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POST AMERICAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 26

50¢

NUMBER 5

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1997

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BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 26

NUMBER 5

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1997

In this Issue:

Page 2--The usual
 Page 3-Blue Moon Coffeehouse
 Page 4-Community News
 Page 5-Notes from the land of anti-fat
 Page 6-The elephants are mad!
 Pages 7 & 8-Voice for Choice News
 Page 9-Rants & raves from Matt & Kaz
 Pages 10-11-Marcee Murray's article
 Pages 12-13-Mental Illness Awareness
 Page 14-15-Poetry Pages

Page 16-Area residents protest stealth bomber at airshow
 Page 17-Gay, lesbian & bisexual news
 Pages 18-19-Words from behind the wall
 Pages 20-21-Welcome to Sprawlmart
 Page 22-Underground Barfly
 Page 23-The good, the bad & the ugly
 Pages 24-25-Anti-nuclear civil disobedience
 Page 26-Eckhardt on Algeria
 Page 27-Gregg Brown's piece/peace

About us

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

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

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

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

Subscriptions

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

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

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

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Nov 15

Good numbers

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



Community News

Blue Moon Coffeehouse Fall Semester 1997



October 4

Jon Carmen comes to The Blue Moon Coffeehouse direct from Boston, MA where he is a part of the famed Cambridge music scene. In those bustling musical environs, Jon has had the opportunity to learn from the masters and to nurture his muse while developing his finger picking style of acoustic guitar. Jon has a musical sound that defies comparison, a deep voice, deft fingers and a poetic insight. Also making her Blue Moon debut, **Stolie** will open for Jon Carmen. Stolie is an IWU student who began performing for the public about a year and a half ago. She is a passionate singer-songwriter who has charmed campus and local audiences at a variety of local venues.

October 10

Susan Werner will bring to The Blue Moon Coffeehouse her remarkable ability with both piano and guitar. Those talents coupled with a songwriting language all her own and a sure command of the stage combine to make her one of the most riveting performers on the acoustic circuit. Her songs range from pop/rock to folk ballads to cabaret, but all share a precision of language and mastery of detail that single her out on the acoustic scene.

October 24

Sons of the Never Wrong return to The Blue Moon in a special Homecoming concert that will be filled with magic and wonder. Sons of the Never Wrong is a Chicago acoustic trio that has burst upon the Chicago music scene and beyond...described as "two women and a boy," this trio delivers three-part harmony on top of witty whimsical songs that spring from a tradition you'd swear you've heard, but just can't place. This is visionary, serious and searingly joyous music--while much of it concerns pain and betrayal, the overall effect is uplifting. Professional illusionist Christopher Carter, an IWU alum, will open for the Sons of the Never Wrong.

November 1

Sonia Rutstein of disappear fear returns with a new solo acoustic CD to play a solo show at The Blue Moon Coffeehouse. Fans of the band are making plans to travel to IWU to catch this amazing singer-songwriter in a one-of-a-kind solo gig. Sonia writes with intensity and to-the-bone honesty while delivering her songs with both electric and acoustic guitars, a "dylan-esque" harmonica and a big voice that rocks the house.

November 22

Christine Lavin is a highly acclaimed singer-songwriter who is a familiar presence and an extremely popular artist on the New England coffeehouse circuit. She is the founding mother of the ensemble, The Four

Bitchin' Babes as well as the organizer of the songwriters' retreat on Martha's Vineyard. Long at the top of her field as a solo performer, Christine has gone a long way to boost the morale, if not the careers of many other musicians.

December 5

Eddie from Ohio, our favorite touring maniacs, return to close out the Fall Season. These musical nomads can be found on the road about 20 days of the month and loving it! The group has been phenomenally successful over the short five years they've been together. While their musical style is diverse--from folk to rock to calypso--one constant is the positive attitude--"they don't do angst." Eddie from Ohio has instrumentation that crosses the musical spectrum, a superb flair for cliché-free melodies and the stunning voice of Julie Murphy.

All shows will take place at the Illinois Wesleyan student union, located on the west side of the Quad. Please refer to the map in your local telephone directory for directions. All shows are free and open to the public. An ASL signer will be present at each show.

For more information about shows, call the Blue Moon Concert Infoline at (309) 556-3815. To join the mailing list or send a comment, e-mail us at: bluemoon@titan.iwu.edu

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HIV/AIDS support group

The McLean County AIDS Task Force, serving both McLean and Livingston Counties, has resumed its "support group meeting for families, friends, caregivers and significant others of persons with HIV/AIDS," with the next meeting on October 9 at the Connections Community Center, 313 N. Main Street in downtown Bloomington. The group meets from 7:30-9:00 pm on the second Thursday of each month. In October the discussion will include issues such as "Coping with misdirected anger," as well as other topics of interest to those attending.

This support group is provided as a free service to the community by the McLean County AIDS task Force and is open to anyone who has a family member or friend with HIV or AIDS. Your confidentiality will be respected and membership in the Task Force is not a requirement to participate. Call (309)827-AIDS for information on this group or other activities of the Task Force.

Exhibit "A"

University Galleries is pleased to announce the opening of Exhibit "A" on October 2, 1997. This ten-person exhibition features photography, installation, sculpture, printmaking, video and film addressing issues of evidence and the human body. There will be an opening reception on October 2, 1997 @ 7:00 pm featuring a presentation by New York artist/photographer Robert Flynt. He will trace his evolution of representing the body starting with early explorations focusing on mapping human anatomy through recent series working with "traditional" masculine vocabularies. The exhibition continues through November 2, 1997. This exhibition is partially sponsored by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

Exhibit "A" dissects our notions of evidence through explorations into the human form. The artists' examinations of the body and its surroundings demonstrate how sexuality, disease, identity, place and circumstance shape the force and meaning of evidence. The impact of AIDS on the human psyche; the psychological aftermath of the Holocaust; the nature of truth, testimonials, and crime scene evidence; and our fascination with tourist "expeditions" are a few of the many areas of investigation for the artists featured in Exhibit "A": Karen Baldner, Tseng Kwong Chi, Lisa

Erdman, Robert Farber, Robert Flynt & Chris Packard, John Ford, Ron Grenko, Carol Irving and John Schlesinger.

Exhibit "A" has been organized in conjunction with an annual interdisciplinary conference entitled Border Subjects 2: Bodies of Evidence. As the name implies, the conference also examines issues relating the human body and evidence. Over 35 presentations will be given by speakers from throughout the country. Border Subjects 2: Bodies of Evidence will be held at University Galleries on October 2, 3 and 4, 1997.

In addition to the opening reception and Border Subjects conference, the galleries and the McLean County AIDS Task Force will host HIV & the Arts Panel Discussion on October 28, 1997 @ 7:00pm. The discussion will focus on the disastrous impact HIV has had on the arts.

University Galleries is located at 110 Center for the Visual Arts on the Illinois State University campus. Parking is available in the gravel lot off of University Avenue in spaces marked Gallery Parking. Gallery hours are Tuesday 9:30 am - 9:00 pm, Wednesday through Friday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm and Saturday, Sunday, Monday 12:00 4:00 pm. For more information contact Jeanne Luther at 309.438.5487.



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OUT Magazine feature writer to speak in Bloomington

November 20 is the date that Michelangelo Signorile, feature writer for *OUT Magazine*, will make two appearances "right here" in Bloomington. Exact details are still being worked out, but he will be doing a book signing at Once Upon A Time Alternative Books and Gifts, and speaking at Connections Community Center. There may be a small fee or requested donation for his speech.

