continues to be among the most violent of all nations. So, we are in essence throwing away tax money in a battle against crime we were never even designed to win. Throwing away isn't really harsh enough. It costs more to keep a person locked away in one of our overcrowded rat holes called prisons for a single year than it does to keep a student in Harvard or Yale.

It is misplaced priorities of the most disgusting quality.

The state of the state

Illinois' illustrious governor gave a perfect example of this sort of misunderstanding of the best ways to cure the crime problem in his 1993 budget proposal. Edgar claims that we are out of money and that he is forced to cut welfare and social programs for the poor and raise regressive sales taxes.

Funny how he is unwilling to continue giving aid to the impoverished of this state, but he is glad to spend the money to open a medium-security prison in Mt. Vernon. We don't mind spending money on the poor as long as we are putting them in cages, I suppose.

--shadd

The Post Resource

AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power/ Central Illinois (ACT UP/CI)
PO Box 3452
Bloomington, IL 61702
827-6841
Meetings: Alternating Thursdays, 7 p.m. at Up Front Gallery, 102 N. Center, 2nd floor, Bloomington.

Amnesty International/ISU
146 Braden
Illinois State University
Normal, IL 61761
454-2902, ask for Scott
Meetings: Alternating Sundays, 8 p.m., 112 Fairchild, ISU.

Bloomington/Normal Anti-War Coalition
829-3701

Gay And Lesbian Alliance (GALA)
146 Braden, ISU
Normal, IL 61761
438-2GAY (0429)
Meetings: Wednesdays, 8 p.m. ISU campus Fairchild Hall 112

ISU Feminist Alliance
146 Braden, ISU
Normal, IL 61761
436-0383, ask for Kate Eisenhour
436-0134, ask for Jenny Melnick
Meetings: Check ISU *Vidette* for meeting time and location

Men Against Rape
146 Braden, ISU
Normal, IL 61761
Meetings: Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Stevenson 352, ISU

McLean County AIDS Task Force
Phoneline: 827-2437 (827-AIDS)
Monday-Thursday, 7-10 p.m.
Info recording at other times.
Emergency/crisis: PATH, 827-4005
Meetings: First Thursday of every month. Call for information.

McLean County Human Rights Coalition
c/o Voice for Choice
PO Box 905
Bloomington, IL 61702
828-3108, ask for Linda

McLean County Voice for Choice
PO Box 905
Bloomington, IL 61702
828-3108, ask for Linda
Meetings: Alternating Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.
Call for meeting info.
Newsletter subscription: \$4.00 donation requested

Post Amerikan Newspaper
PO Box 3452
Bloomington, IL 61702
828-7232, leave a message
827-6841, ask for Scott
Meetings: Call for information
Subscriptions: \$4.00 for one year (six issues)

Progressive Student Union (PSU)
146 Braden, ISU
Normal, IL 61761
452-3781, Angie
452-7955, Michelle
Meetings: Tuesdays, 8:30 p.m., DeGarmo 551, ISU.

Rape Crisis Center
Use PATH phoneline
827-4005

Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC)
146 Braden, ISU
Normal, IL 61761
438-5765, Saad
Meetings: Alternating Wednesdays 7pm, Schroeder 316, ISU

Students for Choice
146 Braden, ISU
Normal, IL 61761
454-8587, ask for Lainie
Meetings: Thursday evenings, 8:30 p.m., Schroeder 114, ISU



Letters:

Readers in the Bronx

Dear *Post Amerikan*,

As perhaps ordained by some cosmic force as yet unintelligible to humans, except for the enlightened readers of the *Post Amerikan*, another significant birthday is taking place.

This one, twenty years your senior, verily twice your age, is proudly owned by one of your (former?) feature writers, a film critic, and perhaps Jimmy Higgins. Congratulations to the two of you. May you both grow quantitatively and qualitatively.

Sincerely,

A Bronx Reader

The *Post Amerikan* replies:

Dear Bronx Reader,

Thank you for your generous donation.

Could we be sharing a birthday with our own Soto Bito?

If so, then congrats on the big four-oi!

Hitchhiking through the Midwest

Dear *Post Amerikan*,

Long, long ago, I used to read your newspaper. Back then, it was mostly about legalizing pot and getting out of Vietnam. These were the things that were important to me and I looked forward to each issue.

That was before I went to the West Coast. Since then, I've been around the continent. But the same things remain important to me.

I was just hitchhiking through your fair city, and lo and behold, there was a *Post Amerikan* vending machine on the sidewalk. Tears actually came to my eyes as I realized that I was about to spend my last 25 cents on a name out of my past. It was an emotional moment. I hope you can relate.

Later that day, I ran into an old hippie friend of mine I hadn't seen in about 15 years. He has short hair now and he's a computer guru up in Peoria. I guess it pays pretty good, because he gave me the \$100.00 he owed me, plus he offered me \$100.00 in interest. I guess there really is a God, and He was telling me that I did the right thing with my 25 cents.

By the way, to all my fellow Acid Heads: dose and then go see "The Lawnmower Man." Way cool. I turned my old friend on to this.

Keep truckin',

A.J.

And now a word from the West Coast

Dear *Post Amerikan*,

Do you realize that the *Post Amerikan* is the only continuously published left newspaper dating from the early 1970's? The situation elsewhere is that they all folded or changed into something else.

In Seattle, a pretty liberal city with a number of left subcultures, there have always been left-community organizer papers—*The Helix*, followed by *The Northwest Passage*, followed by *WAVES*, followed by *Community Catalyst*.

There have been gaps, as various groups burn out and other groups start from scratch, [but] usually with no continuity [between groups].

I was raised in Decatur, Illinois, and certainly understand why people on the left feel so isolated in central Illinois.

I was struck by Pete Howells' story of his friend who didn't like the *Post Amerikan*, but read it anyway. When he [Howells' friend] moves to a more populated area, he can have a circle of friends with whom he has almost no political disagreement if he chooses.

I'll admit that this is certainly a much more comfortable way to live, but it has the drawback of isolating radicals into communities which have little close personal interaction with the more conservative people around them. Is this the particular strength of the Bloomington-Normal left community, and the reason for the longevity of the *Post Amerikan*, that you have no choice but to get close to some people who are pretty different from you?

As long as you can keep it up, I'll send you a few bucks to stay in touch with my roots.

--MKK

P.S. Chris Smith, Andrea Barron, Noreen McGrath and Juma Michal all moved here from Bloomington-Normal in the early '80's and have been active in various left, feminist and gay liberation activities since. I think that Midwestern transplants around here secrete pheromones that alert other people of similar backgrounds to their presence!



I want my PA--on time!

Dear *Posties*,

Thank you again for the renewal notice. Here's my subscription renewal and a small donation. Hopefully, your financial problems are being alleviated.

I do have one small query—why do I get my paper so late? For instance, my December/January issue arrived during the last week of January. By then, many of the happenings in Bloomington-Normal are history. Some of us may like to attend these events if we know about them. Just wondering.

In any event, you're still the best periodical in this house. Keep it up!

--Sandy Pottorf

The *Post Amerikan* replies:

Dear Ms. Pottorf,

Thank you for your generous donation.

Our apologies on late receipt of your issues. We can only say that such are the combined hazards of fourth class mail and the glitches which continue to plague us at our Mexico City plant,

particularly at the times of the Vernal Equinox and the Winter Solstice.

Seriously, though, we have to admit that you're right. While the new issue gets distributed quite quickly to newsstands and local businesses which sell the *Post Amerikan*, we are frequently lax in sending out our subs. We pledge to make a more concentrated effort to get issues in the mail and to our readers in a more timely manner.

We thank you for your patience and your loyal support.

PA helps in choice boycotts

Dear *Post Amerikan*,

I've been reading you for about a year. Before that I glanced through you at a good friend's alternative bookstore.

What really sold me [on the *Post Amerikan*] is information on Domino's Pizza contributing to a Right to Life (translation: Anti-Choice) group. My Domino's boycott began [then].

I live in Springfield, our fine capitol. We have nothing like you here, and we need you! So, in celebration of 20 years, send some folk down Springfield way. We need some local eye-opening.

Thanks *Post*. The world needs you.

Sincerely,

Lisa Weisser.

The *Post Amerikan* replies:

Dear Ms. Weisser,

Know anyone out in Springfield who would like to become our correspondent on state political issues? We definitely could use some help in covering that ground. So spread the word that we would be happy to accept articles for our consideration.

Growing up with the *Post*

Happy Birthday *Post Amerikan*!

It was 1979 or 1980, while attending ISU, when I first began to read the *Post*. I picked it up because I was curious about the spelling "Amerikan." I continued to read it because I thought the pen names were clever and I wanted to support the work of an "alternative" press. By this time I had learned what "alternative" meant and the importance of such a paper in Bloomington-Normal.

In addition to the paper, *Post Amerikan* parties also played a significant role in my growth and development as a Bloomington-Normal leftist. You all were this farm girl's first experience with hippies, patchouli oil and reggae music!

I have recently joined the exodus of lefties out of Bloomington-Normal settling down in the vast Southwest amongst Saguaro cactus and two-step dance clubs—Womyn Only, of course. Last week I received my first *Post* via the mail. It was like a visit from an old friend. (Pardon my sappiness, but what can I say, I'm a double Pisces with my Mercury in retrograde!)

Thank you for your perseverance, your irreverence and your commitment to providing the Bloomington-Normal community with an alternative voice.

Carry On!

PMH



Fascist postal carrier?

Dear Post,

I'm happy to renew my subscription, but, in this past year I've received only 2 issues. Please send 'em all this time. Even in the big city, papers such as the *Post Amerikan* are difficult to come by. It seems that people here are more interested in making a fashion statement than a political statement.

Although I have little desire to live in Bloomington-Normal ever again, it's great to know the fight for an equal, gentle world is going strong.

-Yours,

Hollie Rogin

P.S. Any news on Leger Brosnahan? As the student who made the first complaint, I have a vested interest--to see him removed!

The *Post Amerikan* replies:

Dear Ms. Rogin

Sorry you haven't been getting your paper, but as your name is on our subscription list, we can only suggest that you may have a fascist mail carrier who thinks the Federalists were only kidding when they wrote the First Amendment.

Or perhaps you have loutish and inconsiderate neighbors who, starved for stimulating regional journalism, swipe your paper?

Just what B/N needs

Dear *Post Amerikan*,

Happy Birthday!

