

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

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Post Amerikan

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Utah Phillips Stops Touring

Leger Brosnahan Arrested

Local Gay Rights Ordinance

Free Leonard Peltier



POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOL. 24

50¢

NO. 6

DECEMBER/JANUARY 1995/96

DEAR SANTA:
please bring us

1. Human Rights Ordinance
2. New Bloomington mayor
3. A heart for Newt
4. New newspaper boxes
5. A train set

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BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOL. 24

NO. 6

DECEMBER/JANUARY 1995/96

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Good numbers

ACLU.....454-7223
 AIDS Hotlines
 National.....1-800-AID-AIDS
 Illinois.....1-800-243-2437
 Local.....(309) 827-AIDS
 Alcoholics Anonymous.....828-7092
 Animal Protection League.....828-5371
 Bloomington Housing Authority.....829-3360
 Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035
 Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070
 Dept. of Children/Family Services.....828-0022
 Gay & Lesbian Resource Phoneline...438-2429
 Habitat for Humanity.....829-0693
 HELP (transportation for senior citizens/handicapped).....828-8301
 Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356
 IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621
 IL Lawyer Referral.....1-800-252-8916
 Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-5051
 Lighthouse
 (substance abuse treatment).....827-6026
 McLean Co. Center for Human Services.....827-5351
 McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450
 McLean Co. Humane Society.....663-7387
 Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691
 Mobile Meals.....828-8301
 Narcotics Anonymous.....1-800-779-6178
 NAAFA (size acceptance)
 Central IL chapter.....454-2128
 National Health Care Services/
 abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622
 Normal N.O.R.M.L.....452-4761
 Occupational Development Center...452-7324
 Operation Recycle.....829-0691
 Parents Anonymous.....827-4005
 PATH (Personal Assistance
 Telephone Help).....827-4005
 Phone Friends.....827-4005
 Planned Parenthood (medical).....827-4014
 (bus/couns/edu).....827-4368
 Post Amerikan.....828-7232
 Prairie State Legal Services.....827-5021
 Project Oz.....827-0377
 Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005
 Safe Harbor Mission (Salvation Army)829-9476
 Sunnyside Neighborhood Center.....827-5428
 TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301
 Unemployment comp/job service.....827-6237
 Voice for Choice.....828-3108
 Western Ave. Community Center.....829-4807
 Youth Services of Mid IL.....828-7346

Post Sellers

Bloomington
 AIDS Task Force office (inside)
 About Books, 221 E. Front (inside)
 the Back Porch, 402 N. Main (inside)
 Bakery Ban, 901 N. Main
 Bus Depot, 533 N. East
 Circus Video, (Emerson and Main)
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main (inside)
 Front and Center building
 Law and Justice Center, W. Front (bus stop)
 Medusa's, 420 N. Madison (inside)
 Once Upon a Time, 311 N. Main (inside)
 the Park Store, Wood and Allin, (inside)
 Shockwaves, 313 N. Main (inside)
 Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main, (inside)
 U.S. Post Office, Center and Monroe
 Wash House, 609 N. Clinton
Normal
 Amtrack Station
 Babbitt's Books, 104 North (inside)
 Bus stop, (School and Fell)
 Coffee World Coffeehouse, 114 E. Beaufort
 Mother Murphy's, 111 North (inside)
 Past time Book Exchange, 106 E. Beaufort, (inside)
Champaign
 Babbitt's Books, 614 E. Green, (inside)

About us

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

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

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. The *Post Amerikan* welcomes stories, graphics, photos, letters, and new tips from our readers. If you'd like to join us, call 828-4473 and leave a message on our answering machine. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Don't worry if it takes a while--we don't meet every week.

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

What's your new address?

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

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

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

David, John, Linda,
Ralph, Sherrin & Winter

Due Date:

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

Jan 15th



Community News



McLean County AIDS Task Force Calender

Several things are happening to commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the AIDS Pandemic. Wear red to work and encourage others to also to commemorate those lives lost and the fight to lose no more. Visit the special display at the Children's Museum. Send a card or call someone who lost someone special to acknowledge the loss and share a reminder of who they were and what they still share in your life. Call of bring a food item to a person living with AIDS. Remember the struggle. Cover up art in your home and workplace to commemorate a Day Without Art.

December 10-Tree trimming party 1:00pm at the MCATF office. We will be making a tree skirt of mini-quilt panels of loved ones lost. We have fabric, fabric paint, fabric glue and felt. Bring a hot glue gun (and glue sticks), any other lace, ribbon, broken jewelry or scraps to help embellish the skirt. Material can be picked up at the office, worked on at home and returned by the Thea. Names can also be put on ornaments or Red Ribbons. Donate lights and ornaments new or from your family (previously used will be accepted). Please join us in this Holiday Season, and be a part of our family.

Brosnahan arrested

Police arrested ISU English professor, Leger Brosnahan at his home on November 27 after police said he kicked a student who was in his office.

According to police, the student went to Brosnahan's office on Nov. 20 to get an explanation for a poor grade on a paper. The two then got into an arguement. After telling the student several times to leave the office, police said Brosnahan threw the woman's book bag near the doorway. When she tried to pick it up, he kicked her in the buttocks.

Although the student filed a report immediately after the incident occurred, Brosnahan wasn't arrested on charges of battery until 2 p.m. Monday, Nov. 27. The reason for the arrest occurring a week after the crime was because the state's attorney had to review the allegations and determine whether there was sufficient information to make an arrest.

Up to the arrest, Brosnahan was mostly known for his haughty attitude and infamous student questionnaire. Such highly personal questions asked in this multi-page document include disclosing information on one's sexual orientation, parents' income, personal beliefs, and other topics irrelevant to the course.

Brosnahan's court date is not known at the time of press. In addition to possible criminal action, the College of Arts and Sciences at ISU is conducting their own investigation. We will keep you updated on this matter in future issues of the Post.

towanda!
Sources used;
the Pantagraph and Daily Vidette

Woman Seeking

Divorced white female, 26, 5' 7" 145lbs seeks companion. I enjoy reading, conversation and comedy. Not seeking new husband. Write and we'll get acquainted. DWF27

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ALL RESPONSES WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.



Mental Health Awareness

McLean County Center for Human Services
108 W. Market, Bloomington
Ph. 309-827-5351

Institute for Human Resources
310 E. Torrance, Pontiac, IL
Ph. 815-844-6109

P.A.T.H. Crisis Center
Information and referral ... 827-4005
Toll-free in McLean County
1-800-537-3085

After-hours emergencies
in Livingston County, Ph. 815-844-6109

Obsessive Compulsive group is being organized. For information, call 662-6119.

AMI of Livingston & McLean Counties
Educational programs and support meetings, 7 p.m. every third Thurs. at BroMenn Conference Center. Call 309-454-4983 or 815-842-1514.

AMI of Livingston & McLean board meetings
6 p.m. on fourth Thursdays at BroMenn Conference Center, ph. 454-4983.

Journey of Hope Support Group, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on fourth Thursdays at BroMenn Conference Center

AMI Illinois State Office
730 E. Vine St., Rm. 209
Springfield, IL 62703
Ph. 217-522-1403

Mental Health Treatment Act Passes House and Senate

Don Moss says our calls and letters got SB 293 out of committee and it received a unanimous vote in spite of opposition from the State Bar Association, Now AMI needs to send letters to Governor Jim Edgar urging that he sign the legislation.

Call or write to:
Governor Jim Edgar
State Capitol, Room 207
Springfield, IL 62706

Send a copy of your letter to Don Moss & Associates, 312 East Adams, Springfield, IL 62701 or let him know if you called the Governor.

Bill Requiring Medigrant Services for MI's Passed

In the final floor debate on the Omnibus Reconciliation Act (OBRA) in the U.S. Senate, Sen. John Chafee, Republican of Rhode Island, and Sen. Kent Conrad of North Dakota, managed to have it amended to say that all the states must provide Medigrant services to all persons receiving cash assistance through SSI, including those with severe mental illness.

It was a victory in that the grassroots lobbying of AMI and other advocates won out over the Republican Governors' strong position that NO strings be attached to the Medigrant payments. The bill now goes to conference committee

where the Senate and House Republicans will resolve their differences on the measure, and then to the President, who has promised to veto the whole budget, thereby leading to further negotiations. Moss will keep us informed on this effort.

Ineffective Cost Control

A Harvard Medical School study shows that restricting Medicaid reimbursement for psychotropic drug prescriptions is not an effective way to contain the cost of health care. During an eleven months period of budget problems the New Hampshire state legislature decided to limit Medicaid reimbursements to three prescriptions per person per month to "control" costs. Result; full or half day use of mental health centers increased by some 50% while overall cost of services increased by about \$140 per patient per month at the two mental health centers, for a total of \$1,530 per patient—17 times greater than the Medicaid savings.

Researchers noted they did not include in their findings the extra cost to the patients' families and the state administrative and criminal justice systems, and they could not put a price on the suffering of the patients themselves.

—From Tri-County Alliance (Peoria area) newsletter.

Psychiatric Society Supports Insurance Parity

The Illinois Psychiatric Society (IPS) Council approved the following position statement at its July meeting.

The IPS supports the position that mental health care services should be considered on the same par as general medical health care services and that all health plans, regardless of their organization, structure or charter, should provide coverage for mental health services. Persons suffering from mental illness should be accorded the same level of care as those who suffer from other medical illness.

The IPS opposes current discriminatory practices used by health plans against persons with mental illness that provide very limited or non-existent coverage in an effort to contain costs. Recent studies indicate that appropriate mental health care services are cost effective and can return persons to healthy, productive lifestyles.

The IPS will work with other health care professionals, consumer/advocacy groups, industry, and health plans to achieve the goal of coverage for mental health care services at parity with medical health care services.

—Source: AMI of Livingston & McLean Counties

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Notes From The Land Of Anti-Fat

Liquid Diet Deadly

Dieting can kill you.

Even dieting that is supposedly being overseen by "professional dietitians" like the New Direction Diet Center.

Case in point: Dale Wells, a 258-pound factory worker, who went on an all-liquid diet under the supervision of New Direction. Wells died of a heart attack in October two weeks after undertaking the all-liquid diet, and at the November 7 coroner's inquest into his death, coroner Dan Brady noted that the diet was a contributing factor in the man's death, weakening his body so it was susceptible to cardiac dysrhythmia.