His latest book is *Life Outside--the Signorile Report on gay Men: Sex, Drugs, Muscles, and the Passages of Life*. Signorile gives outstanding solutions to some of the issues related to the new wave of HIV infections, the rise of unsafe behaviors, and current attitudes. He even mentions Bloomington in his book as an example of how far a small town can go in redefining what it means to be gay.

His other books are *Outing Yourself* and *Queer in America*. Find out why HIV-prevention education efforts in our community are right on track, where we can be going, and how you can become a part of the process, as well as many other things. Show Michelangelo Signorile how strong we in this community really are in numbers, ideas and advocacy.

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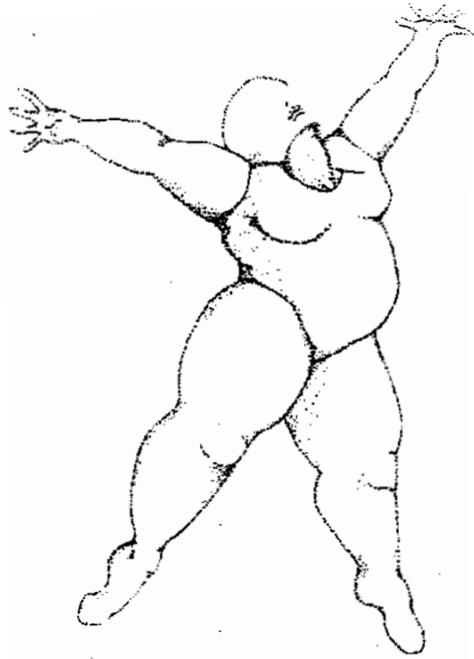
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Notes from the Land of Anti-fat



Redux reduxed

The wheel of fortune spins dizzily in the Land of Anti-fat.

One week you're on top of the world with a billion dollar drug that is on the minds of every weight phobic adult in America; next week, you've got warehouses full of pharmaceuticals that only the very desperate (or the evening news ignorant) want. Shall we all take a moment to feel sorry for the makers of Redux?

With the evidence mounting on the negative effects of Redux and Fen-Phen, Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, manufacturers of the heart-damaging diet drugs have withdrawn them from the market. This noble concern for the public good followed the state of Florida's ban on Fen-Phen and similar combo drugs - not to mention a lawsuit against the drug manufacturers and the FDA by a size-acceptance coalition concerned with its unregulated distribution. With mounting negative publicity, the diet community has quickly retreated from its support of this disastrous drug therapy in favor of *New and Different!* equally disastrous drug therapies.

Currently being peddled by NutraSystems: a Prozac combo that supposedly affects the appetite centers of the brain much the same as Redux did. Gives a new meaning to the phrase Prozac Nation. One thing about that fast-spinning wheel: soon as one form of diet therapy gets discredited, there are dozens ready to take its place.

Even with the writing on the wall for Fen-Phen and Redux, some doctors have continued to defend the drugs, stating that the risks (pulmonary hypertension, heart valve damage and possible psychosis) are outweighed by the dangers of being "morbidly obese." Never mind the fact that many of the adults given scrips were many pounds short of being "morbidly obese." What's important here is the *illusion* of pursuing a healthy course of life. Even if it

More than 18 million prescriptions for Redux and Fen-Phen were written over the last year.

Okay, so what you have is a portion of the medical community saying that fat is so abhorrent that it's worth risking your life to get rid of it. Sound like an invitation to eating disorders?

If not, then let's consider this tidbit: according to a story in the Charlotte Sun Herald, recent deaths from liposuction have begun to be reported. Seems the procedure of fat sucking - also poorly overseen by the medical community - is being done by an increasing number of practitioners with limited experience. The number of snafus is growing: death by anesthesia, fluid overload, cardiac arrest and other medical complications. Since liposuction is considered outpatient surgery that doesn't even have to be performed in the hospital, any old hack can perform it in their office. Three recent deaths from the surgery have been reported in the state of California - where everyone knows it doesn't matter if you're dead as long as you Look Good.

Liposuction, lest we forget, is only being promoted as cosmetic surgery - not the last-ditch attempt at saving some poor "morbidly obese" shlub's life. Yet the same slipshod practices that gave us an ill-advised widespread drug therapy can be seen in a mounting death toll from mere cosmetic surgery. There's *beaucoup* bucks to be made in the Land of Anti-Fat, lots of money for the opportunistic and sloppy.

When the National Institute of Health officially designated obesity a "killer disease," it opened the doors for all manner of slash-and-burn approaches. As the current rush to promote Prozac shows, there is no shortage of practitioners ready to promote ill-tested therapies on a patient base that is already designated fatally ill. So a few fat adults die? Well, wouldn't they have kicked off anyway, being so fat?

When it comes to matters of accountability, the diet industry is still sitting where the tobacco industry perched for so many years: blame the victim. Blame them for their diet failures; blame them for their own demise. In such a climate, is it any wonder we've got doctors still trying to defend a therapy that loses credibility daily?

From the very start, size acceptance advocates had been questioning the Food and Drug Administration's refusal to examine Redux too closely. Look at the FDA's track record on prescription diet medications, and you've almost got to wonder why the tobacco industry has fought being overseen by the federal agency for so long. Maybe the cig peddlers should take a cue from its own history - when smoking was sold to women as a diet aid.

What's a little lung cancer when compared to the killer disease of obesity?

Life is full of tradeoffs in the Land of Anti-fat.

--Bill Sherman

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What's really big and really angry?

The elephants are mad, and they're just not going to take it any more.

Three times this summer, a "circus elephant" has run amok and hurt her captors. In New York, an elephant named Flora crushed the skull of a Moscow Circus interpreter minutes before a planned appearance on the *Live with Regis and Kathy Lee* show. In Honolulu, a 21-year-old African elephant named Tyke deliberately trampled her trainer to death and injured a dozen spectators as she tore out of the Circus International tent. She was shot dead in the street. It was the second elephant attack at that circus in a week.

Last summer, Janet, an old elephant who had been kept on repeated doses of drugs to calm her down, tore out of the Great American Circus ring in Florida, carrying a box full of children on her back, and was shot 47 times by an off-duty police officer before she died. These spectacularly hideous attacks made headlines; many others did not. Elephant rebellions are becoming routine.

Circus proprietors have been too busy counting out their money to do more than slug or drug uppity elephants. Now the pachyderms' polite protestations have turned nasty. How much human blood and misery will mingle with that of the elephants before their struggle for freedom is successful?

Sound farfetched? Consider this. Elephants have the largest brains of any mammal on the face of the Earth. They are creative, altruistic and kind. Imagine what it must be like for them to be told what to do, courtesy of a bullhook, at every moment of their lives. They live more than 70 years in their homelands, but their average life in captivity is reduced to 14 years; because of stress, traveling in boxcars and being stabled in damp basements, many captive elephants have arthritis, lame legs and tuberculosis.

Left to their own devices in their homelands, elephants are highly social beings who enjoy extended family relationships. Aunts baby-sit; mothers teach junior life skills such as how to use different kinds of leaves and mud to ward off sunburn and insect bites; babies play together under watchful eyes; love-making is



gentle and complex; and elephant relatives mourn their dead. They draw pictures in the dirt with twigs and rocks. In captivity, elephants are deprived of all such experiences. Life under the big top means: Pay attention to your trainers; feel the bite of their implements in your flesh; don't stumble or falter even if you feel tired or ill; obey, obey, obey. It means leg chains between acts, the loss of all comfort and warmth from your father and mother, no long-term friends.

Behaviorists tell us that elephants can and do cry from loss of social interaction and from physical abuse. Yes, cry. If you wonder how these magnificent beings keep from going mad--waiting in line night after night, eyes riveted on the person with the metal hook, ready to circle to the music in their beaded headdresses--perhaps the answer is, they don't.