What the *Post* means to me? A strong voice of the people, a lively critic, a community bulletin board, a co-operative that welcomes and nurtures beginning writers (thanks, Balrog and Phoebe!), and a cultural icon that B-N needs more than it knows.

The highlights? The funny, the outrageous, the profane, the investigative, the passionate--including the photo of Sheriff King, the articles on local MDs, the exposés on lawyers and the Scott Estate, the French soiree benefit, the t-shirts, the covers (including the one on "Hell Freezing Over"!), the meetings.

Thanks for so much -- and thanks for continuing to cover birth as an issue. I was glad to see Holly's ad & article.

Sincerely,

--Sue Frizzell

Too late for the deadline?

Dear *Post Amerikan*,

Hello, I hope you all are well and still going strong.

As I was transferred some months ago from the facility to which you mailed this issue, I received it too late to meet your deadline. I sent you a notice of my change of address, but you apparently did not receive it.

At any rate, I would like to wish your publication another twenty years of success, and to congratulate you all for the tremendous effort you've given to its production. I've only received a few issues thus far for the gift subscription you granted me, but I have enjoyed those to no end.

Thanks a million for all you do!

Sincerely,

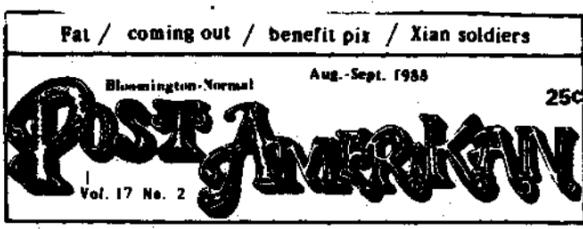
Jasper Lynch

The *Post Amerikan* replies:

Dear Mr. Lynch,

We have updated our subscription files to note your change of address.

As you can see from the inclusion of your letter in our anniversary issue, it's never too late for the *Post Amerikan*.



Do you have any openings at *Post Amerikan*?

Dear Folks,

Although I have not lived in the B-N area for quite some time, I was a faithful reader of yours during my years in school. Some of you may even recall that I occasionally wrote articles for publication [in the *Post Amerikan*] in the mid-eighties. Now that I have finished my formal education, I feel it is time to make an effort to volunteer my talents.

Happily, choosing where to first proffer my services is a difficult one. I find that many non-profit organizations have helped me at several times in my life so far, and those are the organizations I would most like to help out if I can.

As I recall, the *Post* was (and probably still is) an important part of Bloomington-Normal and if so, of convenience for you I would like to volunteer articles for your publication again.

At any rate, I understand that since I am now living in North Carolina, I may not be able to write articles relevant to your readership in McLean County, or even the Midwest at large.

Possibly, you could send me assignments with a general or national perspective. I would look forward to hearing your reaction to this idea.

--Jon Thomas

The *Post Amerikan* replies:

Dear Mr. Thomas,

Are you kidding? Isn't North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms' stomping ground? The man who led the pack against the National Endowment for The Arts? The Senator who seems to think that First Amendment rights don't apply to artists--especially openly lesbian and gay artists--who would like government support? The man who blatantly manipulated white fears about racial violence in his appallingly racist televised campaign ads?

Since the NEA has funded artists, such as Keith Haring and David Wojnarowicz, whose shows have turned up at the Illinois State University Gallery in recent years, we'd venture to say that people and topics who come out of North Carolina make an impact on people in Illinois.

Carol Moseley Braun, an African-American woman, may very well take a Democratic Senate seat for Illinois in November, and thus make history. If Ms. Braun becomes the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. Senate, then the Lady from Illinois may very well tell the Gentleman from North Carolina just what time of night it is.

Bring on the articles. We'd love to hear from you.

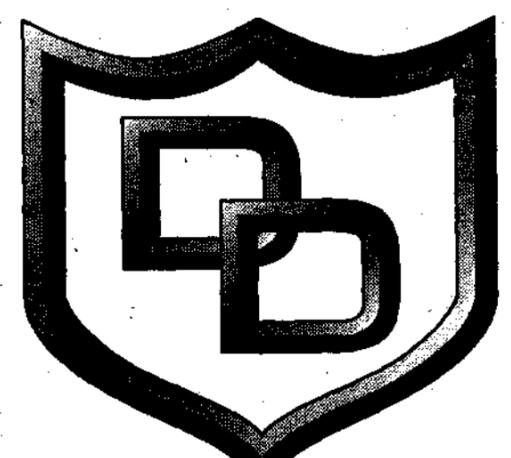
And thanks for the kind words, too.

To all our readers:

Even if you're not from Springfield, IL, or North Carolina, but have articles and issues you think might be of interest to our readers, please send them to the address below.

Please bear in mind that we do not publish fiction or poetry.

Send letters and articles to us at the *Post Amerikan*, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702



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WHO IS MS. HIPPIE?



Ms. Hippie #1



Dear Post,

Thanks for contacting me regarding the whereabouts of the real Ms. Hippie. As insiders may know, Ms. Hippie was driven underground by death threats made against her by an evil imposter, the pseudo-Ms. Hippie. Due to the serious nature of her rival's terrorist tactics, I cannot of course, reveal her whereabouts in an overyuppified, underhippified East Coast corporate/university community that shall remain nameless. She has, however, sent me a letter via a trusted contact, which she has instructed me to convey to the loyal readers of the *Post Amerikan*. It reads as follows:

Dear Friends in Struggle:

Greetings from the bowels of Amerika—where day by day I pick my way through the fetid, undigested remains of the fodder of the Amerikan Dream. Wish you were here.

But enough pleasantries. Dear readers, I have a dire purpose in writing to you today. I'm writing to urge you to always remember, and never forget: I'M MS. HIPPIE! FORGET THAT OTHER BITCH! Now, she may sound like Ms. Hippie—frankly, Ms. Hippie's rhetoric is not that hard to come by; a couple of Grateful Dead records, a copy of *Be Here Now*, *Rubyfruit Jungle* and *Steal This Book* and you're on your way. And she may look like Ms. Hippie—but trust me, anybody can dress up in a tie-dyed pillowcase or turn her grandmother's crummy old silverware into bracelets. So look closely—the braids are extensions!



Ahem. I have another purpose in mind today, as I languish in this snobbish, uptight wasteland of corporate headquarters, overpriced boutiques and trendy espresso bars, and that is to beg you to GET ME OUTA HERE. Well, that, and to pay homage to my beloved *Post Amerikan*. We're twenty years old now, and if I may use the Grateful Dead as a *leitmotif*, allow me to state the obvious by saying, gee, what a long, strange trip it's been.

I want to tell you about the first time I visited the offices of the *Post Amerikan*, when it was in the basement of a rundown house on West Monroe. There were revolutionary slogans painted on the cinderblock walls. It was a pig sty. (Please tell me that this still holds true—there must be some *constancy* in life.) I was not yet Ms. Hippie—I suppose at that time I was rather the neophyte Ms. Hippie, without a fully formed consciousness, trailing along in the wake of a feckless boyfriend who pretended to be working on the paper. We walked into the middle of a deadline meeting—it was very tense, because the paper had recently exposed the wrong person as a narc. They were trying to decide what to do about it, as this was serious egg on their collective face.

The *Post* workers all looked real serious and intimidating—Mark, with his hair looking like a dangerous halo, a huge black cloud around his head, Andrea, with her radically butch haircut, and Deborah, completely silver at twenty-six years old. The uniform was the same for everyone—a flannel shirt over a clever, sloganeering t-shirt and old jeans that kind of bagged up around the ass. I imagined that they ate Marx for breakfast and each had a favorite recipe for a homemade incendiary device, and that they never sat in front of their t.v.s with a bowl of chocolate-chip ice cream.

They were using a style of discourse (as the eggheads say) that I was unfamiliar with. Where I come from, the one who wins the argument is the one who talks the loudest. These *Post* types seemed to be following some code of mutual respect, only talking one at a time, everyone listening, and everyone having a chance to air their opinion. Gender-neutral language, to the point of changing their own names ("Goldman" would become "Goldperson") was attempted. It was both impressive and excruciating. I would find out later that all this posturing had a playful side—which is something that those who did not know the *Post* very well never realized. In fact, some people on the *Post* never realized it either, which eventually caused some problems. But I digress.

So what were they going to do about this poor guy who had been exposed as a narc? This had never happened before. I said they should send him a fruit basket with a little apology. They said the fruit basket was a good idea, but could we be sure that the fruit was picked by organized farm workers? I was in love with the paper almost from that first meeting on, when I started to understand their style—the *Post* crew embodied a quirky combination of qualities that seemed to work together in the most delightful way—serious political beliefs held in check by playfulness and nonsense. You would never make it if you couldn't tease your own dogma. Those who couldn't left.

Sexuality. There was plenty in all varieties, and that was the nicest thing about the group—people were comfortable with each other. O, the parties we would have—the unholy unions we would make. But we took it in stride and the collective survived more than a few non-monogamous relationships, and *that* is a real testament.

You know, readers, Ms. Hippie would not be here today if not for the *Post*, because it was there I learned the basis for what I think I know. For instance, I think I learned the words "dogma" and "rhetoric" and "ideology" there, which I'll admit is somewhat regrettable. But I also learned from the *Post* what I could do without permission from the authorities—from proclaiming ownership of my body, to speaking my mind (still working out a few bugs on that one), to mixing my metaphors, to launching impossible schemes that would never work, but so what?

Honest to Dog, readers, the example of the people at the *Post* enabled me to do things intellectually and creatively that I never imagined. I had never been around such smart and imaginative people and believe that I never will again. Ironically, the *Post Amerikan* is responsible for my entrance into this institution of higher learning where I am spending my exile, preparing for the next phase of my life as an academic. So when Ms. Hippie gets her hotshit job after this hotshit education, she can send the paper a big check to assuage her guilt about making money. Ain't life funny?

--Readers: At this point, Ms. Hippie's letter trails off, and if I'm not mistaken, the paper is stained with tears, as they say. She asks me to ask you to please forgive her backsliding into the sentimental there toward the end, but asks, what good is a sharp memory if you can't slice open your own heart with it now and then? I'm not sure what that means.

Happy Birthday to you--US! Keep those home fires burning.

--Laurie Dahlberg

Ms. Hippie #2



Dear Post,

I hear through the grapevine that the false Ms. Hippie may be sending a swoony, sentimental letter via Laurie Dahlberg—a letter that in true ersatz Ms. Hippie style enchants the reader with its elegant prose and leads one to believe, through the use of specific insider details, that she is, indeed, the true Ms. Hippie.