Liquid diets have lost a lot of luster since Oprah Winfrey gave her uncritical support of the approach, but that hasn't stopped some diet franchises from relying on 'em. They're profitable, easy to prescribe and package; most every franchise has its own brand to sell. Despite growing evidence that shows liquid diets in an unfavorable light, they remain popular--perhaps because their fluidity makes them seem more medicinal (and hence: more legitimate) than mere food. When asked to defend their use of these nutritionally specious substances, the diet pros resort to s.o.p: blame the client. Clients like Wells, we're told, "are unable to succeed at diets that stress food choices."

What's tragic about Wells' death is the fact that he apparently was driven to his new diet by the recent death of his mother. He went to the diet hucksters in hopes of getting down to his "ideal weight," that spurious list of arbitrary numbers that the insurance companies have used without credible backing for decades. Wells lost eighteen pounds in the first two weeks of his diet at the expense of his health. To many Americans this would be an acceptable risk.

At times when I tell folks that I'm a member of an organization devoted to the idea of fat acceptance, they respond by saying, "But isn't fat unhealthy?"

To many size acceptance advocates, it isn't fat that's the problem, it's the dieting--and the unforeseen and underdiagnosed havoc that it's wreaked on generations of fat men and women. Look at a case like Dale Wells, and you have to wonder how much longer he might have lived if he'd stayed all 111 pounds above his so-called ideal weight.

Unfunny Munson

Boos to WJBC's "Lifestyles" magazine that's distributed via bulk rate to lucky postal customers in McLean County. The recent holiday issue contains the second part of a Don Munson article on "Changing Lifestyles" with some truly cheesy fat stereotyping. Writing about turn-of-the-century bicycling in Bloomington, Munson includes a photo and reference to Leonard "Baby" Bliss, a 565-pounder who was hired to promote a new model bicycle.

"When he was off the road and back home on East Oakland," Munson writes, "Baby Bliss would bicycle downtown for groceries. Frequently, no doubt."

Yeah, that's right. Baby Bliss had to have gotten the size he was because he ate all the time! (Haha.) Sorry, Don, but that's not necessarily true. Most of the super-sized men and women who sold themselves in circus side shows and similar public displays became that way for reasons unrelated to gluttony. (Robert Earl Hughes, for many years the largest man on record, grew that way thanks to an endocrine imbalance.) Munson's cheapshot joke is just the kind of thing that reinforces the diet death culture.

Homer, How Could You?

I've tried to generally be tolerant around "The Simpsons" when it comes to size issues. The show's so satirically sharp everywhere else (and "Simpsons" creator Matt Groening seems like such a cool guy) that I've let 'em slide when they indulged in the easy fat joke at dad Homer's expense. But a recent episode where Homer attempted to get out of working at the plant by fattening himself to a weight where he would be considered disabled according to the ADA blew it big time.

Now, Homer at his regular weight always has been a stereotypical fat man: gluttonous, weak-willed, stupid and hygienically challenged. Yet, typically, the writers have managed to make him enough of an Everydad to redeem the character.

Super-sized, though, he's a waddling Don Munson joke: not very funny and pretty irrelevant, too. Typical of the episode's humor was a sequence where Homer goes to a plus-sized shop to find some comfortable clothes, and he winds up buying a muumuu which he wears throughout the rest of the show. Oh, I get it: fat ladies used to wear muumuus because it was the only clothing available that would fit them! (Haha.) So Homer by becoming fat becomes a fat lady?

One of the standard lines in the old psychoanalytical take on obesity was that men and women became fat to desexualize themselves. (The most current flip on this adds the assumption that fat women were all sexually abused as youngsters.) Without trying to make too much of a chintzy cartoon joke, I can't help noticing that as Homer gets larger both his virility and his attractiveness as a sexual being (to blue-haired spouse Marge) pointedly diminish. What's the message here?

The episode ends with Homer's boss offering to pay for liposuction to get the Simpson patriarch down to his old weight. As ridiculous and unrealistic as this was, I had to admit to a feeling of relief when the writers pulled out this quickie solution. Nuthin' more embarrassing than watching a funny show air an episode that is totally off the mark.

On A Positive Note...

Perhaps I would've taken that "Simpsons" episode more gracefully if it hadn't aired the Sunday that Becky and I returned from the Midwest National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NEPHEW) convention in Chicago. But being in a hotel with over 150 predominately fat men and women (mostly women, which only underlines the oft-stated message that fat is a feminist issue) crystallizes the need for size acceptance. Listen to a day's worth of workshops and casual gatherings--to the stories of daily struggle and humiliation, of intolerance so commonplace that occasions like this convention are a welcome respite--and a little cartoon doesn't seem so innocuous anymore.

Yours truly presided over two workshops on FAs: men and women who are attracted to fat partners. Biggest recurring issue in both workshops was the difficulty these folks faced in even coming to grips with their size preference. In many ways, it was as painful/liberating process as acknowledging any other non-traditional sexual preference.

Yet one of the highlights of the con (as it is with most major NAAFA events) was the Saturday night dance. Anyone who associates fat with lazy and indolent should get a gander of the dance floor at a NAAFA soiree. Anyone who assumes that fat women and men can't be sexually attractive should do likewise.

In this sanctuary, away from the eyes of lipophobic America, where fat adults and FAs are allowed to just be themselves, is the answer to every corny assumption and bad joke about fat that's been told.

--Bill Sherman



Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues

**NATIONAL
NGLTF
GAY & LESBIAN
TASK FORCE**

**ACTIVIST
ALERT**

Walt's American Family

Not long after Walt Disney Co.'s decision to extend health benefits to partners of gay and lesbian employees, 15 Florida state congressmen—led by Rep. Bob Brooks—wrote a letter to Michael Eisner, president of Disney & the Disney Board, decrying the decision as “anti-family”, a “belittlement of the sanctity of marriage”: “We strongly disapprove of your inclusion and endorsement of a lifestyle that is unhealthy, unnatural, and unworthy of special treatment.” The letter is full of homophobic and right-wing propaganda, appealing to the “wholesome image” of Disney. They use the language of “family” again and again, implying that lesbians and gays don’t have families. The representatives also say that the Disney company will also lose money by extending benefits, because Disney has now “alienated the vast majority of families in this country” and because other Disney employees will have to “pick up the tab” to pay for increased costs.

Action:

Write to Michael Eisner, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521, and thank him for his support of all families. Let him know that you and your family are more likely to patronize Disney because Disney acknowledges the reality of the American family and realizes that discrimination of any kind is wrong.

Not In Our Town

Not In Our Town is the story of the residents of Billings, MT, who in late 1993 and 1994, came together to support one another and respond to a wave of racist, anti-Semitic, and homophobic harassment by white supremacist hate groups. This documentary serves as an example of how individual action can prevent and stop hate crimes.

Action:

Not In Our Town Week is December 10-17, 1995. Use screenings of the film and town hall meetings to bring your community together to discuss hate crimes and community responses. Watch *Not In Our Town* on your local PBS station on December 17. For more information on how to get involved, contact California Working Group, 5867 Ocean View Drive, Oakland, CA 94618, (510) 547-8484.

Block Medicaid Reform

Congress has proposed a Medicaid spending cap and elimination of its entitlement status, converting it instead to a block grant program. Under these proposals, states could lose an average of 30% of their federal Medicaid funds by 2002 resulting in an estimated 8 million beneficiaries losing their health care coverage.

Medicaid provides over six times more funding for AIDS care than the Ryan White CARE Act. At least 40% of all people living with AIDS in this country, and more than 90% of HIV positive children, depend on Medicaid as their primary access to health care.

Action:

Contact your representatives, asking them not to slash Medicaid.

Contact President Clinton, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW Washington DC 20500, (202) 456-1414, (202) 456-2883 fax, president@whitehouse.gov, asking him to stand firm on his commitment to guarantee health coverage for everyone.

Discrimination is Not A Right

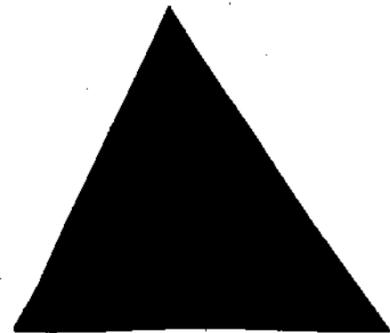
During a question and answer session after an open town meeting at University of Mississippi, Rep. Gene Taylor (D-5), was asked by a constituent why he hadn’t responded to a letter asking why he didn’t support the Employee Non-Discrimination Act. After skirting the issue with vague answers, he finally said “I don’t want to be around gay people and I certainly don’t want them working in my office.” The congressman went on to say that he believes that employers should have the right to fire gay employees, especially since it was hard enough to get rid of bad employees anyway.

Action:

Contact the Honorable Gene Taylor, United States House of Representatives, Washington DC, 20515-2405, (202) 225-5772 and tell him that no one should have the right to discriminate. Being lesbian or gay has nothing to do with one’s ability to do one’s job. If you are a constituent, demand that he support fairness in his state and let him know that you will remember his remarks come election time.

You Have Made A Difference

The “Parental Involvement in Social Issues in Education” hearings, otherwise known as the no-promo-homo hearings have been indefinitely postponed. The hearings, proposed by House Speaker Newt Gingrich to The Rev. Lou Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition, have now been scheduled and postponed twice, thanks to calls and letters from people like you.



the Bistro

**TUESDAY - \$1 DOMESTIC BEER
WEDNESDAY - \$1 CALL DRINKS
DJ - WED - SUNDAY**

**HOURS:
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SATURDAY 8PM-2AM / SUNDAY 6PM-1AM**

**316 N. MAIN BLOOMINGTON
(309) 829-2278**





Waterbirth

Imagine giving birth with ultimate freedom of choice...choosing your doctor or midwife; whether to give birth in a hospital, free-standing birth center or home; choosing to give birth in any position you wanted--squatting, side-lying, etc.; and deciding if you wish to give birth the "traditional" way --in "air"-- or in water.

Yes, water.