Rani was the first captive elephant I ever met. Every single day for many years she stood outside the Asoka Hotel in New Delhi, India, from sunrise to late at night, waiting to be prodded into action whenever a tourist fancied a ride. She wore a jewel-encrusted cloth mantle over her head, and her brown and pink skin was painted with an intricate pattern of paisley and dots.

When I first saw Rani I couldn't have been much taller than her knee, but she was extremely gentle with me even when she could see that her handler, Ram, had succumbed to the midday heat and conked out under a bush. She allowed me to hang onto her legs and would gently blow air into my hair and down my neck to cool me in the blistering heat or hold my wrist in her trunk and sway gently back and forth.

If business was slow, Ram would dig the bullhook into Rani's neck, just behind her ear, to make her kneel. Then he would hoist me into the pretty wooden howdah on her back. I would kick my legs over the edge of the little box as Rani lurched up and forward, then lumbered slowly down the hotel driveway and into the street. I remember that the air was choked with the fumes of unfiltered fuel from the hundreds of little putt-putt motorcycle cabs and decorated trucks fighting it out on the street. Even high up on Rani's back, I could feel the carbon particles in my throat. I didn't think how much worse it must have been for her.



In fact, I didn't think about the quality of her life at all, until one day when I asked Ram where Rani had come from, and he explained that young elephants are taken from their families and "broken." He described how they must be chained and beaten until they learn to listen and behave. Several years ago, a *National Geographic* television special about elephants in the wild and in servitude showed men carrying out exactly that barbaric and inhumane system.

Rani died, who knows of what, long before I had learned that elephant calves in the wild, like orca infants, stay at their mothers' sides for a decade or longer; that elephants grieve and mourn, cradling their lost relatives' skulls in their trunks and swaying back and forth; that they use tools as fly swatters, to sweep paths, even to draw pictures in the dirt and scratch themselves in inaccessible places; that they communicate subsonically at frequencies so low that humans cannot detect them without sophisticated equipment.

There are 2,000 to 3,000 "Ranis" held captive in the beast wagons of circuses and in private collections. Sometimes they stop behaving like wind-up toys and crush the bones and breath out of a keeper, make a break for it, go berserk, run amok. Most simply endure. Their spirits were broken during capture and, later, God help them, when they were trained for the ring. Otherwise they would all use their immense strength to fight back against the human hand of tyranny. They would refuse to be kept chained between performances like coats on a rack, refuse to be backed up ramps into railroad cars and into trailers like so many cars being parked out of the way.

In July 1992 it became a criminal offense punishable by a fine of \$10,000 to confine elephants, big cats and, in most cases, primates in circuses visiting the Australian Capital Territory. Seven municipalities in Western Australia have banned animal circuses from using government land. Animal acts have also been banned or restricted in other countries, including Sweden, Denmark and United Kingdom. Exhibits like Jacques Cousteau's *Zoo 2000* are designed so that human beings can "visit" the ocean floor to mingle with dolphins or sit among the mountain gorillas via interactive video. The Latest Shows on Earth, like the Cirque du Soleil, the Pickle Family Circus and the European Jubilee Circus, feature trapeze artists, trick cyclists, jugglers, clowns, acrobats, wire-walkers and strong men: willing performers who celebrate imagination, coordination, participation and spectacle while leaving the animals in peace.

What are we waiting for before we grant the elephants the freedom we have taken from them? Perhaps the tragedies of this month will be lesson enough for us to demand that our legislators ban captive animal performances and to redirect our children's attention to other entertainments that avoid exploitation. As a society which prides itself on being civilized, we would be far richer for the "loss" of captive beasts.

--by Ingrid E. Newkirk



News from Voice for Choice



Pro-Choice candidates

As the primary season draws near it is time to begin learning about the candidates. Here's the first installment of info we have to share:

Governor: Republican - George Ryan - anti-choice, miserable voting record on women's Rights while in Illinois House

Republican - Chad Kopey - makes George Ryan look like a feminist - anti-Choice, anti-gun control, pro-Christian Coalition, the man has some very unique ideas.

Democrat - Glen Poshard - the current Congressman is anti-choice, anti-gun control, anti-family Planning, his voting record backs this up along with a poor 50% rating on Labor issues.

Democrat - John Schmidt - pro-choice, supports gun control, supported toughening domestic violence laws while working in Justice Dept.

U.S. Senate Democrat - Carol Moseley Braun - Braun is pro-choice, supported the Brady Bill has a good voting record on agricultural issues and women's health care as well as introducing legislation to insure public school facilities are safe. Unfortunately her Office seems unorganized and her personal life has drawn much negative publicity.

No Republican candidate has announced a run for this seat. Attorney General Jim Ryan was rumored to be eyeing the post - Ryan is anti-choice but strong on domestic violence issues. Also considering the Senate is Comptroller Lolita Deidrickson - she is strongly pro-choice, and has a very moderate to liberal voting record in the Illinois House on social issues. If Lolita runs against Braun the good news is that either way we win.

In our next edition we will tell you more about the candidates for office. Look for more details in November.

Planned Parenthood names interim director

Karla Peterson has been named as interim president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois, which is based in Champaign and covers 35 counties, including McLean. Peterson began volunteering at Planned Parenthood in Decatur in the early 1970s because the agency "seemed committed to solid values, important to Americans." The Decatur Planned Parenthood office hired her in 1976.

Peterson said her faith in the agency remains as strong as when she first entered it. "I'm well grounded in the belief that what we provide is absolutely necessary."

Peterson is not a candidate to become permanent president of the region. The board of directors hopes to pick a new president by January 1, following a national search. Voice for Choice welcomes Karla Peterson to PPECI.

Day of Conscience to end sweatshops

The National Labor Committee, People of Faith Network, the United Methodist Church Women's Division and UNITE, the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, are calling for a Day of Conscience to end Sweatshop Abuses on October 4.

This day of nationwide mobilization and educational outreach will come one month before the final report of President Clinton's Apparel Industry Task Force is scheduled to be released. Anti-Sweatshop organizers hope that the October 4 festivities will influence the Task Force and initiate a "Holiday Season of Conscience" where informed consumers can reward companies that have signed on to the Task Force's Accord to Address Sweatshop Abuses and punish companies that have not. Most sweatshop workers are women and many are underpaid and work in unsafe conditions. Contact Maggie Poe or the National Labor Committee at (212) 242-3002 to receive a campaign packet including a petition and ideas for action.

Source: Feminist Majority Report

Upcoming events

October 7 Rush to the Left
Want to get involved but aren't sure which group to join? Come to Rush to The Left and meets representatives from many liberal organizations.
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. - tentatively scheduled for Bone Student Center.
Call 828-3108 for more info.

October 16 Planned Parenthood Annual Meeting
Meet Gloria Feldt, President of Planned Parenthood Federation
Call Planned Parenthood for more details.

Saturday, Nov. 1 Lefty Follies Variety Show - benefit for Voice for Choice
7:00 p.m., Unitarian Church, 1613 E. Emerson, Bloomington
Tickets \$5.00

The Seventh Annual Lefty Follies Variety Show & Costume Ball

A benefit for the McLean County Voice for Choice is going to be held on Saturday, November 1 at the Unitarian Church, 1613 E. Emerson St., Bloomington

Doors open at 6:45, show begins at 7:00 p.m.
Costume ball begins at 8:30 p.m. until midnight.

Admission is \$5.00 per person, \$3.00 for seniors and children under 11

Child care available from 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m., \$3.00 per child

Tickets are available in advance from Voice for Choice or at the door.

Don't miss this evening of talent and humor.