Let me set this straight (excuse the expression): I'M MS. HIPPIE! FORGET THAT OTHER VIXEN!

Well, that's not exactly right. It's been twenty years; it's time for the truth. The Other Ms. Hippie (the one who uses the vulgar word in our traditional battlecry, may I point out) and I are actually collaborators from way back. Many *Post* documents are products of both of our fertile minds and vicious hearts, including the Ms. Hippie advice column. We have also penned poignant fundraising letters and my personal favorite, the *Post* religion poll, which I sincerely hope the staffers will reprint in whole or part in this issue. It has the deep universality of a classic, and besides, Ms. Hippie actually did fall on the floor laughing as we composed it, an act that she always had considered hyperbolic up to that time.



Ms. Hippie does have another purpose in mind today. I would like to point out that my underlying philosophy in the Ms. Hippie column is one that should be given serious as well as lighthearted attention. A bit of knowledge about old-fashioned politeness would do the modern world much good. If we all followed rules of verbal etiquette, for example, people would no more call our fellow creatures by unwelcome names (fag, jig, and so on) than they would neglect writing a thank you note to a dinner hostess. Roommates would not deliver diatribes nor stomp the stairs with their motorcycle boots; bus riders would modestly avert their eyes as a traveling companion chased her wayward diaphragm rolling down the Greyhound aisle; and fourth-time brides would not expect fourth wedding gifts from their parents' neighbors.

Ms. Hippie would also like to point out that her blue jeans have *never* bagged up around her ass. As usual, Ms. Hippie chooses vivacity over veracity. Keep up the good work, sis.

--Phoebe Caulfield

Who? WHO? WHO?

Summing up

One reader issues a challenge to local lefties. PA says, "Back at ya!"

Dear *Post Amerikan*,

Best wishes on 20 years of trying to tell the truth. Central Illinois desperately needs a voice in the wilderness like the *Post Amerikan*, because it sure as hell is a moral wilderness.

I seem to remember writing something for the *Post Amerikan* under an assumed name back around 1975 or '76. Of course, it might all have been a hallucination. I seem to have had more of my share back then. (The flashbacks are dynamite.)

On the occasion of your 20th anniversary, I'd like to issue a challenge to the leftist population of Bloomington-Normal. The circulation of the *Post Amerikan* is about 1,000 and each copy probably gets read by an average of two people, so there might be 2,000 of you.

Get it together with your 1,999 brothers and sisters and take a stand. But this time, do it for something that can really make a difference here in Central Illinois. We're all tired of the usual vegetarian, save-the-whales, gay-rights, pro-choice, no-nukes, women's-liberation crap. I got news: the nearest spotted owl is 1,400 miles away.

So give it a rest for a minute and consider this: 40 miles away a giant corporation and its hired thugs are destroying the lives of thousands of hard-working men and women. The president of this corporation, Don Fites, makes over \$500,000.00 per year—more than you or I will make in our lifetimes.

The leaders of the union make almost as much money as the corporate management. The working men and women, whose union dues pay their salaries, are out freezing on the picket line, then going home to figure out how to buy food for their kids.

Neither the union power junkies nor the management are moving even one more millimeter towards a settlement. Both of them are equally responsible for the suffering of these working families, but there is no end anywhere in sight. The power junkies on both sides love a good fight. The company's hired thugs are out there every day, trying to provoke a fight.

And there are plenty of casualties. At the union hall, 31 filings for divorce have already been reported. Nobody knows how many couples are screaming at each other, but still trying to keep it together. And nobody wants to guess how many of them will step out to the garage and eat a bullet (or French-kiss the exhaust pipe) before it's over.

There is no good reason why they couldn't continue the current contract for 20 years. If it was good enough three years ago, why isn't it good enough now?

(Personally, I think we need to lock the negotiators in an unheated gymnasium, let them sleep on the hard floor, and send in lukewarm coffee and cold sandwiches. When they slide a signed contract out under the door, we let them out. It's a nice fantasy.)

The corporation is called Caterpillar. Negotiators from both sides are taking it easy in a luxury hotel in St. Louis, while the workers suffer. Those workers need your support.

There is an "adopt a striker" program for \$35.00 per week through the United Auto Workers, 3025 Springfield Road, East Peoria, IL 61614—and every cent goes to the strikers, not the union leadership. Also, the fat cats on both sides deserve some heat. (If you can't afford \$35.00, a stamp is only 29 cents.)

Get off your dead asses and do something. And, by the way, happy birthday.

--Bryan Hinnen



The *Post Amerikan* replies:

Dear Mr. Hinnen,

We estimate our circulation at 2,400, slightly higher than your estimate of 2,000. While we routinely print 1200 copies per issue, we would agree with your estimate that each copy has on the average 2 readers.

Now, let us calculate the relevance of our regular features--what your refer to as "the usual vegetarian, save-the-whales, gay-rights, pro-choice, no-nukes, women's-liberation crap," on a percentage-of-represented-population basis.

Women's rights

Women constitute approximately 52% of the current U.S. population. Therefore, "women's-liberation crap"--women's legal rights in divorce, child custody, access to employment, and as the victims of crimes such as sexual assault and incest; access to adequate, quality, prenatal, postnatal, pediatric care; day care, particularly for low-income, working and impoverished women; abortion rights; sexual harassment--affect, at a minimum, 52%, or 1,248, of our estimated 2,400 readers.

However, if you believe, as we do, that feminist issues directly affect men as well as women, then we would venture to add an additional 48% to the number of readers affected by our "women's liberation crap."

And if you don't think violence against women is a matter of serious consideration for people concerned with human rights, as you say you are, we suggest you consider the following set of statistics.

According to the FBI, in the United States a woman is raped every 10 minutes, and a woman is beaten in a domestic situation every three minutes. In other words, in a 24-hour period, at least 144 women are sexually assaulted in the United States, or 52,704 women will be sexually assaulted this year. And at least 192 women in the United States are victims of domestic battering on a daily basis, or 70,272 per year.

Let us remind you that the FBI calculates these figures on the basis of reported cases. The actual incidence of violence against women could very well be much higher.

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual rights

As for what you refer to as "gay-rights...crap," we can only assume you refer to our regular coverage of specifically gay and lesbian concerns, such as the following:

Laws restricting free sexual expression between same-sex consenting adults, even in the privacy of their own homes. Discrimination in housing and employment. Denial of custodial and/or visitation rights for lesbian and gay parents for no better reason than their sexual orientation. Legal refusal to recognize rights of inheritance, community property, or to provide home medical care for an ill and/or incapacitated partner in same-sex partnerships on the same basis as would apply in a given community to heterosexual couples.

We also regularly cover the representation of lesbian and gay people in the media, and lesbian and gay artists' representation of themselves and their communities in the fine arts and other media. We can only assume that you refer to those features as well.

For the sake of argument, then, let us accept Kinsey's estimate that 10% of the U.S. population--male and female--is homosexual. We would therefore estimate that our coverage of the above named lesbian and gay concerns affects 10%, or 240, of our 2,400 readers. If we factor in bisexual people of both sexes, and if we estimate the bisexual population at a conservative 3% of the total U.S. population, then that number should include an additional 72 readers, for a combined total of 13%, or 312 readers.

We take it to mean then that you think that our reviews of films like *Paris Is Burning*, *Longtime Companion* and *Basic Instinct*, in addition to television programs which feature gay and lesbian characters, are of little political import and concern no larger percentage of our readers than our total of 13%.

But much of the remaining 87% of the U.S. population gets both its understanding and misunderstanding of homosexuality through popular movies and television shows.

We at the *Post Amerikan* think that the various professionals in popular media--writers, directors, journalists, actors, producers--ought to take more seriously their responsibility to the gay and lesbian community. Especially given popular misconceptions of the AIDS crisis as a "gay disease." And all the more especially because of the alarming rise in reported gay-bashing incidents which may very well relate in part to fears and misunderstandings about who People With AIDS might be.



Post Amerikan

And by the way, if you don't think violence against lesbians and gays--gay-bashing--seems of legitimate concern, then consider these statistics.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 1991 an estimated 65% of adolescents--male and female--who committed or attempted suicide did so because of their despondency over their sexual orientation.

We should note that this report was never officially released. When Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan attempted to suppress it, Congressman Gerry Studds (D-Mass.) leaked the study to the press in an attempt to bring national attention to the human consequences of homophobia.

In other words, teenagers who suspect or know that they may be lesbian or gay, find reinforced everywhere through popular culture and popular attitudes cruel and even malicious representations of homosexuality.

For every art house film such as *Lianna*, *Maurice*, and *I Hear The Mermaids Singing*, there are too many major commercial releases such as *Cruising*, *Windows* and *Basic Instinct*.

The latter three films represent not just some but *all* of their gay and lesbian characters as cruel and promiscuous, if not downright murderous and sociopathic.

The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that 77% of all reported hate crimes for the year 1991 were perpetrated against lesbian and gay people, or people perceived to be lesbian and/or gay.

77% of all reported hate crimes? 65% of all reported adolescent suicides and/or attempted suicides? Disproportionately high for 13% of the total population, we would venture to say.

We at the *Post Amerikan* consider all these sets of alarming statistics--pertaining to women, lesbians and gays--to be of grave concern to anyone at all interested in human rights, as again you suggest yourself to be.

So even if you are neither homosexual nor female, you very well could care about someone who is either or both-- a friend, a coworker, a relative, a neighbor. It would seem to us then that those statistics alone should give you pause.

Environmental action

As for our "save-the-whales...no-nukes...crap," by which we take you to mean our consistent commentary on environmental concerns, we would like point out that those concerns include the following topics:

The dangers of nuclear power and the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, either one of which could obliterate us all. The widening hole in the ozone layer, which could increase dramatically cases of skin cancer and other health problems related to overexposure from the sun's ultra-violet rays. The disappearing rain forests of the Amazon basin, which provide 70% of the earth's daily oxygen supply.

And call us sentimental, but while as you point out, "the nearest spotted owl is 1,400 miles away," we believe that the possible prevention of yet another animal species' unnecessary extinction may have an environmental impact that reaches at least as far as--if not beyond--1,400 miles.