No, it isn't some hippy-fad (not that this would be a bad thing). Waterbirth is a worldwide phenomena. There are cultures throughout the world who claim to have given birth in water for centuries, and during the last three decades it has grown in popularity throughout the world. There are birth centers in California and on the east coast which have tubs in birthing rooms, and midwives throughout the United States are doing waterbirths at home. England, France and New Zealand have many hospitals and birthing centers which feature tubs in the birthing rooms, and it is growing in popularity in Australia. In Russia, many are giving birth during the summer months in the Black Sea, as well as waterbirths at home.

Last year 20/20 did a feature on waterbirth, featuring Dr. Michael Rosenthal, a doctor from California with an excellent international reputation who does waterbirths in his clinic in California. After reviewing all the evidence and interviewing doctors "opposed" to it (who obviously had not done their research into the safety of it), the "investigating" doctor from 20/20 came to this conclusion: It sounded safe and wonderful for women. He is right.

Waterbirth in the modern world was started by Igor Charkovsky, a Russian physical therapist, in the early 1960's when he discovered that his daughter, born at 32 weeks gestation, thrived when in a tub of water with her mom. He discovered this after they had checked out of the hospital early because doctors said his daughter wouldn't live. He decided to create as womb-like of an environment as he could. This sparked his interest in water training babies, which actually leads to children who are very physically advanced for their ages, and ultimately to waterbirth. Another modern-day "pioneer" of waterbirth is Dr. Michael Odent, who has received world-wide recognition for his work in Pithiviers, France, and has written numerous books on this and related subjects: *ENTERING THE WORLD*, *BIRTH REBORN*, *WE ARE ALL WATERBABIES*, and *WATER AND SEXUALITY*.

Why waterbirth? Water acts in numerous ways on the woman:

SPECIFIC HEAT--The warmth of water acts to reduce the sensation of pain and relaxes women, which stimulates the release of oxytocin, it reduces the adrenalin and causes a move away from the "flight or fight" mechanism (which triggers adrenalin production etc.). More relaxin (a hormone) is released and women have easier, shorter labors.

BUOYANCY--Effective gravity is reduced in water which helps take the weight off of the uterus. Women feel lighter, are able to be more mobile, and contractions are perceived as less painful, allowing her to relax more, and contributes again to an easier, faster labor.

AQUASTATIC PRESSURE--This is the principle by which the higher pressure under water provides a homeostatic effect on all systems within the body, if the woman is almost fully immersed in the water. It lowers blood pressure and has the effect of giving the baby a more gentle entrance into a watery environment as the head and body are born, providing a less drastic release of atmospheric pressure, thus reducing the chance of intracranial hemorrhage, asphyxia and emotional trauma.

FAMILIARITY--Water is a familiar environment to both baby and the mother. Water is the element of life. We all grew and developed in the water in our mother's wombs, and it was the first environment we knew. Therefore, most people may subconsciously associate water with their mothers. They may associate water with protection, nourishment, nurturing and love. It is commonly found that using water with women who had difficult births when they were born or complications in their relations with their mothers can do much to heal personal birth trauma, heal this relationship, or heal feeling about the relationship by birthing in water.

CELLULAR MEMORY--If you believe everyone has inside of them the cosmic knowledge of how to give birth, but because we are split from nature and intuition etc. (so that most women need a technique to give birth) then you will recognize that waterbirth provides, on a physical level, a reminder that women have that knowledge. As the great balancer of life, water can remind us on every level of what we already know, melting and dissolving our warped mental consciousness and pulling people away from their natural extremes.

Most people are concerned about the safety of the baby. This is not a concern. The baby will not breathe until it's head is exposed to air. As long as it's head is under water, it is fine. This does not mean that the baby can stay under the water indefinitely. Once the baby is born it should be brought up, face down, immediately. Yet, it is perfectly safe for the baby. Remember, it has spent the last nine months of life living in a watery environment...the womb. Water is nothing new. In fact, it is believed that due to the effects of aquatic pressure, it is actually a much gentler way to give birth, resulting in a more peaceful baby when it is born.

I have done waterbirths with women where the baby has not cried at all. It isn't that there is something wrong. The baby comes out of the mother, and is lifted up into her arms, usually with the body still in the water. It's eyes will open, it will breathe, turn pink, and look

around. No crying. It is quite an amazing sight. Contrast this with our society that not too long ago turned its babies upside down and swatted them to make the babies scream.

It should be cautioned that waterbirth are not safe for all women. Any woman who is considered high risk, has any anticipated complications or is having a breech or twin birth should not be giving birth in water. However, for everyone else, waterbirth is wonderful! What is important is the woman's desire to be in the water during labor, and possibly during the delivery. With a skilled practitioner, waterbirth is a safe alternative to the typical medicated birth and a beautiful experience. By giving women more and more choices about their births, we are empowering them in their parenting decisions, making for a stronger family unit.

--Marcee Murray

For further information on any type of natural childbirth, alternative healthcare or homeschooling, call Marcee at 827-5843.

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Animal Magnetism



Six reasons why I wouldn't dream of buying wool

1) A few weeks after they are born, lambs' tails are chopped off (and males are castrated) without anesthetic. Extremely high mortality rates are considered normal: 20-40 percent of lambs die at birth or before the age of eight weeks from exposure to extreme weather conditions or starvation.

2) Then comes "mulesing" - or carving huge strips of flesh off the backs of living animals' legs. In Australia, the most commonly raised sheep are Merinos, specifically bred to have wrinkly skin (which means more wool per animal). This unnatural overload of wool causes animals to die of heat exhaustion during hot spells, and the wrinkles also collect urine and moisture. Attracted to the moisture, flies lay eggs in the folds of skin, and the hatched maggots can literally eat sheep alive. To prevent "flystrike," Australian ranchers perform a barbarous operation. This is done to cause a large smooth scar that won't harbor fly eggs. Yet the bloody wounds often get flystrike before they heal; and despite the suspicion by many that mulesing may kill more sheep than it saves, the mutilation continues. After mulesing, lambs can be seen writhing and scuttling sideways like crabs, trying to escape the pain.

3) Sheep are sheared each spring, after lambing. Shearers are usually paid by volume, not by hour, so they work quickly and carelessly. Says one insider: "The shearing shed must be one of the worst places in the world for cruelty to animals. I have seen shearers punch sheep with their shears or fists until the sheep's noses bled. I have seen sheep with half their faces shorn off.

Timing is critical: Shearing too late means loss of wool. In the rush, an estimated one million Australian sheep die every year of exposure after premature shearing.

4) Once ewes grow old and unproductive, they are shipped to slaughter (males are usually sold younger, since most farmers regularly sell off some of their flock for meat). The sheep might travel huge distances overland to the coast, where they are held in crowded feedlots before being loaded onto ships bound for the Middle East. Many sheep, ill or wounded from the journey, faced with intense crowding and strange food, die.

5) The surviving sheep—seven million a year—are herded onto huge ships (14 tiers high). Up to 125,000 sheep are packed tightly into each ship, each allocated an area hardly bigger than themselves, so that not all can lie down at once or reach the feed troughs. Mired in their own waste for three weeks or more, the sheep suffer from seasickness, temperature extremes, disease, and injuries. Younger animals or babies born en route are often trampled to death.

6) Those who survive the journey have their throats slit without being stunned. According to an eyewitness report of one abattoir in Bahrain, the sheep "wave[d] their heads in obvious confusion, trying to stand up and call out as the blood gushed from their throats."

Source: Peta's *Animal Times*
September/October 1995

Holiday Recipes

Christmas Cashew and Chestnut Roast Serves 6

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp each dried rosemary and thyme
- 1 1/4 cups cashews, ground
- 5 medium carrots, cooked and mashed
- 3/4 cup whole wheat bread crumbs
- 1 vegetable bouillon cube dissolved in 3/4 cup hot water
- 3 heaping Tbsp whole wheat flour
- 3-4 Tbsp water
- 1 cup canned chestnut puree
- 1/2 tsp salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Heat oil in saucepan, then add onions, garlic and herbs. Saute until onions are soft. Transfer to large mixing bowl. Add ground cashews, carrots, bread crumbs and bouillon. Mix well. Add salt and pepper to taste. Whisk flour and water together to make smooth paste, adding more water as needed. Mix into cashew mixture.

In food processor, whiz chestnut puree and salt to blend.

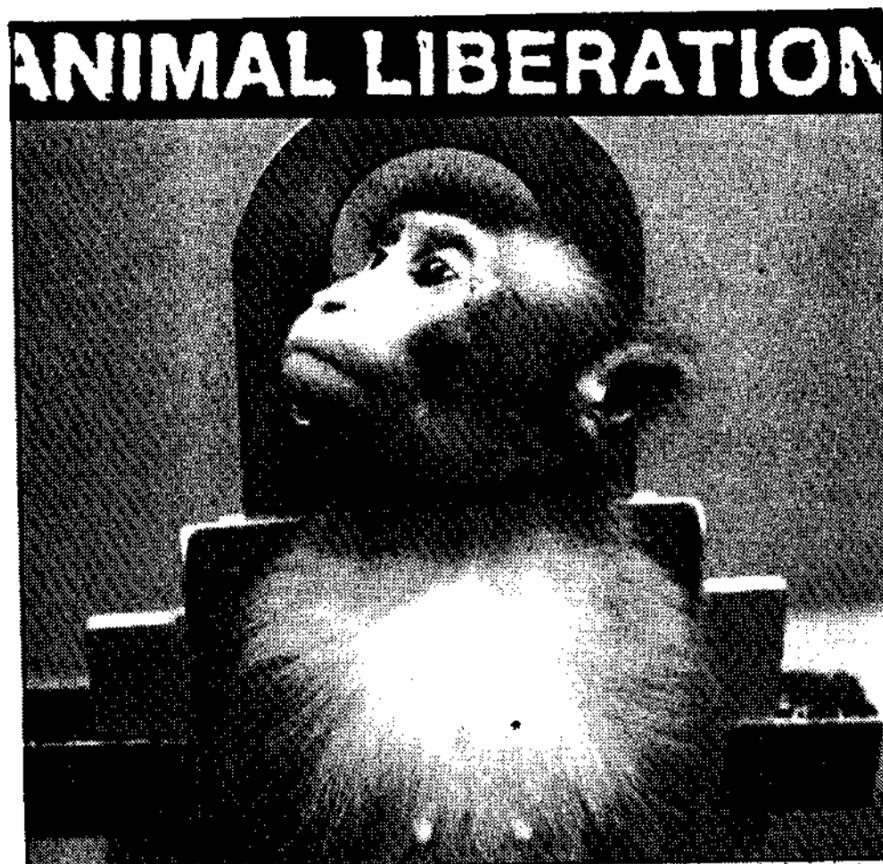
Oil a 2-pond loaf pan and spoon half the cashew mixture into the bottom. Spread chestnut mixture on top of cashew mixture, making sure the chestnut mixture stays clear of the sides. Add rest of cashew mixture and press down. Bake for 45 minutes. Allow to cool in pan for 15 minutes before inverting and serving. Serve with gravy, roasted potatoes, a colorful salad, your favorite vegetables and all the trimmings.