Cont. on next page

Rape Crisis Center of McLean County

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

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

If you want to talk to one of us
Call PATH 827-4005

and ask for the
RAPE CRISIS CENTER



Voice for Choice Cont.

Are women's lives worth a gallon of oil?

Women in Afghanistan, who are prohibited by the Taliban army from going to school, leaving their homes without a close male relative, earning money, and are beaten for not wearing the head-to-toe "burqa," may be condemned to permanent gender apartheid if international oil and gas companies make a deal with the Taliban.

Oil and gas companies, including Unocal of California, have welcomed the so-called "stability" brought by the Taliban, which took over Kabul, the Afghan capital, in September 1996. For the past few decades a number of rival factions have thrown Afghanistan into chaos with their fighting. Bidas International of Argentina, Delta of Saudi Arabia and Unocal are bidding to build a pipeline from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan. Mario Lopez Olaciregui, managing director of Bidas, said he is not concerned about the Taliban's human rights violations "We are just an oil and gas company," he said. "We are not bothered by human rights or politics."

Drugs also play a role in the Taliban's power. According to the United Nations, Afghanistan is one of the world's top producers of opiates, and 90 - 95% of the opium poppy areas are controlled by the Taliban, leading to speculation that the Taliban uses drug money to buy weapons.

Women are 65 - 75% of the Afghan population because so many men have been killed during the decades of civil war and Soviet occupation. There are currently an estimated 60,000 widows in Kabul, most with children to support, out of a total population of one million. Prohibiting

women from working has impoverished tens of thousands of families and has hurt boys' education as well, because most teachers were women. In addition, there are 50,000 to 60,000 street children in Kabul according to Aashiyana, a Swiss charity that provides education, hygiene and classes for 600 street children.

The Taliban claims they are following Islamic doctrine in prohibiting women from working and going to school, but many Islamic scholars have said the group has a misguided view of Islam, according to Zeibu Shorish Shamley, chair of the Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan. "Islam dictates that education is mandatory for both males and females," said Shamley.

To day only two countries have recognized the Taliban government, Saudi Arabia, which provides funding to the group, and Pakistan, which provides military training. Pakistani ambassador Aziz Khan said the Taliban could bring "peace" so that oil and gas pipelines could be laid. Khan urged other countries to recognize Taliban rule. Both Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are allies of the U.S.

Women who protest their situation are beaten and killed, including 150 women who were beaten with chains and whips for peacefully asking that the women's bathhouses be opened again. Women have been shot at for leaving their homes without a male family member to seek medical care for themselves and their children. Even women doctors and nurses, who received permission from the Taliban to work, have been harassed and beaten, as have women workers with international relief organizations such as CARE.

The Taliban has also imposed harsh rules on men, who must wear beards and who are forced to pray at a mosque five times a day. Ethnic minorities, artists, teachers, and doctors are also subject to harassment, beatings and imprisonment.

To receive more information about how you can take action to help free women in Afghan, send an e-mail message to Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan at: Zieba @ aol.com.

Source: *Feminist Majority Report*

Chenoweth introduces bill to give guns back to batterers

Claiming concern for domestic violence victims, right wing Republican Rep. Helen Chenoweth (Idaho) introduced a bill that would repeal the Domestic Violence Gun Ban, passed last fall.

The Domestic Violence Gun Ban law is one of the toughest laws protecting victims of domestic violence. It prohibits anyone convicted of a domestic violence misdemeanor from owning a gun. The ban does not exempt police officers or members of the military. Studies show that weapons are used in thirty percent of domestic violence incidents, and that police families have a higher rate of domestic violence than the general public.

Opponents of the Gun Ban law have introduced numerous bills to exempt police officers; to eliminate retroactivity so the law would only apply to those convicted of domestic violence after September 28, 1996, the day the law passed; and now to repeal the law entirely.

Chenoweth claims support from "women's groups" for her bill, such as the right-wing groups Concerned Women for America, Independent Women's Forum, Women Against Gun Control, and Women's Firearms Alliance. Chenoweth and her supporters argue that the gun ban hinders domestic violence victims from owning guns to protect themselves, because a domestic violence victim may be convicted of a misdemeanor for striking her offender in defense.

Many women's groups, including Voice for Choice, are strongly in favor of keeping the Domestic Violence Gun Ban. Be sure to contact Rep. Tom Ewing and let him know how you feel about repeal of this law.

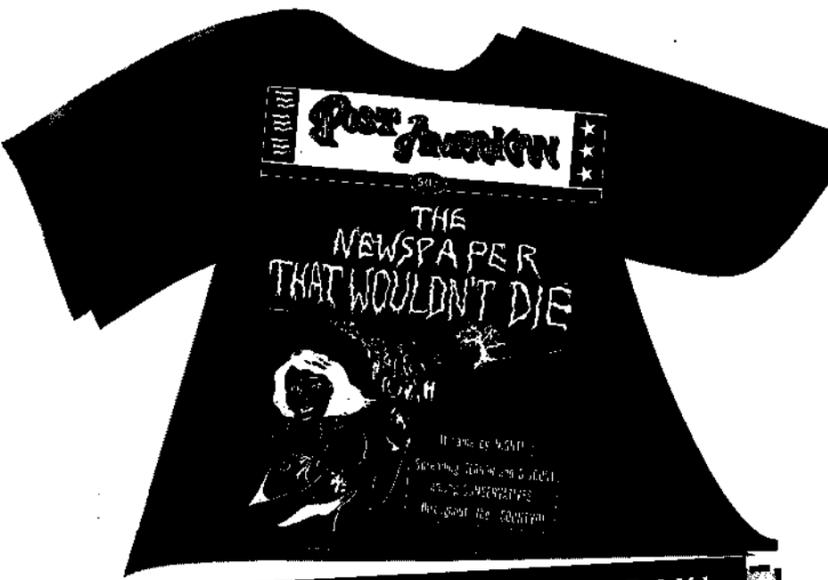
Source: *Feminist Majority Report*

Pollution and breast cancer

Much media attention has focused on genetic causes of breast cancer, and the best diet and exercise program to prevent breast cancer. Now Bella Abzug of the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) is calling for more information on environmental causes of breast cancer.

WEDO's Action for Cancer Prevention Campaign sponsored a world Conference on Breast Cancer in July. The one day conference was devoted to ecological links to breast cancer. For more information call WEDO at (212) 973-0325.

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The world according to Matt

One ring to bind them

In JRR Tolkein's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, a great war between good and evil sweeps Middle Earth. This conflict began in ages before the actual story takes place, and centers around (see the title...) some rings. It seems that each race, humans, elves, and dwarves, had a set of mystical rings that held the essence and magick of said race. Humans had 9 rings, dwarves had 7, and elves 5. At some point, however, the "Dark Lord Sauron" creates one ring more powerful than all the others, but, like its maker, is pure evil.

Although many metaphors for this symbolism have been drawn (monotheism...), there is one scene in book one that really got me thinking. The halfling (hobbit) who, by fate, comes upon the One Ring, offers it to the powerful, good wizard Gandalf. Gandalf refuses it dramatically and specifically mentions that he would attempt to use it for good and it cannot be used as such. Anything done with the power of that ring becomes corrupt (monotheism...?). This sentiment is later repeated by Galadriel, elfin princess, when the ring is offered to her. What this "one ring to rule them all, one ring to find them, one ring to bring them all and in the

darkness bind them" reminds me of, besides monotheism (although certain powers are linked), is money.