You may counter that efforts to save the Spotted Owl are as quixotic as trying to resurrect the Passenger Pigeon or the Dodo Bird. However, we would like to note that experts estimate that

living species number anywhere from 5 to 30 million. Of that number only 1.4 million are identified and classified. And yet these same experts estimate that in the next twenty-five to thirty years, 25% of all known species will become extinct if current, world-wide ecological crises continue apace.

We would submit to you that if we don't clean up our collective act soon and stop using the planet for a trash heap, that 25% might very well include *homo sapien sapiens*.

Consequently, we at the *Post Amerikan* feel confident that the environmental concerns outlined above are, or at the very least, *should be*, of concern to a minimum of 100%, or all 2,400, of our readers.

All of us have to co-exist on this planet for the duration.

Including you.

However, Mr. Hinnen, you do have a point which we take to heart.

The *Post Amerikan* has become in recent years more a forum than a newspaper. And readers besides you have frequently criticized us for that. But, we would more than welcome investigative journalism pertinent to local community issues.

Labor rights

However, we would suggest that labor contracts may need to be changed a little more frequently than every 20 years, if you calculate the rising costs of health care, day care, and education, along with the general decline of real wages, into the equation.

And what's more, the UAW believes that it must negotiate pattern bargaining, so that its membership can preserve if not gain a middle-class lifestyle throughout the country, and not just in Peoria, Illinois.

We feel obligated to point out to you that actual union membership in the U.S. numbers only 15% of the current work force, as opposed to say, for example, 40% in Germany. Yet Germany remains one of the United States' major Western industrial and economic rivals.

Whatever the sins Big Labor may have committed, the UAW apparently feels--and if so then rightly so--that the labor movement in this country has its back to the wall.

Of course, whether or not the UAW and other big unions can stand and deliver for the American worker remains to be seen. Union membership in this country has declined most precipitously during the 1980's. The United States Supreme Court overturned previous statutes preventing the firing of striking workers and the hiring of new laborers to replace them in 1938. However, that ruling remained essentially untested until 1983, when 3,000 air traffic controllers went out on strike over labor conditions.

In 1983, then President Ronald Reagan summarily fired all of the striking air traffic controllers, a gesture which inaugurated his administration's attack on organized labor.

That mass-firing set a precedent which made it far more possible for both private industries and public commissions to deny their employees the right to strike without fearing for their jobs. Without the strike as an essential bargaining tool, unions and their members become far more vulnerable to abusive practices by management and government.

Now whether or not you regard the UAW's strategy at Caterpillar as humane or fair, we think you ought to consider the above points carefully.

Since you are an old newspaper hand, and since you are still residing in Illinois, Mr. Hinnen, we should be quite willing to consider printing your stories covering the strike at Caterpillar.

The protracted strike at Caterpillar and its effect on laborers and their families would be one possibility. Racially discriminatory hiring and promotion practices in state agencies and private companies would be another. The issues are as numerous as the population of McLean County.

We toss the gauntlet back at your feet.

Choose your story, sir.

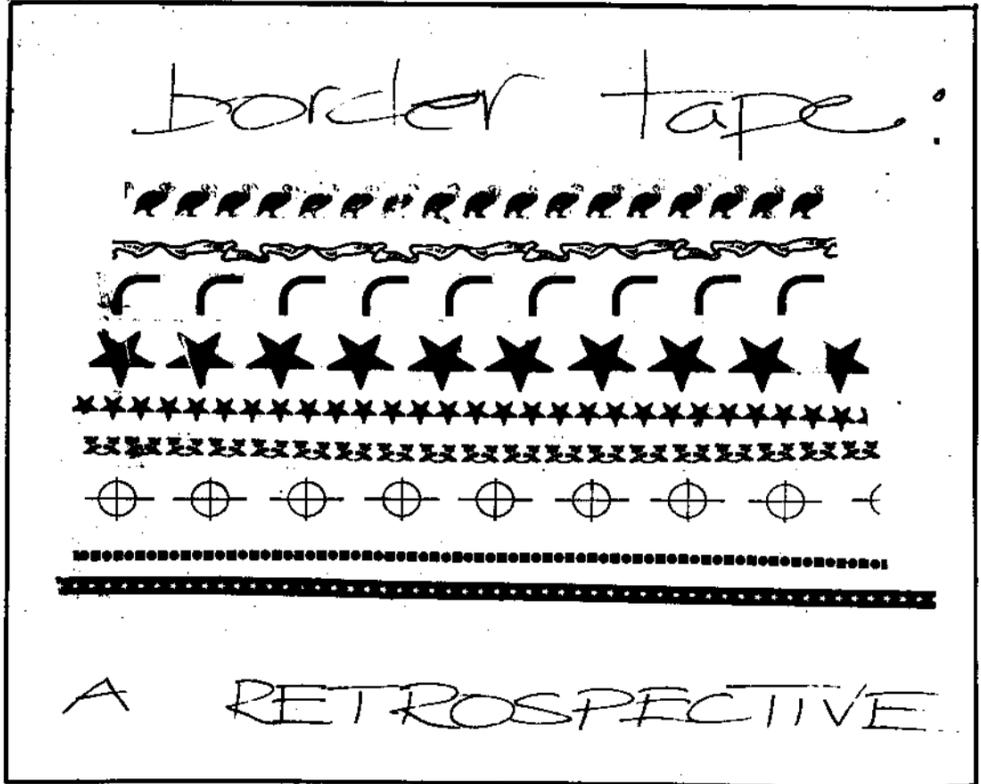
What? The Post-Amerikan needs money? James, get my checkbook!



Seriously, folks, we've been struggling along putting out this paper for 20 years now, trying to make income from ads and paper sales stretch to cover supplies and printing and what have YOU done to help except throw us a lousy quarter once a month (when you remember)?

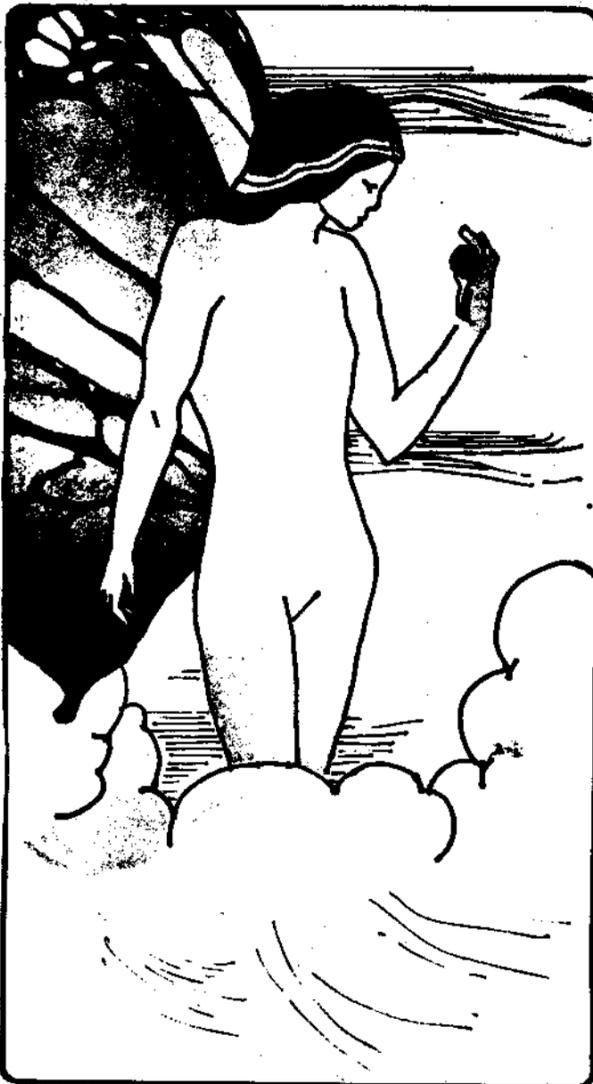
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 A
 GRAPHIC DESIGNER'S
 WORST NIGHTMARE

PAST POST COVERS



Ten years after:
 gay pride marches on
 pages 9-24

My son,
 the
 gay person
 page 13

Lesbian
 mothers
 page 14

Gay rage
 page 18



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Post Amerikan Bad Habit #1

The Procrastinated Post

Reading the Post Amerikan is something like riding the Titanic—you only see the tip of the iceberg you're about to run into.

A lot of activity goes on behind the scenes of the nation's longest-running community-based alternative press. Back when I was working on the Post, one of the rituals consisted of meeting roughly every other week and sharing our story ideas. I was the "acting mother hen" at the time, so I would duly record these ideas in my notebook or on a cocktail napkin, whichever was most convenient. (I still have some of those napkins. They are totally incomprehensible.) Dreaming up the story ideas was the easy part. Convincing people to actually follow through and write them was often impossible.

So, in honor of the Post's birthday, here are some of the best articles that never appeared in the Post Amerikan.

The best article I never wrote was entitled "What the F*ck's a Ferdydurke." One of the nifty perks from being a Post writer is that you get to dream up your own sexy-pen name. The point of this article was to expose the hidden meanings behind such mysterious pen names as Phoebe Caulfield, Skeet Floyd, Major Drag, Peter Doubt, LVD, my own Balrog, and—of course—Ferdydurke. (And in case you're wondering, our pope-bashing Ferdydurke picked up his pen name from some unknown Polish novel that even he hasn't read.)

Speaking of Ferdydurke, back when he and I were dating, he used to drag me to some positively awful movies. Phoebe Caulfield, LVD, Alethea, and some others I probably forgot to mention decided the Post should have a movie review column: "Ferdydurke and the Balrog ... At the Movies." Although I was willing to pan such atrocities as "Hollywood Shuffle," we could never talk Ferdydurke into participating. Alas, dear reader, as Gene and Roger would say, the balcony is closed and it's going to stay that way.

I really miss Deborah Wiatt's contributions to the Post—it has been too long since Deborah's venom has appeared in these pages. (By the way, Deborah, great pen name!) Back when I was still coordinating, Deborah had an experience at the local True Value hardware store that she promised she would write up for the Post. Deborah had stopped by the store to pick up some materials for a home repair project, but those helpful salespeople at True Value told her that women shouldn't be doing such chores. Let's just say that Deborah was not pleased. Unfortunately, she never wrote her scathing exposé of the True Value sexism.