Lemon Broccoli Serves 6

- 2 medium large heads of broccoli
- 1 cup water or chickenless stock
- 3 Tbsp margarine
- Juice from 1 lemon
- 1/12 tsp grated lemon rind (yellow part only)
- 1/2 cup toasted sliced almonds or
- 3 tsp sesame seeds for garnish (optional)
- Salt to taste

Remove the tough ends of the broccoli stems, and cut into 6 large spears. Bring water or stock to a boil, add broccoli. Reduce heat to simmer and steam through—about 3-7 minutes, depending upon the thickness of pieces and degree of doneness you prefer. Do not overcook.

Meanwhile, warm the oil in a small saucepan over medium low heat. Stir in the lemon juice and soy sauce. Remove from heat and stir in the grated rind. When broccoli is done, drain thoroughly. Return to pan and toss with the lemon sauce. Remove to bowl and sprinkle almonds or sesame seeds on top.





Animal Friendly New Year's Resolutions

1. Leave leaflets wherever you go—in the doctor's waiting room reading rack, at the laundromat and in the beauty salon.
2. Ask permission to put up an "Animal World" bulletin board in the local supermarket.
3. Enclose a leaflet with every bill payment.
4. Replace your leather shoes, belts and wallets with cheaper, attractive, synthetics.
5. Volunteer to help wildlife rehabilitators nurse injured birds and squirrels.
6. Convince your local newspaper to run photos of animals up for adoption at the shelter.
7. Join PETA's phone tree and link up with others when action is needed.
8. Use suggestion boxes and fill in comment cards whenever you see something that helps or hurts animals.
9. Always stop to pick up plastic litter. Animals get tangled in or swallow discarded six-pack rinds, string and fishing line.
10. Speak out! Within earshot of the shopper ahead of you in the checkout line, talk about factory farming.
11. Play daily with your companion animals. Give them lots of love and attention. That means so much to animals whose lives consist of waiting for you to come home.
12. Far more dogs and cats are born every hour than can ever find good homes. Pay or persuade someone to spay or neuter their animal friend.
13. Jump into radio call-in discussions with animal issue tie-in's (e.g., call into a health show with info on vegetarianism or call a show on budget cuts to talk about government subsidies of useless vivisection).
14. Cap your chimney (or a relative's) to save birds and squirrels who might otherwise fall in.
15. Protest dissection in your community classrooms. Suggest films, computer demonstrations and models instead.
16. Arrange a talk on cruelty-free living at a local college, church or civic center. Borrow a PETA video to share.
17. Make sure your dog or cat has a clean, readable identification tattoo or wears a secure tag bearing your name, address and phone number. Lost animals depend on clear ID to get back home.
18. Keep a stack of blank, prestamped, postcards by your television, along with the addresses of the major networks. When a show promotes or trivializes animal abuse, fire off a brief polite message to the network. (Remember to thank a station when it does something good).
19. Bring your office into the '90s. Ask the person who buys supplies to purge all Gillette products (including Liquid Paper and Papermate pens) from the shelves until the company stops testing on animals.
20. Eating Out? Carry our "Vegetarian meals served here" window stickers.
21. Ask grocery stores to carry frozen veggie entree, tofu and soy milk.
22. Set aside an hour every week to write to elected officials, industry executives or magazine editors. (PETA can send you tips on writing effective letters.) Multiply your efforts by throwing a letter-writing party.
23. Enjoy animals only in their natural environment, not in cages.
24. Ask your librarian to write on library letterhead for PETA's free library pack of books, videos, factsheets and vertical file materials.
25. Speak out against fur! Don't let a single fur-wearer pass you without receiving a fur card (write us for a free supply).
26. Create a library display about animals in entertainment.
27. Don't shop in stores that carry fur. Let store managers know why.
28. Never ignore stray animals on the street, where they can become victims of disease, starvation, cars and the cruelty of humans—as well as being able to reproduce and add to the overpopulation problem.
29. In winter, break the ice on ponds and puddles so squirrels, birds, and other animals who live outdoors can drink the water. In the yard, set up a heated birdbath.
30. Insist on vegan meals in cafeterias. Contact the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, PO Box 6332, Washington DC 20015, for recipes that are specially formulated for institutions.
31. Walk a lonely neighborhood dog.
32. Bring life to your yard. Plant a mix of shrubs, trees and flowers that will provide nuts, berries, seeds and nectar to animals throughout the year. Foster hollies, for instance, provide animals with berries and foliage.
33. Bring veggie food to share at your office, and give out recipe cards.
34. Refuse to support companies that test their products on animals or use animal ingredients.
35. Carry an animal rescue kit. (Nonperishable food, a cardboard cat carrier, a leash, a bandage for a muzzle and emergency phone numbers of vets and shelter)
36. Help your local animal shelter; volunteer to walk dogs, play with animals, and donate supplies like blankets, kitty litter and food.
37. Adopt an animal (or two!) from your local shelter. Be sure you'll have the time, patience and funds for food, toys and veterinary care.

—PETA's *Animal Times*



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America Does Not Need Capital Punishment

"My primary concern here is not compassion for the murderer. My concern is for the society which adopts vengeance as an acceptable motive for its collective behavior. If we make that choice, we will snuff out some of that boundless hope and confidence in ourselves and other people, which has marked our maturing as a free people."

These words, spoken by former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, illustrates the feeling of most individuals opposed to capital punishment. It's not sympathy towards the murderer that we feel; indeed, most of us feel a great deal of anger and revulsion towards all murderers and their actions. Our objection is that the death penalty is a complete renunciation of all that is embodied in our concept of humanity. Or, more simply put, executions degrade us all.

In today's society, the execution process is far removed from most individual citizens. We may, or more likely may not, be aware of the criminal acts that put an individual on death row-and if we are it is usually through sensationalized press accounts-but very few of us know of the human being whom society has condemned to death.

And fewer of us have witnessed, or ever will witness, an actual execution. They are carried out in the middle of the night, in the dark, away from us all, to hide what they really are-a barbaric punishment symbolic of our less civilized past. The public is kept as far away as possible from the whole process to keep them from seeing that human beings-real flesh and blood, real people-are being put to death. This deliberate dehumanization of the entire process makes it easier for us to distance ourselves from capital punishment and to accept it as "something the government does", which in turn allows us to avoid individual responsibility for the consequences of such actions. That is the only way that any state or government can continue with executions without the public demanding their eradication.

There are acceptable alternatives to capital punishment that are more in line with the values of our supposedly enlightened and humanistic society. The state is supposed to be the pillar of our ideals, and its institutions should emulate the best values of our society. Are not the greatest of these values our compassion, our concern for human rights, and our capacity for mercy? By continuing to conduct executions, aren't we undermining the very foundations of our greatness? As Zimbabwe poet Chenjerai Hove wrote: "The death penalty is abominable, as abominable as the crime itself. Our state must be based on love, not hatred and victimization. Our penal code must be based on rehabilitation rather than annihilation." For so long as the spirit of vengeance has the slightest vestige of respectability, so long as it pervades the public mind and infuses its evil upon the statute books of law, we will make no headway towards the control of violence in our society.

There are suitable alternatives. Individuals who are a danger to society must be removed from society. Society has the right to protect itself- there is no disputing that. If rehabilitation is not possible or is not a consideration, then that removal must be made permanent. But that permanent removal need not take the form of the death penalty.

Those who favor the abolition of capital punishment do not advocate releasing convicted murderers into society. The choice is not between the death penalty and unconditional release, but between the death penalty and meaningful long-term sentences. Life without the possibility of parole, or natural life sentences, meet the necessary requirements of society without being excessively brutal or barbaric.

Feelings of retribution, vengeance, blood atonement, and the like are difficult feelings to suppress. Perhaps there are some individuals who, in some sense, "deserve" to be executed. But the real question that should be asked is do we really need the death penalty? In light of such suitable alternatives as natural life sentences, is society in general paying too high a price when it executes its own citizens? The late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall once wrote: "I cannot agree that the American people have been so hardened, so embittered that they want to take the life of one who performs even the basest criminal act knowing that the execution is nothing more than blood lust."

It is time for us to acknowledge the death penalty for what it really is-barbaric savagery, pure and simple-and abolish it nation wide. By rejecting the seemingly "simple" solutions that compromise our values and undermine the fundamental principles of our society, we maintain the greatness of our country. For it is certainly true that by giving in to our basest emotions we lower ourselves to the very persons we wish to execute, and in the process weaken the moral fibers that bind and protect our society.

And while it is admittedly difficult at times, when we recognize the humanity of even the vilest criminal-when we acknowledge them as fellow human beings rather than as objects to be discarded-we pay ourselves the very highest of tributes and celebrate our own humanity.