At first, every human being had the same basic needs: food, water, and shelter. In the natural balance of tribal living, these needs were met without destroying the environment. But then one master was imposed above all others: the need for money. Those with money can satisfy every need in gross excess, while those without starve in the streets. Through the mechanics of capitalism and technology, the population has suffered stricter controls and a more deadly excess is taken from nature while the imbalance of our society grows more obscene. Even if money is attempted to be used for good the dollars filter back into the economy and make the source stronger; and this demonic cycle keeps turning. To get food for the hungry or homes for the homeless some excess money must be produced. At some level the food or lumber is paid for, and this money gets sucked up by the mega-conglomerates or lobbying efforts that are anything but charitable. Even medicines and cures are left undeveloped if they aren't cost effective to distribute.

If our species is to survive we must recognize money for what it is and remember that it is not necessary. These are human-made controls that benefit a tiny fraction of humans at the expense of the rest of us and our world. Urban waste lands, toxic byproducts, forty-hour work weeks, destitution, the elite, technologic control, and mass destruction are not natural, and, if you look closely enough, are the end results of the essence of the One Ring: they are evil, and they are human-made. The tiny percentage of people who control the One Ring depend upon our complacency and their ability to control our choices with concepts they create. And anything done with this One Ring makes them stronger. If people can rise above their distractions, remember what's important, and find ways to sabotage the capitalistic economy by not participating, there can once again be enough for everyone.

--Matt Toczko

Kaz is not impressed

Hi kids!

Just called to share some thoughts and observations, and boy are we bitter!

Technology has always impressed me, but sometimes I think people go too far with it. The other day I was in a supermarket purchasing my usual bologna and bread and I witnessed a gentleman with a package of toilet paper, chatting on a cel phone. C'mon, is this guy so important that he cannot buy shit paper without corresponding on his mobile yup phone? Am I supposed to be in awe of this twit because he's sooo in demand he can't leave the house without a phone?

Same goes for those cheeses (usually on the parkway) on those car phones that can hold a conversation, but cannot distinguish a green light from a red light. Get off the phone and drive, motherfucker! You're not impressing me! I only wish I had more of a beater than I have so I could smash into them and say "Gee officer, they were on the phone and had no clue what was going on around them." Aah, it'd never work.

I know beepers have a lot of important uses, but does some 18 year old kid working at Hardee's really need one? I once worked with some kid with a beeper (our job was cleaning toilets so I'm sure he needed a beeper: Beep-beep-beep-beep-this toilet needs cleaned!). I promptly

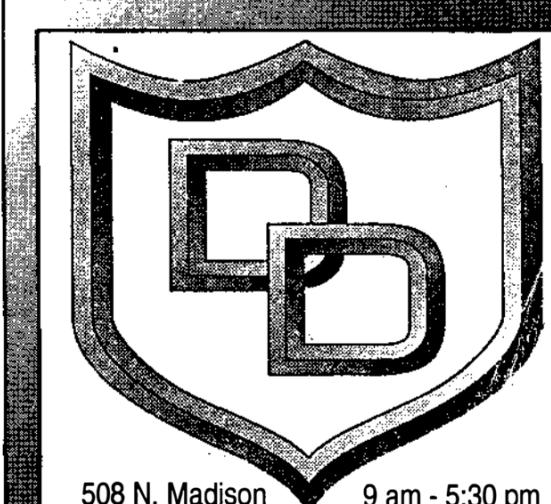
learned his beeper number, purchased a roll of quarters, and would "beep" him whenever I would see a pay phone. Sorry, it's just the mean streak in me. Trust me, this is all going somewhere.

Oh, another thing, a message to Mitsubishi workers: Change your clothes when you get off work! Nobody else runs around in their work uniforms! Once again, I am not impressed! You wearing your uniform out to a bar (to you) might say "I'm making money!" But to me it says "I don't bathe and change my clothes after a smelly job!"

The point of all this raving is that a lot of people running around must have very low self esteem if you're trying to impress me.

I'm not impressed.

--Kaz



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What is happening?

I am either growing much wiser as I grow older, or much crazier. It is becoming more and more difficult for me to spend time out in public. My list of places I will go into becomes shorter, and I can tolerate them less. Each time I go out I become reminded of the futility of our society and its basis in an economic system. I drive around and see all the new construction, mostly for unnecessary businesses. Who shops here? Where does the money come from? How many more THINGS do we need? Yet, I live in a perpetual state of cognitive dissonance...a state where what you think/believe is in conflict with what you do. I find my very existence....uncomfortable. My love of the convenience of being able to run to the store for Tacky Glue and cotton pipe cleaners is not lost on me. My obsessive purchasing of books is always in front of me.

Think of the number of "simplify your life" and "environmental" books on the market, which contradict their purposes. Imagine: a selection of probably 10 books I could grab at Barnes & Noble at any given moment about HOW to simplify your living. If you read them all, think of the time it would take..and the puzzling people who come to me to ask my advice on which ones to buy. "Do you know anything about either of these two books? Which would you recommend?" Yes, it is a good starting point, but when I see the half-carat diamond rings, and the designer clothes, I really get the feeling that they aren't going to quite get it. The environmental books are another realm. They may have wonderful information, but are they printed on 100% post-consumer waste paper with soy ink? Obviously, not. Even if they were, think of the pollution generated to recycle paper and produce soy ink. And so what environmental devastation has gone into the publishing of the book which is about...*how we are destroying the environment*??! The list is numerous.

I get busy doing things that need to be done, and frazzled by modern society, and then don't have time to cook dinner, so we go to Taco Bell. As I eat my "healthy-for-a-fast-food-restaurant-but-not-too-good" food I think of it all...the paper waste which comes with the food, the gasoline to get to the restaurant, the garbage from packaging the food en route to the restaurant, and the ridiculousness that so many of the managers who work there seem to really believe that what they are doing is somehow important. On top of all of this, it isn't real food.

There are the unnecessary plastic objects in every store everywhere. The stupid toys in kids' meals. The publishing of junk books on *how to catch a man* (and none that I am aware of on how to catch a woman) or romance novels (multitudes of which get the covers ripped off at the bookstore and thrown away). There are changes of fashion, fabrics and colors every season, dumb toys, and an electrical appliance for *everything*. Really. Walk down the electronics aisle at the store some day. Electric hot sandwich makers and electric shoe polishers!

Then there is the difficulty in recycling. Yes, lowering consumption is important, but what about being able to recycle when you can't get it with no packaging? There is no mandatory recycling program in our city, and then there is the difficulty of trying to recycle on your own. The city doesn't pick up much, and they require that everything be separated into paper bags...a waste of paper. Do they recycle that? They have very picky rules about the bundling, etc., of cardboard that we haven't quite figured out. Basically, for us to recycle everything, Mark drives to *three* different sites, two of which are in Normal. So, a waste of gas...and making it easier for one who isn't quite so dedicated or doesn't have the time to give up in despair.

The government is corrupt; employees are becoming more incompetent, and as I go out I become more and more amazed that anything functions at all.

Really. Granted, most employees unlike the managers at stores, restaurants, etc., understand that what they do doesn't really mean anything, and are bored silly with their positions. I can't say that I blame them. However, it is still mindboggling how often they seem to not be able to handle the simplest jobs. Talk with any manager about the difficulties of getting good help. And, arguably, if the person was able to handle a difficult job, the person would be working for a better paying job (though I find this a classist view, and as a very-part-time employee at Barnes & Noble, I can attest to the fact that there are different reasons for everyone doing the job they are doing). But then look at the messes in most major corporations or organizations. Look at the more obvious messes at Mitsubishi and at ISU, and it soon becomes apparent that incompetency and lack of caring are everywhere.

Our society, our entire planet is very, very sick. I view it as a cancerous growth that is out of control, and can't be stopped.