Many of us also miss LVD's delightful "My Sister, the Punk Rocker/Iconoclast." After she killed off Jill and Katie in a mysterious explosion and before she magically resurrected the sisters (who I think are very well drawn no matter what the characters themselves may say), LVD had planned an entirely new strip entitled "Billy and Bobby/Bobby and Billy." This strip was based on the adventures of a certain couple of LVD's acquaintance—a couple that could have used some counseling from Ms. Hippie. Although "Billy" and "Bobby" would be at the same place at the same time, they would have completely opposite recollections of the event. The difficulties of ordering a pizza was going to be LVD's first "Billy and Bobby/Bobby and Billy" cartoon. Unfortunately, LVD's strip never became reality because the couple that served as her inspiration finally broke up. "Bobby" won the lottery, moved to Stockholm, and is now the towel boy for the Swedish tennis team. "Billy" was run over by a truck.



LVD also had an idea for a new Post Amerikan T-shirt which I still hope will some day grace the torsos of our readers. The T-shirt would feature a pair of dogs "in the act" (I assume they would be doing it doggie-style) with the caption "Disgustin', but somehow fascinatin', the Post Amerikan."



The series "Queer/Counterqueer" never quite made it out of the closet. You may remember the first installment that appeared about three years ago, in which Skeet Floyd and I debated the virtues of the label "queer." Even though that article took us six months to write, Skeet and I were planning to continue debating still more crucial issues facing the gay/queer community in "Queer/Counterqueer." Our next installment was going to be "Boxers versus Briefs," in which we would debate which style of undergarment was proper for the socially-active gay/queer male of the '90s. (I shall leave it to the reader's furtive imagination to determine who was going to take what side in that debate.) I always wanted to start my side of the debate with, "Skeet, you ignorant slut," but that column idea appears to have gone the way of wet dreams.

Phoebe Caulfield never procrastinates and always gets her articles written before deadline. She's perfect.

Last but not least, about two years ago, I promised Skeet Floyd (who was coordinator at the time) that I would write this article entitled "The Procrastinated Post." In this article, I would share with our readers all the great story ideas we had never written. Well, I procrastinated. It's now the day before deadline for the birthday issue, and I've finally finished this long-promised article. I hope it gets to the Post crew quick enough to make it into the paper. If you don't get to read this article, you'll know what happened.

--The Balrog

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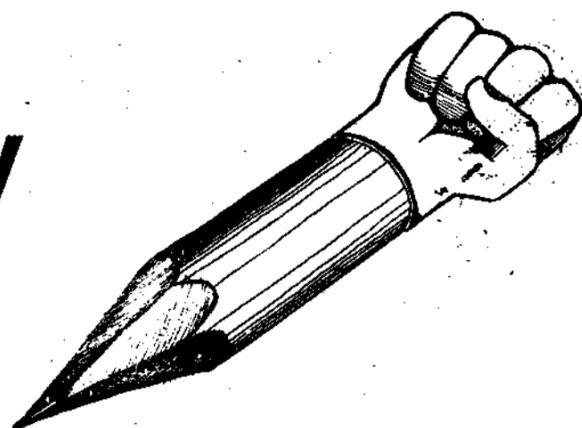
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Fighting back against racism and homophobia in Seattle

By any means necessary



The following is an account of Richard S. Mote's, a regular correspondent to the Post Amerikan, experience at an anti-Nazi demonstration in Seattle, Washington on January 25, 1992. He informs us that Seattle anarchists have since formed a loose-knit, anti-racist coalition, which will serve as an information-for-action network.

On Saturday, January 25, 1992 at 6:00 p.m., I joined what began as a couple of hundred people at 50th and University Avenue gathering for an Anti-Nazi rally called by local anarchists. The rally was called because of increasing local neo-Nazi activity.

The most recent outrage had been the stabbing and beating of Anthony Johnson, a fifty-year old black man, by neo-Nazi skinheads in the University district on Christmas Eve, 1991. The University district is near Seattle's Capital Hill district, a primarily gay neighborhood and the site of many recent gay-bashings and other hate crimes.

Local anarchists had distributed a flyer and people of almost every leftist political persuasion took part. The capitalist press credited the United Front Against Fascism and The Revolutionary Communist Party with the demonstration, apparently because no one else cared about talking to reporters. Other parties and groups who participated, but were not mentioned by mainstream newsreporters, were ACT-UP, Queer Nation, and ALF.

The march started out with many people in a militant, lively mood, adorning buildings with graffiti, carrying the usual signs and banners, and chanting "No Nazis, No KKK, No Fascist USA." After marching around the University district for awhile, we headed for the Capital Hill district, stopping traffic for awhile.

Marchers' numbers grew

During the march to Capital Hill, demonstrators spotted a bumpersticker on a truck which read: "I don't brake for niggers or dykes." Radical queers and others immediately set upon the truck, pounding it with fists and feet. Ironically, the two rednecks inside the truck's cab were rescued by the Queer Patrol, a gay group modeled after the Guardian Angels to protect area residents from gay-bashers.

By the time we started down Broadway, the main street through Capital Hill, there were about four hundred of us.

A lot of people were ready for a confrontation. Some comrades carried small baseball bats and wore masks. I mistakenly thought the Nazis would not make an appearance, due to our numbers, but the scum finally surfaced in the form of ten to thirteen skinheads.

The crowd of anti-fascists did the predictable things. Tossing eggs and garbage at them, the demonstrators ran toward the Nazis. The police, who until now had merely cleared traffic, though we lacked any permits, intervened between us and the skinheads. Out came the riot helmets and the batons. For a moment, it looked like there would be a confrontation between us and the cops. But someone from the United Front Against Fascism suggested we rally a few blocks down the street at the Seattle Community College campus. The demonstrators agreed to this, so a confrontation with the police was postponed for a short time.

Once at Seattle Community College, people made speeches and debated about which action to take next. A number of demonstrators were angry at the cops for protecting skinheads. They were infuriated because the police were not prosecuting the attack on Mr. Johnson as a hate crime, apparently because he had pulled a knife in an effort to protect himself against the eight skinheads who beat and stabbed him.

Demonstrators change strategy

The demonstrators decided that the best way to vent their rage was at the Capital Hill police station.

About half the demonstrators left at this point, including members of the United Front Against Fascism, who apparently wanted no further confrontation with the police. 150 to 200 demonstrators remained. We then marched to the police station, and some people began spray-painting walls, while others continued shouting slogans and stopping traffic.

After awhile, we decided to return to Broadway. A couple of cars got trashed as a parting gesture.

We then headed for "Tugs," a tavern on nearby East Pine Street. People were upset with "Tugs" for showing some kind of art film that portrayed Nazis.

At this point, most of the demonstrators left were either anarchists or RCP members. After about twenty minutes or so of our rallying in front of "Tugs," the mounted police moved in and formed a line, with more police on foot behind them. Clearly, they were determined to disperse us.

The majority of the demonstrators, myself included, stood from six to ten feet away from the police, with more people further in back of us, with one exception.

Suddenly, I noticed a young woman, a pacifist who I know, standing up there at the front lines, talking to a cop and petting his damn horse!

I urged her to move over with the rest of us, but she said: "I'm just being decent to a cop." I replied that I understood, but that the police were preparing to move forward and I did not want her to get caught in the middle. She told me she "would not miss this" and refused to move.

It was then that the cops announced they were moving forward and that anyone arrested would be struck. I yelled at the bastards that the woman in the middle was a pacifist. Another young woman ran forward as if to do something, but she was clubbed to the ground. The pacifist was grabbed while the rest of us were being pushed back.

The people directly in front of the cops tried to be pushed back as slowly as possible, while those further back retreated while yelling and occasionally throwing things.

We're mad as hell . . .

We gathered again at Seattle Community College and debated about whether we should stand and fight the police or continue moving up Broadway. I urged the young, masked comrades, still armed with baseball bats, not to try to use their weapons against the cops. I felt my urgings appropriate considering the situation and the probable consequences of armed resistance.

The situation justified direct action against property, but in my opinion, it did not justify our young comrades risking life and limb in direct hand to hand combat with the police. I told them that the bruises they received because they refused to disperse would not compare with the injuries they probably would receive if or when we charged the police lines.

We decided however to continue down Broadway. The police stayed back for awhile. Perhaps it may have been then that someone was arrested for pushing down a cop and attempting to relieve him of his gun.

The police then charged up Broadway in formation, running past a RCP member and me as we stood aside and observed the commotion. Even though we had begun running when we knew the cops were charging, they passed us and were forming lines on either side of the block, surrounding most of the demonstrators left. This stand off lasted for a few minutes, after which the police lines parted to allow traffic and tourists through. At this point my companion from the RCP and I rejoined our comrades.

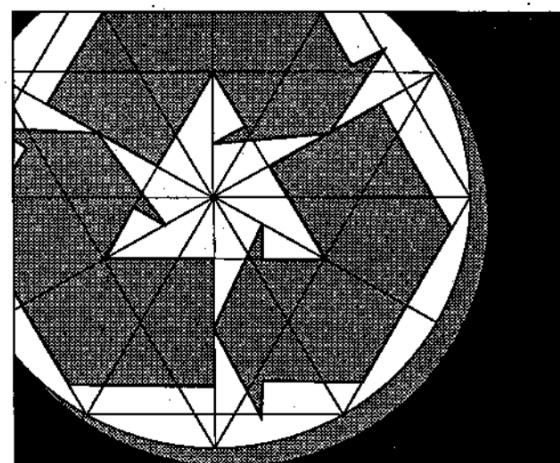
An abandoned police car then drew our attention and some people kicked it and threw rocks at it. But we then began asking whether or not it was suspicious that this police car had been abandoned. Deciding it had probably been left as bait—and the police stood at the other end of the block and watching us—we decided to end the demonstration with another thirty minutes of speeches over our open mike.

. . . and we're not going to take it anymore.

In the end, fourteen people were arrested, some demonstrators were clubbed, but neither the police nor the demonstrators were seriously injured.

The militant nature of our tactics were both justified and necessary to show the fucking Nazis that we will fight for our rights. Our restrained show of force demonstrated that we would defend ourselves.

—Richard S. Mote



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Cecil Hook challenges the Church of Christ to start practicing Christianity

Fundamentalist rebel

Writing from Norman, Oklahoma, regular *Post Amerikan* contributor Steve LaPrade notes that those of us interested in the freedom of speech and the free exchange of ideas may find that we have some very unlikely allies.

It takes real courage to do something that will win you widespread abuse and hatred.

It takes even more courage to do something that will get you fired from your job. I know. I once wrote a freelance article that so angered a University of Oklahoma professor that he wrote a letter to my employer—a friend of his—to get me fired. It was two years before I got up enough nerve to do any more freelancing.