What can you do? You can get involved, for no justice is done if everyone leaves the work of justice to everyone else. There are several organizations working hard to rid our country of capital punishment. They need your help and support. Please contact one or more of the following groups:

National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (918 "F" St, NW Suite 601; Washington, D.C. 20004; Phone 212-807-8400)

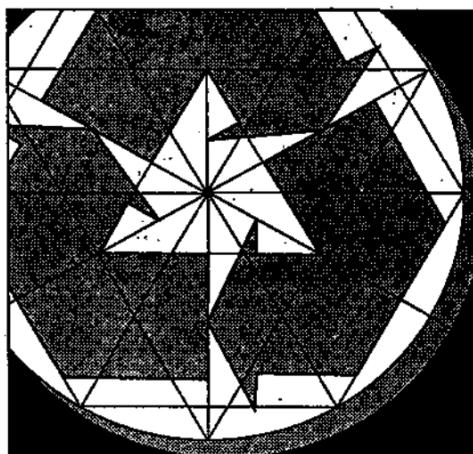
Amnesty International-Program to Abolish the Death Penalty (322 Eighth Avenue; New York, NY 10001; Phone 212-807-8400)

American Civil Liberties Union-Capital Punishment Project (122 Maryland Ave, NE; Washington, D.C. 20002; Phone 202-675-2321)

Murder Victims' Families For Reconciliation (P.O. Box #208; Atlantic, VA 23303; Phone 804-824-0948)

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

--Michael B. Ross



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Increase Minimum Wage

Early in November, CNN announced an 800 hotline to collect federal minimum wage. By the time the *Post* goes to the press, the hotline will be disconnected but this is the gist of my report to the Department of Labor (it would be the text of my response, but my one-minute time limit ran out).

The federal minimum wage is one of the few protections of the working poor and must be periodically reviewed to assure it still serves a purpose. The Clinton administration would like to see a raise in the wage, although the amount is yet to be determined. This, of course, stands a snowball's chance in hell of passing through a Republican congress. The conservatives are going to scream that a raise in the hourly wage will hurt minorities. The logic of this statement has never been proven to me. How can this hurt minorities when all minimum wage earners are affected equally, black or white, male or female? This is just a smoke screen designed to hide their real concern: a higher minimum wage will hurt business. This is a little more believable, but the truth of the matter is those businesses who pay minimum wage have not seen an increase in their labor costs since the last wage hike. Those businesses who periodically give raises will not be significantly affected.

A little closer to home, let's take a look at what a minimum wage earner actually brings home. If they work a full 40-hour week, after taxes, they will bring home about \$150, or \$600 per month. Now, let's look at a budget:

- Rent/Utilities \$250
- Food \$60
- Gas/Auto Repair . . . \$80
- Auto Insurance \$40
- Credit Card Payments \$40
- Phone \$35

The total comes to \$505, which leaves \$95 for extra, such as clothes, health insurance, laundry, entertainment or fees for things like registration of bank services. Forget student loans or Christmas presents. These figures are noticeably low—when was the last time you paid \$250 for rent and utilities? Five years ago, maybe? In those five years, inflation has taken more than a ten percent bite out of your buying power. It is for this reason that minimum wage ought to at least be tied to federal cost of living figures. Sound dismal enough? What about those who make less?

It is possible, and legal, to pay workers a sub-minimum wage if they accept tips in the course of their work. I doubt anyone knows why these workers' labor is worth less than even a minimum wage earner, or why the customer is expected to pick up part of the employer's labor expense. I suspect that this was a bone tossed to the hospitality industry to reward their powerful lobby. It is a privilege which has been abused. There are cases in which workers have been reclassified as servers so their pay could be lowered to sub-minimum. Recently the IRS has decided to tax 15% of a server's net

sales as income, up from ten percent in years past. Now, if that same server ever needs to apply for unemployment benefits, the state pays one-half of the average weekly income while the server was employed. Declared tips are not included. For a full-time waitress, that comes to one-half of \$85.20 or 442.60 per week. Think it is difficult to live on minimum wage? Try living on sub-minimum wage. Let's close that loophole.

--Roadkill





Not in our town

is an award-winning program that gives an inspiring look at the power of "community," and the important role played by ordinary citizens, churches, service groups, unions, and the media to stem the growth of hate crimes and racial intolerance.

For more information about the NOT IN OUR TOWN Campaign, call California Working Group 510-547-8484 / 5867 Ocean View Drive Oakland, CA 94618 or the Institute for Alternative Journalism 415-284-1420 / 77 Federal Street San Francisco, CA 94107.

In Arizona an Amtrak is derailed and in Oklahoma City the federal building is bombed.

In Fulton County, Illinois the Klan rallies and in Bloomington a heated debate burns about a proposed expansion of the human rights ordinance.

One city that found a way to counter hate crimes and celebrate its diversity is the moving story of "Not In Our Town," showing on Channel 47, WTVP Peoria on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 9:30 p.m.

A preview of the show and a community discussion, sponsored by the Bloomington & Normal Trades & Labor Assembly, local churches, the Coalition for Diversity and Reconciliation, both Bloomington and Normal's Human Relations Commissions, the YWCA, UAW 2488 and other groups, are scheduled for Dec. 12 and 14 at 7 p.m. at Carpenters 63 Hall, 2002 Beich Rd., Bloomington.

The Tuesday, Dec. 12 forum is open to the public, the Thursday, Dec. 14 event will be a youth forum. Both forums will include a screening of the film, a short panel discussion and then open response.

"Not In Our Town" is a documentary on Billings, Montana, where white supremacist, skinhead and Klan activity threaten minority groups.

Native Americans had their homes spray-painted, African-American churches were harassed by skinheads and Jewish homes were stoned.

The community held demonstrations to protest and mark its unity. Labor responded by condemning the attacks, the Painters Union repainted any homes marked and the Laborers aided the police with security.

The attacks escalated with stones through Jewish windows displaying Chanukah menorah candles in December. The community not only held marches and inter-faith services, The Billings Gazette printed a full page menorah add, inviting families to display it in their windows. A Methodist church and some homes displaying the add were stoned, but the attacks stopped after 10,000 Billings homes displayed the ads.

The AFL-CIO, National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers are promoting the program and encouraging members to view and participate in community events. The program has won awards and critical acclaim. "It's...important family fare with a red, white and blue message that is far brighter than any flag-waving, gun-toting group that claims to act on patriotism," said Susan Swartz in the Santa Rosa Press-Democrat

What you can do:

PUBLICIZE your local PBS broadcast date and time of NOT IN OUR TOWN by including information in your organization newsletters, church bulletins and club mailings.

ORGANIZE a screening or town hall meeting to watch and discuss NOT IN OUR TOWN with teachers, religious leaders, local police, union members, and others.

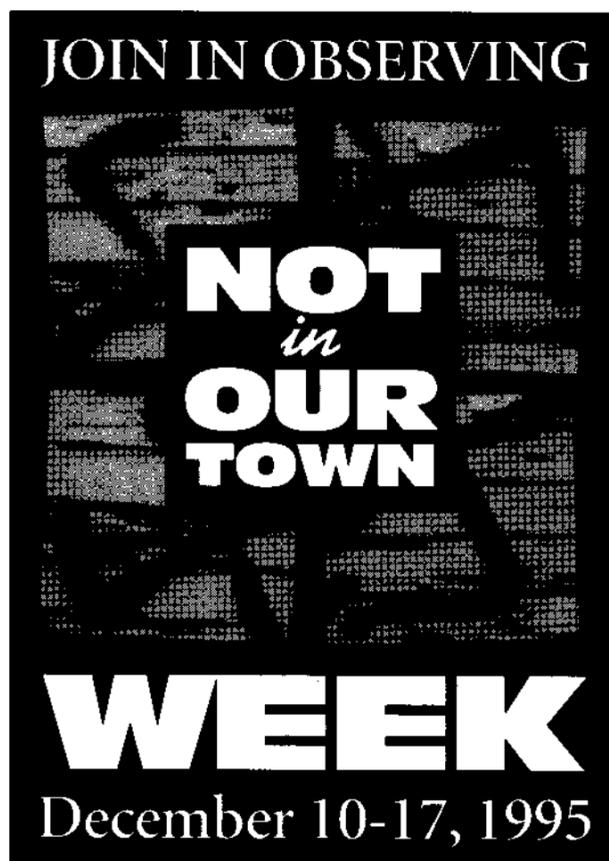
TALK with your local elected officials about proclaiming NOT IN OUR TOWN WEEK as a way of raising public awareness about hate crimes.

INFORM the local media about NOT IN OUR TOWN WEEK and encourage them to do local stories about the issue.

ASK teachers and principals to include NOT IN OUR TOWN curriculum materials in their course work for this week.

USE the NOT IN OUR TOWN LOGO as a symbol in newspaper ads, newsletters and on posters.

WEAR a NOT IN OUR TOWN button or distribute them to others.





Free Leonard Peltier



Leonard Peltier is the Gandhi/King/Mandela of his people's struggle. Leonard Peltier is the voice of conscience of this shameful nation. Leonard Peltier is the spirit of freedom locked in a deep, dark hole. Leonard Peltier is the voice of truth that this nation so terribly fears. Leonard Peltier is the condemned man that bears witness to America's crime. Leonard Peltier is the soul warrior/medicine man who cries out for justice.

Every day he is kept in prison the sky darkens. Every day he is locked away, he gains power.

Truth cannot be denied forever. Five hundred years of oppression must be ended.

He na na Ho Na na/Free Leonard Peltier.

--Greg Brown can be reached at The New Age Resource Center, P.O. Box 3161, Bloomington, IL 61702-3161 or at (309) 827-5805

Civil Disobedience Planned For Leonard Peltier

After 19 years of unjust, unwarranted, and unexplained imprisonment Leonard Peltier is still being held captive for a "crime" his accusers have even admitted he did not commit.

As a last legal recourse for Leonard, he has an executive clemency petition pending with the U.S. "Justice" department. With an average time of 6 to 9 months for a clemency decision to be made, Attorney General Janet Reno has been sitting on this petition for 24 months now!

The government's flagrant disregard for real justice by their constant dismissal of their own recorded evidence proves Leonard's innocence.

As a result of the racist F.B.I.'s recent lobbying efforts to delay the executive clemency decision yet even longer, civil disobedience actions are currently being organized.

The National Committee for Nonviolent Civil Disobedience to Free Leonard Peltier will begin its campaign on March 20, 1996 in Washington,

D.C. and other key locations. If you are interested in taking part in demanding of the long overdue and unconditional release of political prisoner Leonard Peltier, please contact the address below for details:

"Free Peltier Now"
P.O. Box 76609
Washington, D.C. 20013-6609

The "20 Years of Injustice" Action

With the clock ticking on the clemency campaign, we must act fast to win Leonard Peltier his freedom. We are asking that all of Leonard's supporters seize the day on February 6, 1996 by gathering outside of their local F.B.I. field offices and distributing literature on the miscarriage of justice which has been done.