Look at the First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics (which I haven't had explained for many years, so bear with me): 1) energy cannot be created nor destroyed and 2) everything moves from a state of order to a state of chaos. These are physics principles which are considered laws in the world, but on the other hand seems to negate Darwin's theory of evolution completely. If everything moves towards a greater state of chaos, then how could we have evolved gradually over a period of years? In fact, Creationists use these very laws to back their contention that God created the world in the form it is in at the beginning...the supposed seven days of creation.

There is a different breed of Creationists (I forget their exact title) that try to combine the two views of the beginning of time by stating that evolution did, in fact, occur, but it was

directed by the divine intervention of God who orchestrated every moment of it. Frankly, I do tend to lean towards the latter theory, though I don't necessarily believe in a GOD per se but more in a higher intelligence/energy, etc. because it somehow allows for the 2nd law of thermodynamics to be, uh, bent, so to speak.

It also allows the mathematical odds of evolution actually occurring to be beat. I cannot begin to remember the actual numbers, but when I studied this I learned that the mathematical statistics of everything to have occurred in such an ordered manner to result in the development of the world and all living things on it to have developed is, basically, impossible. Even the odds for ONE EVENT to have happened were almost impossible. Take the development of the first carbon atom. Impossible. Yet, somehow we are led to believe that this did occur randomly. And all life slowly developed out of repeated impossible events. No matter, the theory of evolution which appears to have worked in the development of our earth seems in direct opposition to the second law of thermodynamics. How could things gradually become more and more complicated and developed if everything actually falls apart?

Then, again, the first law is violated in the beginning. Where did everything come from? We are told the nebulous clouds of gas and particles pulled together, compressed and exploding causing everything to start...the Big Bang Theory. Okay, so maybe that happened. But, I always asked, where did that stuff come from? Oh, *around*. It was there. But where? We KNOW that everything must come from SOMEWHERE, and then, obviously, ENERGY must come from SOMEWHERE and must have started SOMETIME. Thus, the first law of thermodynamics is, somewhat, invalid too. I haven't yet read anything about where these gases in space before the Big Bang originated. Thus, Creationist argue with the Evolutionists, GOD MUST HAVE MADE IT. Without God there was nothing. God made everything, they say. Cool.

And, back to grade school philosophy, where did God come from? Hey, and just to fuck with these people who are willing to so completely argue that God made everything, and he is a mystery that cannot be explained and must be accepted by FAITH, ask them about the nature of good and evil. If God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, and he is all-loving and GOOD, and Satan is a bad, bad boy, explain this: If God CREATED EVERYTHING and KNOWS EVERYTHING, he created Satan as an angel who "fell," and he created "free will," can we not then logically assume he knew from the start that he was creating evil (this is assuming that God is real). Thus, the logical conclusion, is that God willing created and introduced evil into the world. Does this not make him evil, in the least? And is free will *really* free will if God already knew the outcome? Ah, but I digress (though not really...it does tie in a convoluted way).



Ooooh, but here is another good one. Remember high school geometry? This was Euclidian geometry, which has been around since, uh, Euclid. It is how our world operates, right? Well, yes and no. Our immediate world seems to operate in such a way, but then looking at the universe as a whole, a different type of geometry is applied. It is non-Euclidian geometry. Here is a simple example of the difference: in Euclidian geometry, parallel lines never cross. In non-Euclidian geometry, they can and do, and easily, I might add...just as easily as they don't cross here. So, apparently there are different sets of rules for how the universe works, depending upon where you are and your point of view.

And then there is the one I have been learning about over the last couple of years...quantum physics. This is sort of like magic. We normally say that given two ping pong balls (one at my house and one in China) which are sitting, and one of them gets moved somehow, this can in no way effect the one in sitting in China. Quantum physics would say wrong, that on some undetectable level the movement of one can effect the other. Quantum physics is, in my very limited understanding and view, the scientific study of magic in the universe.

At times I think of how we used to think the stars and sky moved around the earth and the earth sat stationary, and how silly that notion now seems. If humankind survives long enough, we will probably view all this grasping for straws to explain existence as just as silly. Yet, as you look around, most people never even question these basics in their daily life! It seems as if to actually have to think about how they live would really just be an annoyance. They would then have to examine the nature of their lives, the choices they are making and the long term repercussions of those choices.

Mostly, when I consider these concepts and ideas, I become aware of how incredibly silly our existence is. Surrounded by such mysteries and magic, we choose to concern ourselves with how nice our car is and whether or not we have the newest "labor saving" device. Daily existence in and of itself is a miracle. When we pick herbs or flowers in our garden, we can focus for just a moment on what has gone into the creation of this, and we should be filled with awe. We don't have to ponder each and every detail of it, but we can just *feel* it in our souls, and it is that moment of spirit in each day that can sustain us. We can be reminded of the miracle.

But the same miracle that created all of this and created us is the miracle that has allowed for the destruction of this world. That which creates also destroys. Cars, pollution, toxic waste, mass consumption, environmental devastation: all these are created by the same miracle that made all the beauty and joy. A double-edged blade. Again, God created evil, to put it simply.

Somehow, in the midst of all of this, humankind has decided that we are the end-all and be-all of the universe. We act like we own the earth, and that all this was created just for our species. God "gave us dominion" over the earth and all its creatures, according to the Christian tradition, and in other religions as well. Basically, we live with the notion that God made it for us, and God is perfect, and we can do whatever we want with it because he will take care of it for us, because we are chosen by him, and are the pinnacle of his creative

"Aliens" in outer space? No way. Don't even mention the concept of the fourth dimension, let alone other dimensions. Reincarnation? Out of body travel? ESP? These are scoffed and ridiculed, but remember this: people scoffed at the notion that the earth was round. With all the other miracles in the universe, and the "laws of nature" changing depending on "where you are," why are these concepts any more ludicrous? I would argue that only a very narrow, limited mind would eliminate these as possibilities, and that the truly open mind would, in fact, say not only are these possible, but that they are in fact quite likely things. Why would we believe we have reached such a pinnacle of intellectual development that there are no more mysteries for us to understand?

In trying to control nature, nature is finally rebelling against us. Flooding of rivers whose flows have been altered. HIV infection. The new resistance of common germs to all medication. We have created a state of anarchy in nature, and it is rebelling against the destructive society we have created on the earth.

I view the earth in an odd way. I compare it to the human body in general as a starting point. We sluff off dead skin cells and hair every day. We get sick, and get healthy again. Our healthfulness is directly comparable to how well we maintain our bodies and what we put into them. The purer that goes in the healthier it will be. Yet, nothing can stop the aging process or the dying of these bodies. No matter what we do, good or bad, we are still going to die. Yet, we can kill it off a lot sooner by deliberately abusing our bodies, or even by more drastic measures...suicide. Now, sometimes a body will develop a sickness that will get powers. Wrong! Ah, but this is the justification for doing all sorts of evil in the world, from holy wars to slavery.