But it takes even more courage to challenge the status quo when you're in your sixties and would otherwise have to depend on Social Security for your survival.

But that's what Cecil Hook, the Church of Christ rebel from New Braunfels, Texas chose to do. He chose to write books to show members of the Church of Christ that there was a better, more loving, more Christian way to do things than his denomination had been practicing.

For his reward, however, after he published his first book, *Free in Christ*, in 1984, this former preacher can no longer find an open pulpit in a Church of Christ congregation. The church he attends won't even let him lead prayers because he once prayed for congregational unity within the Church of Christ.

But he not only continues to write books—*Free to Speak*, *Free as Sons*, and *Free to Change*—but he has even given many copies of those books away to those who couldn't afford the modest cover price of five dollars, plus one dollar postage.

And the work he is doing is so badly needed that his first book is now in its fourth printing since it was first published in 1984.

Who are these people anyway?

To understand the hatred that Hook draws, you must understand the Church of Christ. Church of Christ congregations are totally independent, but all Church of Christ congregation shares certain practices and principles. For example, Church of Christ congregations use no

instrumental music, hold communion every Sunday morning, and teach that baptism by immersion is crucial to avoid going to hell.

For years, Church of Christ congregations have even taught their members that theirs was the only true Church, and other Christian denominations, such as Roman Catholics and Baptists were hell-bent, literally and figuratively.

I go to church too, but . . .

Now, in my twenty years as a Church of Christ member, I've seen the great things a single congregation can do—the 100 member congregation that started a benevolent network that now runs hospitals, feeding stations and orphanages on three continents. I saw a 150 member congregation in Amarillo, Texas start a halfway house for abused children.

On the other hand, I've seen some thirty other churches, with congregations in some instances numbering up to 2,000 members, refuse to get involved in social issues.

And these people call themselves Christians?

And like Hook, I too have seen Church of Christ congregations, convinced that they alone had access to God's truth, allow themselves to engage in activities that might have made Jim Bakker pause.

Most Churches of Christ (which number more than 1,300,000 in 13,000 congregations) are in the Sun Belt, but their influence reaches through and even past the Bloomington-Normal, Illinois area. In fact, the largest Church of Christ congregation sprang up in Boston, Massachusetts.

The *Restoration Herald* magazine, a Church of Christ publication which comes out of Cincinnati, called for a McCarthy-like attack on Church of Christ colleges who would dare to hire a Baptist.

Lipscomb College, a Church of Christ institution in Nashville, Tennessee, tried to float a state bond issue which would have used taxpayer dollars to finance a new library. But Lipscomb College neglected to mention in its campaign literature that the library building would be the capstone of its Religion Department. This action directly violated Pennsylvania statutes separating church and state.

One Church of Christ congregation proved to be so despicable in its proselytizing that its representatives were barred from the campus of Marquette University in Milwaukee.

I have seen first hand a Church of Christ congregation spend \$3,000 to expand its pulpit so the church would look less empty, and then default on its smaller, promised donations to two orphanages. I have seen another Church of Christ congregation, pressed by a bad local economy, decide it couldn't afford to finance its missionary work in the Philippines. However, instead of honestly presenting the problem, the Church announced that the missionary work was going so well, it was now self-supporting and needed no further financial help at all.

I saw Oklahoma Christian College aid in ripping off black voters in an Oklahoma City election (See "Christian college tries to sabotage black voters," *Post Amerikan*, June/July 1989).

What was that about a "voice in the wilderness?"

These abuses moved Cecil Hook, then a Church of Christ preacher, to forego a safe retirement supplemented by occasional paid stints at gospel meetings, and instead speak out in an attempt to set his Church aright.

Hook's works triggered fury in the organized Church of Christ, but nonetheless gave some

hope to those "pew people"—to use Hook's phrase—who saw the need for something better in their Church.

Well, what did he say?

Here's a sampling of the sentiments Hook expressed in *Free to Change*. This book further contributed to the controversy in Church of Christ congregations, a controversy he first triggered when he published *Free in Christ*.

For years, the various congregations of the Church of Christ has claimed spiritual superiority partly because it held communion every Sunday morning. Leaving aside the point that Sunday morning communion is the central ritual of many other Protestant denominations, as well as the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, Hook instead pointed to the discrepancies between contemporary Church of Christ practice and the accounts of the Last Supper in the Gospels.

"Which of these...examples of the details concerning the Lord's Supper are binding?" Hook asks "It [the supper] was eaten (1) at night (2) upstairs (3) in midweek (4) during another meal (5) with no woman present...?"

"I learned that truth is not permitted in our pulpits. [Hook had been the janitor for his Church of Christ congregation when he first published *Free in Christ*. After publishing that and subsequent books, he lost his job.] When the financial security of the preacher's family is threatened by each new thought that he introduces [from the pulpit], it is easy for him to rationalize that it is better to wait."

"We can be doctrinally right on most everything and not be right in things that count most."

"God's basic requirement is for us to love him and one another. This is simple enough, but we have complicated it into a tedious system of religion."

"In his Epistles, Paul called for correction and reform, but he never advocated that the loyal disciples separate to start a pure church."

These passages from *Free to Change* shook up Church of Christ Congregations—noted for splitting over such issues as supporting orphanages, holding Sunday school, and whether congregations should use one communion cup or several?

Change partners, and dance

Perhaps Leroy Garrett, a former preacher from Denton, Texas said it best: "When I think of people like Cecil Hook not being appreciated at their own Church, I remember a point made by Immanuel Kant, the great German philosopher. 'It is more important that one deserves to be appreciated than [that] he is appreciated.'"

Hook himself notes "When I completed the manuscript of my first book, *Free in Christ*, I could find no publisher who would touch it, and I certainly did not have the resources to publish it."

But then a Church of Christ member donated the money for Hook to publish his book. Other Church of Christ members, knowing Hook's message needs to get out, made further donations. For example, one member donated a copier, another a tape player, and others donated postage.

A whole underground, regarded as subversive by mainline Church of Christ members, has grown up around Hook.

And he presses on, demanding that Church of Christ members fully examine what it truly means to be Christian.

Readers interested in Hook's publications can order them directly from the author: Cecil Hook, 1350 Huisache, New Braunfels, Texas 78130

--Steve LaPrade

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BPD space aliens coverup

My friend John believes in flying saucers and will talk your little green tentacles off about the most hilarious and/or frightening theories about Aliens on God's Good Earth. Late last spring on a car radio tuned to WBNQ, I heard John briefing a dj on a formation of four huge flying V's that had just passed over a South Roosevelt Street neighborhood. Glowing V's, they were, neon orange. He also reported them to the Bloomington police department, and the next day the department claimed to have no record at all of any letters of the alphabet sailing over the near west side. Our joke was that they were probably telling that to the other forty people who had called in the sighting as well.

All this UFO hoopla has always just seemed like the ultimate paranoid fantasy to me, but I'll admit I now have a theory of my own. As John will tell you, many things around us are not what they appear to be! Hold on to your space booties.

Some Bloomington teenagers are really alien beings from a nearby galaxy, living here in town under the benevolent protection of the Bloomington police department—and they can only be identified as aliens by the specialized sort of medical attention they might receive from a paramedic, say, or an ER doctor. And—most amazing—Bloomington police officers are actually qualified to make medical decisions regarding these creatures, who must be made of lots more complicated stuff than snips, snails and puppy dog tails.

... alien beings from a nearby galaxy, living here in town under the benevolent protection of the Bloomington police department.

John, obviously, is anything but shy about discussing his close encounters; I have another friend, more sensitive to the plight of the "mentally unbalanced" in the modern police state, who has agreed to share his incredible story on the condition that his identity be altered beyond recognition.

"Bob" (who may or may not be a prominent local clergyman) was finishing up a pineapple and anchovy pizza around 5:00 p.m. on the tenth of January at the Pizza Hut on East Empire, just across from the post office. He had a window seat, facing southwest.

Pastor Bob sighted the alien, faultlessly disguised as a teenage boy twelve to fifteen years old, walking eastward on the raised median between the east-west lanes of Empire street. A passing Bloomington policeman (westward on the frontage road in front of the restaurant) realized that the alien, unfamiliar with human traffic laws, presented a clear and present menace to public safety.

The officer stopped his car, stepped out onto the grassy area between the roads, and beckoned to the alien to approach him. What follows is in the pastor's own words, edited for clarity and to avoid repetition. His references to the alien as a "kid" may be somewhat misleading, as the creature's identity was not obvious until we had pondered the incident over what was left of the daiquiris from the pastor's New Year's Eve party.

"He's walking, the cop calls him and the kid just stares—tunnel vision, right straight at the cop—and starts walking... that's a double lane there... he starts stepping into the other lane and bingo, there's a little white pickup truck [Bob claps here], whacks him.

"He kinda steps back, but then it rolls him, spins him along the truck... just did a 360... and then [he fell down] and then I couldn't see..."

"At that point I jumped up and I go, Jesus Christ, get an ambulance, you know, I just yelled it out."

Strong language for a clergyman, the Lord's name in vain and all—I blushed and hoped Pastor Bob wouldn't notice my discomfort.



Conflict or collusion between aliens and authorities?

"After about a minute, maybe a little more than a minute, he stands up. The kid holds on to the truck, we could see him coming around the hood... using the truck for support and then... he lays down in the grass.

"He's laying there holding his hip... he just lays there on the ground and he's doing... situps, turning and rolling... and I go, God dang, you know, do something!"

I flinched at the pastor's continued profanity, but for this amazing tale, milquetoast words simply would not do.

"When he was laying on the ground... it was sickening to watch this thing just... contorting his body. I mean [he was] in obvious pain... I just assumed here [the officer] is on the radio, he's sure gonna get an ambulance here quicker than any one of us..."

"... and the cop's standing there... just talking and the driver's standing there over the kid and they're both just looking down at him... no assistance... and that's what was kinda bothering me."

Me: "The cop was talking..."

You could probably cut one of those suckers clean in two and it would just grow back as two whole new aliens.

Pastor Bob: "... on his radio. And then he talked to the [driver] for a bit and the kid just kept laying down, just kept laying down... I'd say maybe up to three minutes, four minutes. Finally he stands up and he starts turning around in circles, holding his side..."

I already know, being a friend of John's, about the laughter and ridicule you have to put up with for believing in aliens. But let's face it, some things just defy logical explanation.