To begin the "20 Years of Injustice ACTION" we want the F.B.I. to hear our voice now by writing to them demanding that they come clean and admit the wrong doing in the case of Leonard Peltier. We ask everyone to write several letters a week to the F.B.I. agencies on this list to ensure that hundreds of support letters will be received

Anyone interested in participating in this action can contact the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee for further details: LPDC, P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, KS 66044 (913) 842-5774



Federal Bureau of Investigation
Room 1400
Federal Office Building
111 West Huron Street
Buffalo, New York 14202
(716) 856-7800

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Room 905
E.M. Dirksen Federal Office Building
219 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 431-1333

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575 North Pennsylvania Street
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(317) 639-3301

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News From Voice

PRO-LIFERS LOSE IN COURT

The Supreme Court recently refused to free five anti-choice demonstrators from paying nearly \$100,000 in attorney fees to an abortion clinic they had targeted.

The action was taken without comment in a case from Sacramento, California, extended abortion foes losing streak in the high court. It marked the first time the issue of lawyer-fee awards in abortion-linked litigation had been considered by the justices.

Anti-choice groups called the ruling "outrageous" and said that it "sends a very chilling message to pro-life demonstrators."

The justices let stand rulings that said The lawyer-fees awarded did not violate or wrongly "chill" their free speech rights.

Last month, the court rejected a free-speech appeal by California protesters arrested for picketing too close to a physician's home. The court also rejected a sweeping challenge to federal limits on abortion clinic protests.

In the last year justices have turned away applause by pro-life activists who say they are being wrongly sued as racketeers in their efforts to stop women from having abortions.

Thirteen months ago, the court cleared the way for Randall Terry to go to jail on contempt of court charges. Terry violated a court order by helping another man show President Clinton a fetus during the 1992 Democratic Convention.

In 1992 the Court ruled that states cannot ban most abortions, reaffirming the constitutional right of abortion.

Source: Pantagraph

PLANNED PARENTHOOD FACTS

As the United Way of McLean County is under way, (you remember the United Way, they're the folks that de-funded Planned Parenthood's Okay, Not Okay Touch program and the folks who most recently fought the establishment of a hospice for people with AIDS in McLean County), please remember that you have two options when your employer approaches you for the drive, give directly to the organization of your choice thereby not allowing the United Way to get their hands on 12% of you donation, or give to them but designate your money to Planned Parenthood and/or the McLean County AIDS Task Force. The United Way is obligated to give the money to designated agencies, even if they are not United Way agencies.

In 1994, Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois provided health care services to 19,400 unduplicated clients. Services include: contraceptives; pregnancy tests; prenatal services; case management; male services clients; WIC clients; midlife services; and, HIV tests.

Please support Planned Parenthood and the AIDS Task Force, the work they do in this community is invaluable.

JUDGE RULES ON KILLING FETUS

On Nov. 24, a British judge ruled that someone who kills an unborn fetus by attacking a pregnant woman could be tried for murder.

In a landmark ruling that redefined the law of homicide, Lord Chief Justice Peter Taylor stressed that his decision would not have any implications for doctors carrying out abortions.

"Murder or manslaughter can be committed where an unlawful injury is deliberately inflicted, either to a child in utero or to a mother carrying a child in utero," Taylor said.

Source: Chicago Tribune

CATHOLICS IGNORE POPE

I didn't take the voters of Ireland legalizing divorce to find out that a large number of Catholics ignore a lot of what the Pontiff has to say. Some examples include: Italy, with 85% of its population claiming to be Catholic, has the lowest birth rate in Europe. Another example is the recent election in Poland where voters chose an ex-Communist, despite the church's efforts to defeat him. And in Germany last month a petition, signed by 1.5 million church-going German Catholics, called for sweeping reforms of the church, including ordination of women priests.

The Pope's response to the German petition stressed the church's urgent need to recover "the authentic concept of authority." Stating that only the church has the ultimate authority to interpret the word of God, the Pontiff stated that freedom of theological research cannot be construed to be "freedom as regards to the truth."

Source: New York Times

SANTA IS A WOMAN

Muriel Burrell is the first woman in Manhattan to don the red and white fur trimmed Santa suit for the Volunteers of America. "I heard some people talking about this, and I thought it's got to be a lot of fun. So here I am and I'm glad to be helping out," said Burrell. Burrell's post is outside Macy's Department Store and she'll be there everyday until Christmas Eve.

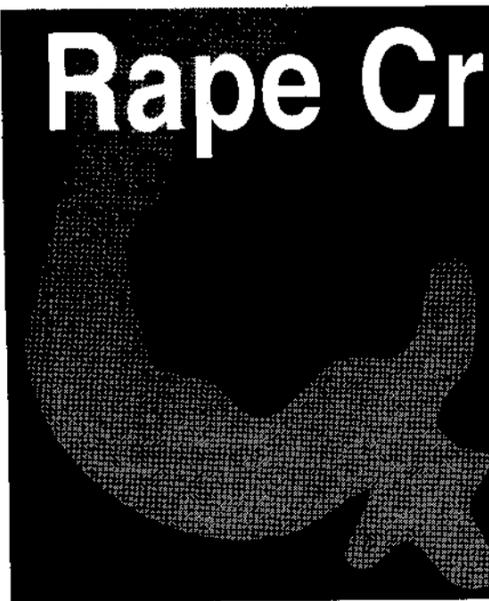
Burrell is a registered nurse and mother of five. She is one of six women who will work as a Santa for the volunteer group, which collects donations from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. during the annual fund raising drive.

Source: Pantagraph

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

ORDINANCE DEMONSTRATE SUPPORT FOR ORDINANCE

On October 16 & 17, the City of Bloomington Human Relations Commission held public hearings on the proposed changes to the city's Human Relations Ordinance. The proposed change would ban discrimination in housing, public accommodation and employment based on familial status, source of income or sexual orientation.



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

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For Choice



The City Council Chambers were standing room only as each night supporters of the ordinance filled the room. In all, 53 individuals testified at the hearings, 12 opposed, 41 supported the ordinance.

Of the twelve opposing the ordinance, four testified both nights, meaning only 8 unduplicated individuals testified against the ordinance.

Organizations supporting the ordinance change include: The McLean County Voice for Choice, ACLU, Rape Crisis Center of Mid-Central Illinois, Mid-Central Community Action, the McLean County AIDS Task Force, and PRIDE.

Hearing transcripts are available to the public at city hall. We would however like to share with you a few of the more ridiculous statements made by those opposing the ordinance:

Gary Stevens: "the Declaration speaks of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The founding fathers wanted to pursue what was right, not what was wrong. They didn't state to pursue happiness by sealing, murdering, taking advantage of others, but they held up the honor of marriage and the sanctity of marriage so that this country could be both God Fearing and God Honoring."

David Curtain - Illinois Christian Coalition.

"The Illinois Christian Coalition opposes any chance to gain special rights for homo-sexuals, which is what the ordinance implements. Other states

have rejected such changes because homosexuality is an unacceptable behavior and not a benign characteristic.... By including special protected status of sexual orientation, will you not be including others of a different sexual orientation. Those who like to commit incest, pedophilia, necrophilia and the like. They too feel they are discriminated against. They too believe they have an alternative life style. If you let one group in, on what rational basis will you keep the others out?"

Randell Smith

"Who wrote this?" Karl Marx? Is this a communist, lesbian, queer, love passage written in here? All through here, probable cause, police statement, fine somebody. People quoted a Bible, but this was at one time a White Christian nation. It was a Christian nation at one time. Now you are going to turn it into a lesbian nation where it is going to be queers.In my personal opinion these queers ought to be expelled to some island in the Pacific and blown up."

Marcus L. Evans

"Please don't discriminate against Mr. Smith because there is enough discrimination in the City."

Virgil Funk

"I am a born again Christian and a Bible scholar. I can assure everyone in the room that Jesus Christ will every homosexual and lesbian if they humble themselves and repent. He will not cure them if they try to justify themselves in their pride and wrongdoing. ...my lease says "No homosexual or lesbian activity, and I don't intend to change it."

Gary Stevens

"While I was attending Bible school I befriended an older man who was very nice and very generous as he helped pay my college bills and send me to Israel. During this time I

discovered that this man lost his wife and was very lonely. My relationship with him became physical. I did not realize right away what was happening. Then I started realizing that something was not right. At the time I was also going out with my girlfriend. I realized that what I was doing with this older man was not right. I just feel like passing this ordinance puts sexual orientation on par with other classes, making sexual orientation more legitimate.

I know myself that these relationships are not healthy in the long run. No types of sexual relationships before marriage are healthy."

Lee Newcom

Enacting this change will put the city in inconsistency with state and federal law. The words included are not homo-sexuality, but "sexual orientation, therefore no one can honestly say what would be included.... I believe in fidelity within a marriage, but if I say that I think about sex with men does that make me bisexual? I don't know the definition.... While I was in a black neighborhood a couple of weeks ago, I was called a white devil. Just because someone took discriminatory and racist attitude with me, it didn't mean that I feared for my life. There are obviously people full of hatred, but it does not mean people fear for their lives. Even if you disagree with the speakers you must admit that people were sincere, but were not full of hatred.

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Has Washington Gone Too

CHICAGO-Distasteful as it may be to add any ink on the O.J. Simpson trial—a grotesquely ill-proportioned circus whose daily torrent of coverage was equaled only by the Gulf War—fact is that the “not guilty” verdict showed again that deep distrust of law enforcement has begun to surface among broad layers of the U.S. population.

True, the preeminent lesson of the case is its dramatic reiteration that there is in the American legal field—just like in, say, medicine or education—a profound schism based on wealth: two words, two standards, an apartheid based on green.

But more to the point is the initial stirrings of resistance to nearly two decades of cruel austerity and fierce use of law as a domestic weapon—resistance now focused on defending democratic rights. After all—aside from the green—Simpson “walked” largely because of deep popular disgust with the ubermensch L.A. Police Department, and specifically because of star prosecution witness Detective Mark Fuhrman’s taped admission of widespread evidence falsification and his own desire to literally exterminate all American Blacks.