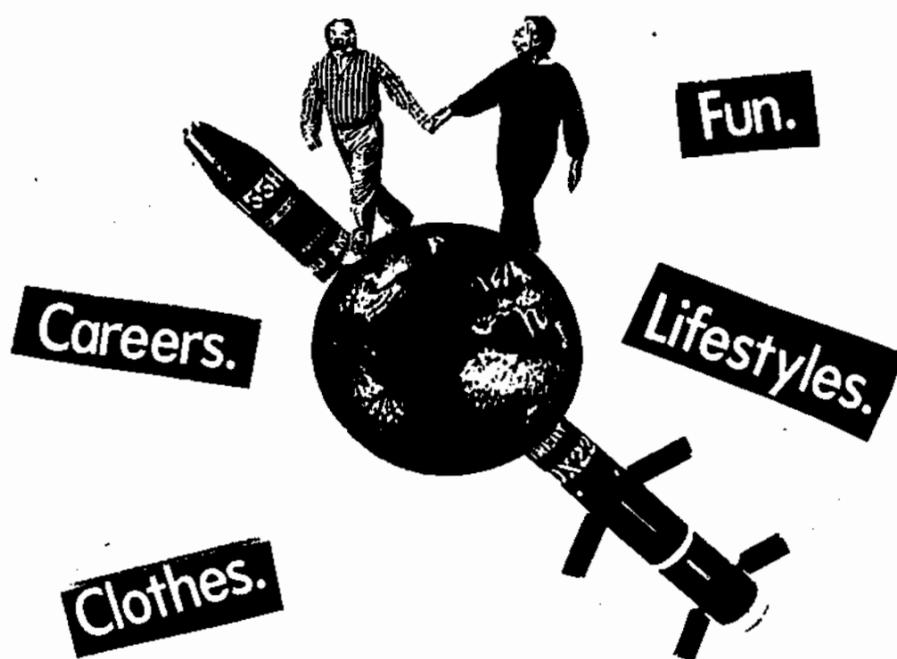
And OBVIOUSLY there couldn't be intelligent life elsewhere in the world because HUMANS are God's ultimate creation (even many atheists still believe there couldn't be intelligent life anywhere other than here!).

completely out of control and kill it, such as a cancer (which can occur in otherwise healthy bodies). It will slowly spread and kill off the rest of the body and the body will die. Sometimes it can be stopped and cured, and usually this involves sheer force of will on part of the person with the cancer. And that is how I view our earth, with humankind as the cancerous growth that is killing the planet. We either need to, through sheer force of will, stop its growth and rebuild a healthy body, or we will need to be destroyed, because our death on a simple level is our destruction. And destruction, ultimately, can cause new growth. Was not the Big Bang a form of destruction as well?

However, sometimes a simple operation will cure the whole problem. Something can be removed or changed on the body, and the body will be healthy again. Also, too, there are the "simple losses" that have no impact. The daily loss of cells and their regeneration. If the skin is scraped off in a fall, there is really no long term impact on the body. And sometimes by the simple removal of the offending object, such as a tumorous growth, all the problems will be solved and life will go on as before with no noticeable change...not necessarily even a scar. This is how I view our place in the universe. We, as humans are not the end all of creation, and if we destroy ourselves, the universe with all its mysteries and wonders will go on as before, and not much will be changed. Our passing will most likely not even be noticed nor cared about in the big picture.

Yet as I go out and become more dismayed with what I see surrounding me, how we are wasting everything we have and our own magic, and the part I play in this destruction, I can then go home and pick plants from my garden and reflect on the beauty and mystery surrounding me everywhere. I somehow find it reassuring that even if we destroy ourselves and all of the earth that life *will* go on, somewhere, and since energy is neither created nor destroyed, I will be a part of it.

--Marcee Murray



Write Your Will Now!



Mental illness awareness

Mental Illness Awareness Week

Oct. 4-- Annual conference

The MIAW committee has received acceptances from two speakers for the Oct. 4th annual conference. Dr. David Levine, psychiatrist at Janet Wattles MHC, Rockford, will speak about medications and answer questions. Brian Adams, vice president of the Chicago OCD group, will tell his experiences with OCD. He has been highly recommended. Plans also include one more speaker and a plan to show the new video, "I'm Still Here--the Truth about Schizophrenia." The conference will be held at BroMenn Conference Center.

Oct. 9-- Depression Screening Day

Screening will be at Eastland Mall just outside J.C. Penney store from 10:00 am to 9:00 pm.

On Oct. 9 & 10 "Angel Baby" will be shown at the historic Normal Theater @ 7:00pm. When Harry meets Kate, (both suffering from schizophrenia) both find a happiness they had never known. They move in together and decide to have a child. But to do so, they stop taking their medication and risk a return to the hallucinations and inner voices they used to suffer. An award winning Australian movie.

Oct. 11-- Annual walk and fund raiser for research on Constitution Trail: David Robins will conduct a memorial observance. There will be refreshments and the opportunity to earn a free Opening Minds T-Shirt. The walk begins at the Colene Hoose parking lot off Grandview Drive at 11:00 am.

A commemorative shrub will be planted on the trail in memory of Thomas S. McCormick and others whose lives ended prematurely due to a brain disorder. The purpose of the walk and vigil is to increase awareness of brain disorders, to show support for those with brain disorders, to improve their quality of life, and to raise money for research.

Statewide Candlelight Vigil

Shirley Woyt of AMI Chicago is spearheading a plan to observe MIAW week with a "Lighted

candle" in windows across the state as a "beacon" to diminish the Darkness of neurobiological brain diseases. Ms Woyt is urging AMI members throughout the state to enlist family members and friends to display a lighted "candle" every evening during MIAW. The candle could be an electric candle, lantern, flashlight covered with cellophane or what have you.

--AMI of Livingston & McLean Counties.

Town Hall meeting to discuss managed care safeguards

As part of the Campaign for Better Healthcare that is being conducted throughout the state, a Town Meeting will address the need for consumer protections in managed care health programs.

The meetings will be Tuesday Oct. 7, 7 to 9pm at St. John's Lutheran Church, 1617 East Emerson in Bloomington.

Susan Wheeler will be on a panel.

For more information, call Luellen Laurenti of National Organization of Women (NOW) at 309-452-4817 or Mary Hall, Illinois Nurses Association, at 309-726-1367.

The event is being sponsored by NOW, the Nurses Association and AMI of Livingston/McLean Counties.

Opening people's eyes about mental illness

Mental illness is a hard thing to live with. There are different kinds: depression, bipolar depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, or any of the ones too numerous to mention. The symptoms are frightening and disabling, often confusing to the patient and for the family. Clearly something is wrong, but how to find out what? Because of the stigma that exists, a visit to a psychiatrist may be resisted. Even when a person is diagnosed the medications prescribed take time to work and are often accompanied by hard to manage side-effects. For any number of reasons, including the disordered thinking that is part of many mental illnesses, the patient has difficulty cooperating with treatment.

As if that weren't enough, well meaning friends of family may exert pressure to "get on with your life," expecting some noticeable improvement after a short time. Would we expect a heart attack victim to be able to jump back into an active life? How many times have we expected a person suffering from depression to "just think positive?"

People who suffer from these serious diseases need our understanding, support and encouragement. After all, medication is not the entire answer. A mentally ill person needs to learn what keeps them from relapsing. Often it is any form of stress such as taking on too much responsibility or trying to do too much that causes symptoms to reoccur.

Although most people with mental illness return to work and a normal lifestyle, some must modify their expectations. Some should not work full time. Some cannot work at all.

One of the hardest things to deal with is stigma. And one of the most common places to find it is in health insurance. Many insurance policies will cover brain diseases like Alzheimer's but only a very small part of psychiatric care, even though the odds for success in treatment of a mental illness far exceeds the success rates for many covered disorders. In my own personal experience the medical bills were overwhelming because I refused coverage. The money I was able to earn went to medical expenses; I lost my home and had to turn to Public Aid for help. I have not been able to work, but I try to help others understand and accept others with these problems. With the help of friends and my involvement with the Alliance for the Mentally Ill I am able to contribute to my community and perhaps open some peoples' eyes. Have I opened yours?

--Faye Townsend

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A hopeful look at schizophrenia

In a recent issue of *The Decade of the Brain*, a publication of NAMI, Dr. Jeffrey Lieberman writes with great optimism about closing in on the cause and possibly even the cure for schizophrenia. He points out that research since 1950 has given us more knowledge about the disease than we had since the beginning of history. The momentum generated from this research is quickly leading to practical applications.