"They stay there and they talk for another minute or so, and the kid starts walking east in the grassy area there... his limp had subsided quite a bit... but he was being real careful with his steps.

"[Then the driver and the cop] start talking, the guy walks to his truck, gets in, pulls off. The cop gets back in his car, pulls off."

... some things just defy logical explanation.

I have no proof, of course, but it seems fair to assume any life form advanced enough to be galaxy-hopping and impersonating adolescents would have some sort of fantastic regenerative powers which would allow it to recover from a minor hit and run just about right away. You could probably cut one of those suckers clean in two and it would just grow back as two whole new aliens. Which leaves only a few questions unanswered.

"That's what we were wondering... is it [standard] procedure for the policeman to call in the information on the guy or does he notate that in his notebook? I never saw a notebook used once... I'm sure this cop had to have some information on this guy to just turn him loose. But... I don't remember... this driver... taking out his wallet and showing any ID's or anything. Which, that's what was striking me as... man, he just allowed a hit and run. I mean, if he got no information from this guy, who knows who he is?"

... only one explanation for why the creature was spared from the prying, inquisitive methods of earthling medical technicians.

"Once you have eliminated all the other possibilities," Sherlock Holmes deduced, "whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth." Sheer civic pride, if nothing else, makes it impossible to believe that the officer allowed a real live kid to just walk away with possible internal injuries and no insurance options. Sheer civic pride also goes a long way toward putting a damper on questions like what and who allowed him to think letting the kid walk was a wise move; the alien's skin was several shades darker than that of the humans.

Sheer civic pride, in fact (according to Mr. Holmes), allows only one explanation for why the creature was spared from the prying, inquisitive methods of earthling medical technicians.

Sources at the Bloomington police department deny a coverup of aliens in the Twin Cities. They contend instead that the incident involved a garden-variety human, and that the officer, apparently a rookie, was disciplined. With a really, really severe tongue-lashing.

The department welcomes any information leading to the identity of the "kid" or the driver, and can be reached at 827-6251.

Still, the final word belongs to Pastor Bob: "I'm dying to know if there was an incident written up at the police station." Well, Bob, there wasn't, at least not with "third galaxy on the left" typed in under "victim's address."

But remember, they lied to us about the flying V's, too.

— Mark Stairwalt





Lambda news



Texas sodomy law struck down

February 3--A Texas judge today struck down the state sodomy law, and barred the city of Dallas and the Dallas Police Department (DPD) from using the law as a basis for rejecting lesbian and gay applicants. The ruling came in a lawsuit brought by Lambda on behalf of Mica England, a Dallas woman denied work as a police officer because of the DPD's declared policy of discriminating against lesbian and gay people.

Judge Larry Fuller of the Travis County District Court became the second judge in less than a year to declare unconstitutional Section 21.06 of the Texas State Penal Code, which criminalizes certain "homosexual conduct." The judge's order takes effect immediately, and means that neither the state nor the city may enforce the sodomy law in any way. The city of Dallas subsequently announced its intention to appeal the decision.



"Dallas' use of the Texas sodomy statute to justify discrimination in hiring is a classic example of how these highly intrusive and stigmatizing laws harm lesbians and gay men, even when they themselves are not arrested or prosecuted for violating the law," said Lambda staff attorney Evan Wolfson.

Section 21.06 makes it a Class C misdemeanor for adults to engage in consensual oral or anal intercourse with others of the same sex. Texas is one of twenty-four states, along with the District of Columbia, which still criminalizes such conduct, and one of seven states that singles out lesbian and gay people. Since 1990, courts in three states have struck down their sodomy laws as unconstitutional.

New Mexico court rules for non-biological parent

February 7--The New Mexico Court of Appeals has ruled that a non-biological lesbian mother may be entitled to seek custody or visitation with the child she raised with her former partner of 14 years. It is the first appellate victory in the country in favor of recognizing a legal relationship between a non-biological lesbian parent and a child conceived through donor insemination.

The New Mexico court also ruled that a parent "may enter into an agreement with another person concerning the custody of a child," including persons who are not biologically related to the child, and specifically held that "sexual orientation, standing alone, is not a permissible basis for the denial of shared custody or visitation."

In an unusual move that recognizes Lambda's leadership in the area of lesbian and gay family law, the court ordered Lambda to submit a "friend of the court" brief because the issue on appeal raised "important questions regarding the rights of non-traditional parents, as well as other significant issues."

Cracker Barrel backs down on lawsuit

February 12--Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores has dropped its lawsuit against queer activists whom the company had restrained from protesting at one of its restaurants in Tennessee. The restaurant had used the lawsuit to illegally prevent queer stock owners from attending its annual shareholders' meeting last November in Tennessee. The company's voluntary dismissal of the case came just weeks before a court hearing at which the company would have been forced to defend its actions against the shareholders and activists, whom Lambda is representing in the action.



The protests across the country were sparked by Cracker Barrel's decision in 1991 to implement a policy of blatant discrimination against workers who are or are perceived to be gay or lesbian. The policy, imposed on the more than 100 Cracker Barrel restaurants around the country, resulted in the firing of at least nine gay and lesbian workers for violation of the policy, which states that it is inconsistent with [the chain's] "traditional American values...to employ individuals...whose sexual preferences fail to demonstrate normal heterosexual values."

Cracker Barrel has filed other suits against activists in Michigan, Georgia and Indiana, but only the suit in Tennessee has been dropped thus far. Lambda is preparing to file a separate lawsuit against Cracker Barrel to prevent the company from refusing to admit activists who own stock in the company from attending next year's shareholder's meeting and to claim damages for malicious prosecution of the company's groundless case.

Lambda joins bathhouse case

February 14: Lambda has joined as co-counsel in defending two Los Angeles gay bathhouses from a lawsuit filed by Los Angeles District Attorney Ira Reiner, which seeks the bathhouses' closure. The lawsuits were filed late last year by the District Attorney's office under a 1988 state law which provides for the closure of bathhouses that promote unsafe sex.

The bathhouses, The Hollywood Spa and The Compound, have been commended in the past by AIDS service providers and gay and lesbian organizations for their leadership in distributing safe sex information to an otherwise hard to reach population. Studies show that many bathhouse patrons do not frequent other gay establishments and thus bathhouses provide a crucial source of safer sex information. Closure of bathhouses, defendants argue, would not deter gay sexuality, but would drive it further underground where high risk sexual encounters would be more frequent.

Lambda Staff Attorney Mary Newcombe commented, "Protecting gay and lesbian institutions and fighting the AIDS crisis go hand in hand. The loss of these bathhouses would come at great expense to our efforts to educate people about the dangers of unsafe sex."

"Lambda's involvement will demonstrate that our institutions will not be made the scapegoat for government's failure to take real responsibility in the AIDS crisis," said co-counsel Mickey Wheatley.

Supreme Court review sought on AIDS insurance cap

February 14: Last November, a U.S. Court of Appeals upheld an employers effort to alter its medical insurance plan by imposing a stringent cap on benefits for AIDS-related care while retaining a million-dollar ceiling for all other conditions. Lambda has filed a petition with the U.S. Supreme Court seeking review of the case.

The Fifth Circuit Court's ruling sanctioned the decision of H&H Music Company to switch from a traditional employer-sponsored medical benefits plan to a self-insured plan following its discovery that an H&H employee had AIDS.

"We challenge the decision because we believe it misconstrued the anti-discrimination provision in ERISA--the federal statute that governs employer-sponsored benefits plans--and because the effects of the decision will threaten any medical plan participant's ability to rely on continued health care coverage," said Lambda Staff Attorney Suzanne Goldberg, who co-authored the petition with Lambda co-operating attorney Joseph Garcia.

John McGann began working for H&H in 1982. At that time, H&H provided lifetime medical benefits of up to \$1,000,000 for all company employees. In 1987, McGann learned he had developed AIDS. After he told his employer of his illness and filed claims under the plan seeking reimbursement for treatment, H&H decided to change its plan.

H&H met with its insurance provider, General American Life Insurance Company, and developed a self-insured plan. The new plan was essentially identical to the old but for one change. Lifetime medical benefits for AIDS care were capped at \$5,000. Coverage remained at \$1,000,000 for all other medical needs.



VOTE AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!

Gay deputy sheriff wins Florida jury trial

March 9: In a precedent-setting lawsuit, a Florida jury ruled in favor of a deputy sheriff who was fired because he is gay. Orange County Sheriff Walter Gallagher was charged with violating Deputy Sheriff Thomas Woodard's constitutional rights, including his right to privacy under the Florida State Constitution.

The jury rejected the Sheriff's claim that Woodard resigned voluntarily, and found that Woodard was coerced into resigning following an investigation by the sheriff into Woodard's sexual orientation and private life.

Now that the jury has upheld Woodard's claim of forced resignation, Judge William Gridley of the Orange County Court, who presided over the jury trial, will conduct a hearing with expert testimony and legal arguments focusing on the constitutional issues of the right to privacy, equal protection, and civil rights for gay people.

The Woodard case was Lambda's first ever jury trial. The case is expected to go all the way to the Florida Supreme Court, where it will set the stage for a landmark ruling on the privacy rights of gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

More Lambda news next page



Lambda news continued

Georgia Court upholds lesbian couple's contract

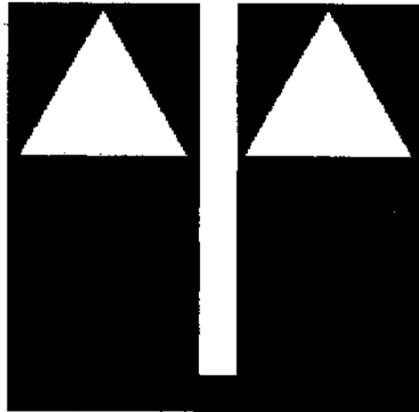
March 25: In a very important lesbian and gay family rights victory, the Georgia Supreme Court has ruled that the property agreement entered into by a lesbian couple is legally enforceable. The ruling in *Crooke v. Gilden* overturns a trial court decision which held that property agreements between lesbian couples are unenforceable because their relationships are considered illegal and immoral under Georgia law. The Georgia sodomy law criminalizes sexual conduct between same-sex adults.

"This is a crucial victory for lesbian and gay couples who desire some security in knowing that the agreements we enter into in our relationships will be acknowledged and enforced by the courts," said Lambda Legal Director Paula Ettelbrick. "This is yet another big step towards recognizing equal rights for lesbian and gay families."