Real story

In fact, recent revelations of flagrant and systematic malfeasance by U.S. law enforcement have dominated the news for over a month, if not the past several years.

In Chicago an off-duty white policeman blew the brains out of a Black panhandler, drove away, and was subsequently cleared of all charges. The judge—son of a cop—turns out to have killed and been cleared himself.

In Philadelphia daily disclosures in August emerged as a long series of organized police drug-deals, frame-ups, thefts, and violence came unraveled, putting in question as many as one hundred thousand convictions.

In New York headlines blared police drunken bashes—including naked cops sliding down hotel banisters—and the exposure of seventeen officers running drug money-laundering operations.

And of course back in Los Angeles publication of the pre-verdict Mark Fuhrman tapes caused authorities to brace for public rioting.

Movies

Meanwhile, unflagging public repugnance at three earlier federal police crimes compelled Congress to hold hearings, which only served to replay the provocative images from the incineration of 57 adults and 20 children at Waco, the killing of Randy Weaver’s wife by an FBI sharpshooter as she held her infant, and the annual “Good Ol’ Boys Round-Up” under a banner celebrating the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

All this after revelations of police crimes ranging from the dramatic 1991 videotaped beating of Rodney King to drug-dealings, robberies, and even torture and murder by police in Chicago, Miami, New York, and New Orleans. Taken together, as the exposures strobe across both time and place, they form a moving picture of a sustained nationwide police riot.

Indeed Hollywood and the cops have formed a symbiotic (if not incestuous) relationship, stealing action and dialogue from each other in a shifting miasma of fact and fantasy.

Fuel

But it’s on the other coast that we can find the source of police violence and turpitude.

With open season now declared in Washington on “entitlements,” affirmative action programs, immigration and homosexuality by politicians of every stripe, it’s no surprise that police feel emboldened to attack poor people, Blacks, Mexicans, and gays.

But no doubt the greatest inspiration comes from inroads being plowed into Constitutionally-protected legal rights. Here prosecutorial rampage dwarfs police malfeasance: one of eleven Americans is under some form of “correctional restraint” (nearly 1.5 million of them in penitentiaries). One third of Black men in their twenties are in prison or on probation or parole—and in the next several years it “will go to half” the members of that population group, according to Princeton

professor John DiIulio, Jr. Sixty-two percent of federal prisoners are jailed under drug offenses.

Moreover, greater than 80% of inmates have been incarcerated without benefit of a trial, as the virtual absence of counsel (public defense lawyers’ cases exceed one thousand per attorney) and threats of draconian punishment make “plea-bargains” the rule, and lengthy pretrial detentions common.

Inside

Methuselian sentences are mandated by law regardless of situation (the first person given a life sentence under California’s “three strikes and you’re out” law was a man stealing food for his family).

Rapes and gangs are encouraged inside the Big House, while inmate education and recreation programs are eliminated. And a construction of totalitarian prisons-within-prisons is arguably the country’s greatest growth industry.

Government killings are now running roughly one a week, and the pace is picking up. Over three thousand inmates await execution—including children, women the insane, and the retarded. (Recall that then-governor Clinton interrupted his presidential campaign to preside over the execution of a man so brain-damaged that he asked to save his final meal’s desert “for later.”)

Outside

Legislators rush to eliminate rights of appeal, while standards of evidence plummet.

(Girvies David was executed here May 17 on a conviction won by a confession “penned with his own hand”—while the jury was prevented from knowing he could neither read nor write.)

Bank accounts, houses, cars and farms are seized from citizens without criminal charges being filed—let alone convictions won—under an “anti-drug” ill-gotten-gains statute. And Constitutional guarantees against self-incrimination and warrantless searches are voided as mandated urine drug tests threaten millions with job termination and a likely future of beggary.

Yet it’s impossible to find a single national politician standing against this chilling erosion of Constitutional rights. It’s all knees and elbows in the fight to pose as guardian of public order.

And so the “war against crime” rolls on.

A Nation Divided

But then not all the news is grim. After all, Washington opposition to democratic-rights is hardly unprecedented. Recall that the original Constitution was so patently anti-democratic that its presentation was met by two years of widespread public rebellion powerful enough to compel its original plutocratic authors to add 10 amendments.

It’s only these amendments—penned by the plebeian mobs’ revolutionary leaders and dubbed by them “The Bill of Rights”—that American democracy was codified: Freedom of speech, assembly, and religion; guarantees of jury trials, legal representation, and the right to face one’s accuser; prohibition of self-incrimination, warrantless searches, and cruel and unusual punishment; and the brilliant sweeping coda that any power not specifically granted to the government reverts to the people.

It’s the still-living continuity of this division between plutocrats and plebeians—demonstrated in two centuries of see-saw battles over Constitutional rights (including a civil war)—that is often missed both here and abroad. In fact, the U.S.—where over 80% of wealth is held by 2% of the population—is profoundly divided.

And grievous setbacks notwithstanding, there’s no evidence that the plebeian democratic flame is doused. True, class-based left/right polarization has deepened. But even the much later gains of the 1930’s—unionization of basic industry, unemployment insurance, and Social Security—have yet to be extinguished.

Oops

Meanwhile Washington itself, perhaps lost in a post-Cold War triumphalist reverie, appears to have forgotten the still unvanquished as well.



Far?

What's really new here is not police crimes, but the public opposition to them. "Our prosecutors now have to begin their cases defending the cops," one Brooklyn Assistant Attorney told the 25 September *New York Times*. "Prosecutors have to bring the jury around to the opinion that cops aren't lying. That's how much the landscape has changed."

Then there's the riots, both real and threatened in L.A.; the acquittals of Simpson, King, and Weaver and the massive damage awards handed down by juries to the latter two; the concession of Congressional hearings on Waco, Idaho, and Tennessee "incidents"; the stay of execution granted to Black journalist Mumia Abu Jamal; and the very publicity won by revelation of police crimes.

Payback

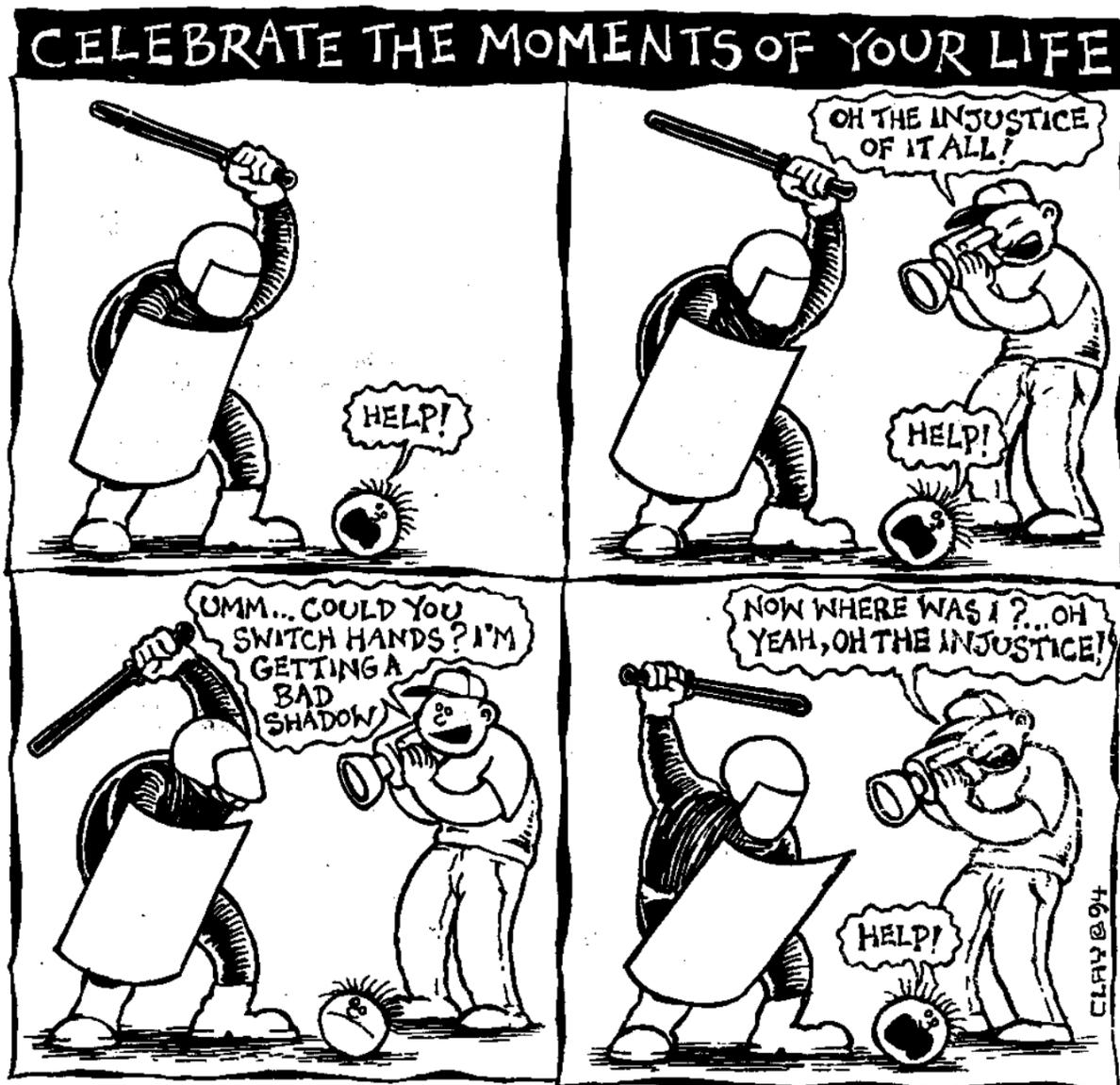
Might these be signs that the war on democratic rights has begun to go too far? An understanding of American history suggests the possibility.

And the emergence of a popular movement against Abu Jamal's execution--the first anti capital punishment ground swell since 1957--strikes a special note, reminding that every U.S. radicalization this century began with protests against repression.

Yet, as another presidential campaign opens, no retreat by the rulers is in the offing as politicians of both parties strive to "outflank" the openly fascist candidacy of Patrick Buchanan.

What's left is the prospect of collision, as today's plebeian victims of the atavistic Tory "war on crime" face the wisdom of Benjamin Franklin's old words: "We must all hang together, or surely we will hang separately."

--Steve Eckhardt (sgoreck@nwu.edu) is a Chicago-based freelance writer.



Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1994 Clay Butler

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Utah Phillips, thanks for the fun . . .

Over the years some of us have had the pleasure to share the stories, music and presence of "Utah" Phillips. A genuine character, activist, collector of left and labor lore and first-class story-teller, Utah was born to labor organizers in Ohio, grew up in Utah, was disillusioned by his Korean war experience and found himself with Catholic Worker Ammon Hennacy and "Joe Hill House" in Salt Lake in the 1960s. After running for U.S. Senate on the "Peace & Freedom" ticket in Utah in 1968, he lost his job at the state archives and headed east to try out performing. Utah appeared at ISU's New Friends of Old Time Music frequently in the 70s and has been through Bloomington-Normal occasionally through the 80s and 90s, most recently last spring.

Utah sadly sent out a letter recently, announcing no more touring because of a heart attack (which he didn't know he had), or as he

wrote, "It must have been some lousy day, to miss a heart attack." To preserve and maintain his health he's quit the road, so they'll be no live performances with his puns, western tall tales and pointed commentary about life in these United States. At Leftie Follies and some other community events the hat was passed to help Utah defray his medical expenses, which was greatly appreciated — thanks to all those generous folks who donated.

Hopefully Utah will find a new way to share his talents and insights, and is exploring radio while he recovers. One thing which resonates is this following segment from his letter, with his description of the community he found in the folk music world. It's got great truth to it and a good reflection we should ponder with on whatever communities we are circulating in today:

"I'm leaving a trade which I love very much. When I left Utah over 25 years ago, I had only

a slim hold on what folk music was, \$75 in my pocket, a head full of songs and stories, and no prospects. When I landed at Caffe Lena in Saratoga Springs, NY, I found gradually that I had stumbled into a family that was in fact transcontinental. I found great numbers of people who, as part of their pattern of social responsibility, were committed to the task of making sure that folk music existed in their communities. I found singer-circles, camp-outs, picnics, concert programs, festivals great and small, celebrating a common heritage of song. And I found my community, singers and makers of songs, plying the axis from San Diego Folk Heritage to the Denver Folklore Center to the Ark in Ann Arbor to Lena's and beyond, eking out a bare living sharing what we had together, but most of all, in each other's company. A family behaving like a family — good, bad, every shade in between. But mostly of all a community of sentiment in which people authentically cared for each other. Listen. For 25 years now I have been part of a family which has given me a living — not a killing, but a living — a trade without bosses where I felt partners with those working in organized folk music, a trade in which I could own what I do, make all the creative decisions, be free to say and sing whatever I chose to, courting criticism from peers and loving friends. Front porch, kitchen, back yard, drunk and sober, young and old, coast-to-coast folk music, a world in which I discovered that I don't need power, wealth or fame. I need friends. And that's what I found and still find. You folkies out there! Comrades! We've created together a whole small world of song, story, travel, love and food, face to face, in every corner of the land, mutually supportive and happening at a sub-industrial level, below the level of media notice. Hooray for us! Who needs the "entertainment" industry? Who needs mass media? Small is beautiful! To hell with the mainstream. It's polluted. What purifies the mainstream? The little tributaries up in the wilderness where the pure water flows. Better to be lost in the tributaries known to a few than mired in greed. Please. Don't give our world up. It needs to grow, yes — but subtly, out, through, under, quietly, like water eroding stone, subversive, alive, happy.

Thanks Utah. If you want to drop him a line send to PO Box 1235, Nevada City, CA 95959, and wish him a get well. I'm sure he'd love to hear from folks these days. If not, just reflect on the wisdom in the words above, and the challenge of building authentic community.



U. UTAH PHILLIPS

Photo by: Hank Meals



Get Ready

Bloomington's lesbian/gay/bisexual community has arrived and it's ready to live large

On November 28, the Human Rights Commission for the City of Bloomington voted in favor of the new city ordinance that would, among other things, make it illegal to dismiss anyone from his/her job or deny him/her housing on the grounds of sexual orientation. The Commission has recommended that the Bloomington City Council adopt the new Human Rights Ordinance.

Let the games begin

As most residents of Bloomington-Normal know, this ordinance has proved nothing if not controversial, and The Pantagraph's editorial pages, over the last few weeks, have shown just how ugly the opposition's rhetoric can get.

The Bloomington City Council will formally review the measure, most likely during its January 22 session. In the meantime, Bloomington's lesbian, gay, and bisexual community refuses to sit on its collective thumb and wait to see what happens six weeks from now.

Toto, I don't think we're in Kansas any more

On Sunday, November 19, local activists called an open meeting for members of that community, along their friends and allies, to be held at The Bistro in downtown Bloomington. I don't know about anyone else, but I was floored by the response. There were at least 85 people gathered by the time I got there, just a few minutes after the meeting was supposed to

start. Some participants had come from as far away as Chicago to be at The Bistro at 5:00 p.m. on a Sunday afternoon. Not bad for our stodgy little Straight Farm company town, nestled snugly in the corn fields.

Although the meeting had been organized quickly, Chris Dale, as one of the principal architects for this new activist forum, clearly knew--and knows--how to go about getting things done. Fielding questions and guiding debate in a low-key, but productive way, Mr. Dale encouraged some truly valuable discourse. But, as we all know, discourse is cheap, and activism does not pay a living wage.

Lead, follow, or get the hell out of the way

Everyone who attended the meeting clearly intends to be part of the solution for entrenched homophobia and discrimination, and from what Mr. Dale told me in our interview last Monday, many of those people are willing to put up so they can't be told to shut up.

In addition to forming a PAC to campaign for adoption of the new Human Rights Ordinance--an absolute priority--Mr. Dale and other community activists have drawn up a daunting agenda. Among other things, the various committees that were formed on November 19 will start fundraising and petition drives to support the ordinance, not to mention counteracting the Bloomington-based Illinois Christian Coalition's just-this-side of-

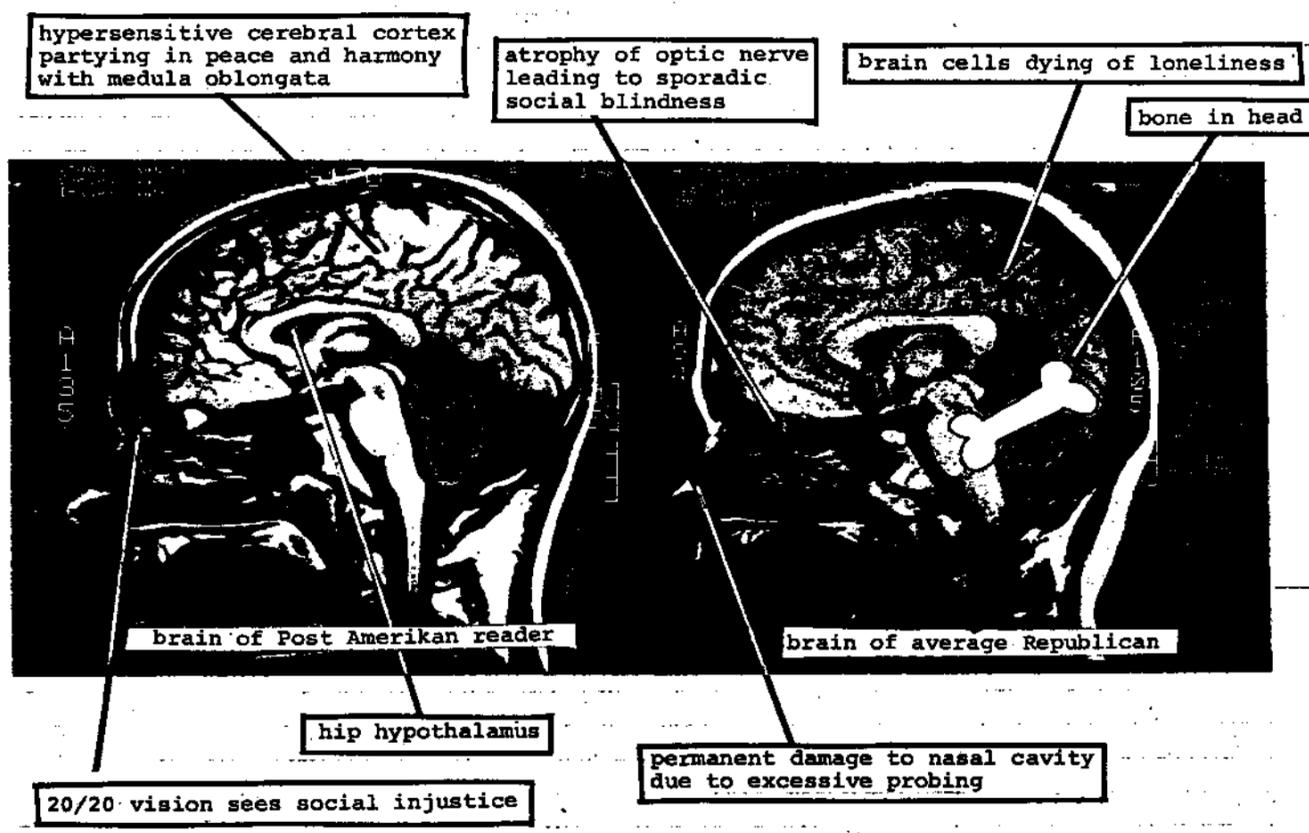
hysterical propaganda and misinformation. Mr. Dale tells me he and the other PAC members have raised about \$300, but clearly they'll need to raise more.

How to add some zing to family gatherings this holiday season

They are also forming support groups for same-sex couples, and groups for gay, lesbian, and bisexual parents. Additionally, the group will begin looking for space to house a community center, a resource that would provide more social outlets for the community, and serve as a conduit through which to educate the straight community. P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) is currently forming a Bloomington-Normal chapter.

If you need any further information, and/or wish to volunteer your time and/or your money, you can call 309/830-2521, or write to P. O. Box 5048, Bloomington, IL 61701-5048.

--Dr. Attitude



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