Patricia Gagne Gilden and Florence Crooke began their relationship in 1982. Shortly after Gilden moved into Crooke's home, they retained a lawyer to draft for them a joint ownership agreement setting forth the terms of their ownership of the house and other personal property.

When the couple ended their relationship in 1989, Crooke refused to honor the agreement, prompting Gilden to seek court ordered enforcement. The trial court voided the contract based on Crooke's argument that any agreement entered into by a lesbian couple would "facilitate a relationship which in Georgia is considered illegal and immoral."

In rejecting the trial court's ruling, the state Supreme Court stated, "We cannot agree that the contract is void on this ground...[W]e conclude that the contract before the court is supported by legal consideration. The promises contained in the contract are also legal."



"If the Georgia Supreme Court can reject the outrageous argument that sodomy laws void any other activity that lesbian and gay couples may participate in, then I am very hopeful that we can get positive rulings in other states on the enforcement of our agreements," added Ettelbrick.

Lambda files suit under new Connecticut law

March 25: Lambda announced that it filed a complaint to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities against the American Radio Relay League (the League) for rejecting an advertisement submitted by the Lambda Amateur Radio Club (LARC), an organization for lesbian and gay ham radio operators and supporters. The complaint alleges that the League's refusal to print the gay club's ad violates Connecticut's recently enacted gay rights law.

The League, headquartered in Connecticut, is a national organization of ham radio operators which, among other activities, publishes a monthly magazine called *QST*. *QST* is devoted to ham radio issues. A portion of *QST* is devoted to classified advertisements of independent ham radio clubs and networks.

Since 1985, LARC had repeatedly submitted an ad with basic LARC membership information. After publishing the ad for one month in 1985, *QST* editors discontinued the ad. Since then, *QST* has rejected numerous submissions from LARC, stating that LARC's proposed ad is unacceptable for publication.

In December 1991, *QST* rejected a LARC ad which stated: "Lambda Amateur Radio Club international for lesbian and gay hams," accompanied by the club's address and phone number. According to League and *QST* officials, the gay group's ad was rejected for representing a "special interest group," despite the fact that *QST* continues to publish ads for ham radio clubs with memberships ranging from Jehovah's Witnesses to atheists to followers of Ayn Rand.

GALA's first annual

SPRING DANCE



Come all ye Revelers!

Saturday, April 25
8:00 pm-?
Unitarian Church
1613 East Emerson
Admission \$3.00

This is a chemical-free, safe space.

Academy Awards Uppers 'n' Downers



UPPERS to the several hundred queer activists who peacefully demonstrated at the Academy Awards against the appalling way in which queers are presented on film.

DOWNERS to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for awarding Best Picture, Director, Actress and Actor Oscars to *Silence of the Lambs*, a film which features a woman submitting herself to psychological manipulation by a psychopath, and a sociopathic queer-identified mass murderer who kills and skins women to make himself a "woman suit."

UPPERS to Amerikan mass media who, in a surprising move, reported on the queer demonstrations with relative accuracy and seriousness, and with a minimum of hysteria.

UPPERS especially to CBS, which appropriately connected the demonstrations to past political protests at the Oscars.

DOWNERS to those members of the mainstream media who failed to report the name of the "prominent actress" the demonstrators called on to acknowledge her lesbianism. "Prominent actress," huh? Who did they mean?

UPPERS to the many presenters and others who wore red ribbons to draw the attention of the Academy Awards' global audience to the AIDS crisis.

DOWNERS to Richard Gere for referring to People With AIDS as "AIDS victims" when explaining the significance of the ribbons.

DOWNERS to Jodie Foster, a "prominent actress," for:

1. failing to condemn homophobia while accepting her award for Best Actress.
2. expecting us to believe that her character in *Silence of the Lambs* was a "strong feminist hero."
3. confusing the hell out of us with her acceptance speech. What "choices" has she made that we are supposed to respect? Why are we supposed to respect them? And just who are "the trusted ones" and "the circle"? What does this MEAN!?!



Chipping away at *Basic*

Instinct

By now you know that the film *Basic Instinct* is playing in town. You may have also heard that Queer Nation groups across Amerika are demonstrating against the movie because of the way it portrays queers. I saw *Basic Instinct* in late March, and the queers are absolutely right to demonstrate against the film. Moreover, women should join the queers on the picket lines, because *Basic Instinct*, in addition to its appalling treatment of its queer characters, is also one of the more anti-woman films I have seen. It also is just a really bad movie.



Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone in 'Basic Instinct.'

The plot thins

Basic Instinct revolves around a San Francisco cop named Nick, who is investigating the ice pick murder of a retired rock star. Nick is in therapy with Beth because he shot two tourists. He was cleared of wrongdoing in the shootings, but the department orders the psychological treatment. Along the way, Nick has also picked up the nickname "Shooter."

Nick's investigation leads him first to suspect, then to fall in love with, Catherine. The evidence begins pointing away from Catherine, first to her lover, Roxy, then toward Beth. Nick confronts, and then kills, Beth, and thus makes the world a little bit safer. Or does he?

Basic Instinct suffers from an extraordinarily weak plot, relying heavily on plot devices which date back at least 60 years. The story also contains many logical inconsistencies, and the fact that Catherine is the murderer is painfully obvious. And don't start whining that I just blew the movie for you. If a gay man can figure out whodunnit based on the shape of the killer's breasts, who do the filmmakers think they're going to fool?

Pick, pick, pick

With a few very rare exceptions, queers in Amerikan films have fallen into one of three categories: comic relief, sociopath, and sexual titillation for hetero men. *Basic Instinct* follows in this proud tradition by including not one, not two, not three, but four really fucked up queer women. The film has no heterosexual female characters. Of the four women, two are bisexual, one is lesbian and one identifies herself as "I'm not gay but I slept with a woman one time." And since in Amerika queerness is defined by behaviour and not orientation, one time is enough to make her queer.

And what delightful ladies they are, too. There's Catherine, who wields a mean ice pick and who probably also killed her parents and her Psychology professor. There's Hazel, who murdered her husband and children for no apparent reason. There's Roxy, the actual lesbian and the first woman to die (more on that later). She killed her two brothers because Dad was paying too much attention to them and ignoring her. And there's Beth, who's just plain stupid.

We know Beth is stupid because 1) she enters into a sexual relationship with Nick while he is her patient, in violation of every standard of her profession, and 2) when facing Nick, knowing full well that "Shooter" has a tendency to blow people away and is pointing a loaded gun at her, refuses to stand still and take her hand out of her pocket. Beth also hampers the investigation because she is too ashamed to admit that once in college she slept with suspect Catherine. That shame in acknowledging her same-sex sexual experience leads to suspicion falling more heavily on her and eventually to her death.

Call your travel agent today

An interesting side note, considering the film is set in San Francisco, is the occasional references to "tourists." Nick has killed two "tourists." Nick's partner rants at one point that there are too many "tourists" in San Francisco and that all "tourists" should go back where they came from. Substitute the word "queers" for "tourists" and the film takes on yet another level of homophobia.

Chicks nix Nick's dick

Throughout *Basic Instinct*, men and women are defined solely by who they fuck and how they fuck, and are punished for not fucking who society says they're supposed to. The rock star is murdered in the opening sequence as much because he is on the bottom, i.e. the "woman's place," during sex as because of Catherine's sociopathy, and he is killed with an ice pick, a penetrating weapon. And do you think it's a coincidence that "pick" and "dick" differ only by one letter?

Catherine "acts like a man" throughout the film. That is, she has sex with women. Her male identity is reinforced constantly. For example, she and the retired rock star have "his and her Picassos"; it is noted that "hers is bigger." But she also has sex with men, therefore retaining enough of a female identity to save her life.



Lolita Sarullo, who plays Roxy, Catherine's (Sharon Stone) lover in 'Basic Instinct.'

Catherine's lover, Roxy, is identified as lesbian and therefore as having sex only with women. That she is viewed by Nick, who perforce represents all straight-identified men, as male is demonstrated by Nick calling her "Rocky" and asking her a question "man-to-man." Nick and Roxy are thrown into a typical alpha-male fight to the death when Roxy tries to kill Nick with that ultimate masculine symbol, a car. Roxy and Nick go "mano-a-mano" in a game of chicken, but Roxy, the artificial male, can't stand up to a real man. She swerves first, goes over a cliff and dies. Her death is less a result of her lesbianism than of her daring to act too much like a man.



Hazel does not suffer on-screen because of her assumption of the male sex role, I think for two reasons. First, she is older and our society has effectively de-sexualized older people. Second, her sexual behaviour with Catherine is only intimated and not expressly stated, so she is not perceived by hetero Nick as a sexual threat.

But besides that, Mrs. Lincoln, how did you like the play?

Even with the really horrid attitudes toward women and queers in *Basic Instinct*, as a film buff I would have been willing to overlook at least some of them if the movie had at least been well done. As it is, there was no good story and no good performances to even distract me from the film's general nastiness. Really, the only real fun part was ridiculing the preview for *Lethal Weapon 3*.

--Horny Dilemma

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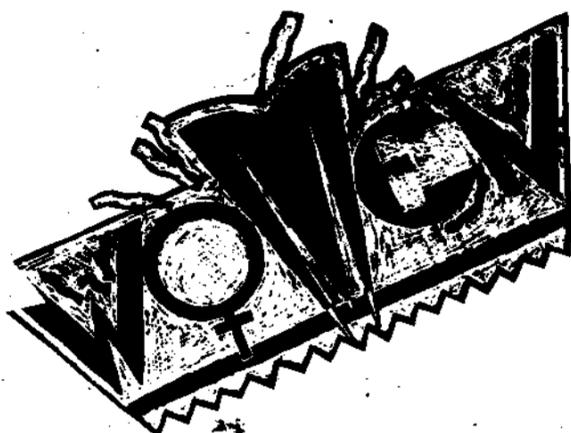
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Rape Crisis sponsored events...

Friday, April 24, 1992 ---Rape "Speak-out" on the I.S.U. quad, 3-5 p.m.

Saturday, April 25, 1992 ---Rape "Speak-out" at the Line Center (Lawrence Irvin Neighborhood Center) 1612 W. Olive, Bloomington, 10-11 a.m.

Sunday, April 26, 1992 ---Women's peace picnic at Ash park, 12-4 p.m. Local speakers begin at 1 p.m. Pack a lunch or bring a dish to pass

Rape Crisis Center Tag Sale ---Look for announcements

Post Amerikan McLean

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