Lieberman finds abundant evidence that schizophrenia is caused by abnormal development that may occur in the womb or as late as during adolescence. These abnormalities occur long before the formal signs of the illness are present. Most people who develop the disease have their first psychotic episode in the latter part of adolescence or early adulthood. Most also recover from the incident but then go on to have one or more episodes from which they do not recover as well.

Some symptoms persist after they are otherwise functioning well, and their behavior may deteriorate with each incidence. Not all

patients exhibit deterioration, however, and the process of deterioration is most likely to occur in the early phases of the disease (the first five years following the initial episode). After that, the illness reaches a plateau and there is no longer a decline in functioning.

Lieberman considers this significant and says, the fact that clinical deterioration can occur in the course of the illness suggests that there may be a secondary (or related) pathological process causing this to occur. "If we could isolate, understand, and halt this secondary process, schizophrenia might not be as debilitating a disease as we now know it. He goes on to point out that people who recover best are those who are treated earliest in the course of the illness. This has suggested to him and other researchers that the active psychotic phase of the illness may be a signal that the second pathological process is occurring that will do further damage if not treated.

The implications of this for therapeutic and public health strategies are obvious.

Their overwhelming importance is clear. Early detention and intervention programs and methods of more effective treatment, including the use of atypical anti psychotic drugs as first-line treatments, are currently being investigated. If we are right and they work, the result could be a dramatic reduction in the cumulative morbidity of schizophrenia.

Researchers are not at all sure what this secondary process may be. Lieberman suggests maldeveloped neurons that are prone to malfunction may also be prone to processes such as occur during a stroke, as part of Parkinson disease, or during an epileptic seizure. For those diseases, effective treatment at the onset of the illness is aimed at alleviating these hypothetical processes and preventing the damage from occurring rather than restoring function after damage has occurred,"Lieberman adds. He ends on an optimistic note that research will find similar treatment for the secondary processes that occur with schizophrenia and save thousands of patients from experiencing the devastation that the disease can now cause.

--Leifa Butrick
arniofgm@execpc.com

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The Poetry Page

The First Night Off The Wagon

and I couldn't afford the \$11.99
 for a case of Mickey Lights
 (it was the attractive packaging -
 the frosty borders, the swatches of green,
 and the foamy head off the mug that got me. Two years
 without a drink and good packaging wore me down)
 so I strolled on down to the tap
 and was soon suckered out of a dollar
 by a young bloodshot girl taking up donations
 for the jukebox
 "what the hell," I said "just play Lodi
 and A Long December. The rest are yours."

I bought myself a Bud
 turned around and started drumming my hands
 as John Fogerty recounted how he'd
 gotten stuck
 seeking his fame and fortune
 just like I'd been stuck
 but I didn't have a tight, kick-ass
 rock-and-roll band backing me up
 It was my first night drinking in two years
 so I was fairly loose by the time I was down to half
 not drunk, no sir, not drunk at all
 just up at the bar stool doing the dancing epileptic slow burn
 and the girl she had ash and stains
 on her man's white cotton tee
 and dark roots splotching through the dye
 of her trailer park perm
 "boy you know how to move," she said, taking a drag
 "I dance good when the song's good"
 She wasn't what I was interested in
 and I wasn't what she was interested in, no

What came from the jukebox next
 was just time to tap the fingers on the bar,
 and have a few sips while waiting for the last request
 so I went back to my stool, ordered another
 and waited, checking the baseball scores
 the girl -- she and I didn't talk much
 except a little bit about music
 how she "became the guitar" when Stevie Ray Vaughn
 played "Lenny" -- too damned slow
 new age noodling in my opinion
 I didn't share though, I just said the song was okay
 and went on with the business of alcohol
 I had waded by that time through too much
 Zeppelin, Cars, Janis
 when all I wanted was that one last song
 and when "A Long December" came I closed my eyes
 hummed and sang along by myself
 "hoping this year will be better than the last"

and after the last longing "yeah" I sucked down the last swallow
 walked out and didn't turn back or say goodbye

it wasn't like she invited me in
 she played my songs and chatted
 and we both stared straight ahead
 at the bronzed miniature soccer ball on the counter
 beside the bottles and trophies
 and the pennants tacked on the wall
 I learned not one thing about the girl
 not even her name, which was okay
 the first night off the wagon
 should be that way -- anonymous
 grey, but a little fun in the
 coming and
 going
 like the August night wind

--Michael Pacholski

Dream of the forgotten child

The pain slowly drains away,
 And he leaves this awful day.
 Entering the world of dreams,
 His face gains a little gleam.

Finally, he is totally asleep.
 The parents watch and weep,
 Knowing that their son's thoughts
 Will always come to naught.

Yet the child does not care.
 Only of his dreams he's aware.
 His mind goes into a trance;
 all thoughts begin to dance.

Winding through field of wild,
 Weather so pleasant and mild.
 Carefree emotions played
 With delight every day.

Oh, how he wants
 These dreams to be.
 But he is caught
 In a trap and can't get free.

He awakens, much to his dread.
 The only thought: wishing he were dead.
 He still sits, shivering, in the cold,
 Forever hoping to be given gold.

--Joe Wiman

Written While Vivaldi's Spring Concerto Played In My Head

Reclining with a
 smile
 Laid back sippin' whiskey in the shade
 and lazy on the violin cloud of
 Vivaldi's
 Spring Concerto

with every cell of my ghostly legs
 and every hanging molecule of my belly
 my body draws a long breath
 deep as the dark of night
 and sweet as the clear sunshine

there is nothing more true
 than the first fluttering notes
 of newborn birds in spring
 and nothing better than a long silence of the mind

--Michael Pacholski



Ha!

These things would I do to afford
 good music--
 for Son Volt gladly would I
 buy no meat
 what is meat -- food that simply
 passes
 through
 on the way to the
 next
 worm
 for R.E.M. no bananas or milk
 calcium wasted on bones
 that will be ground
 to powder
 dead one day, anyway
 might as well
 forget eggs
 for what do a dozen eggs
 represent?
 why, four dozen eggs
 costs as much
 as a Mozart concerto
 and what is this album found in eggs
 can it saw a Stradivarius?
 or lay a lay on the accordion
 strum a
 pastoral on guitar
 bleat a tone poem on a trumpet

no, no -- forget the four dozen maestro eggs
 the symphonies of meat
 the guitar solo sandwiches

Gladly would I starve for good music
 If only I didn't get so
 damned
HUNGRY

--Michael Pacholski

FOR THE SYSTEM

Some people don't understand
 the punishment of crime;
 it appears so trivial
 yet we serve so much time.

The government tells us "Don't kill"
 yet we already know;
 despite them killing the handfuls
 each year on death row.

Do they do this for righteousness
 or just to end fears;
 to me it just causes
 so many more tears.

Why do we deceive
 when the laws are so great;
 can't we simply see
 we're compacting our fate.

Now once we are caught
 we can't go back and think
 while sitting in prison
 we crush all our strength.

Some aren't so lucky
 to return from the walls;
 we live on a few letters
 and an occasional call.

So this is the result
 as great as it looks;
 the answer is dignity
 and our nose in the books

The problems with people
 is our minds work so slow;
 we act like we're powerful
 yet we really don't know.

So until we just realize
 the result will be nil;
 there's no need to defy,
 thief, hurt, or kill.

--Stephen Capranica

These two poems were inspired by two pieces of music called "Heart of the Night" and "Dream of the Forgotten Child," by David Lanz, from his album *Return to the Heart*. Lanz described his personal inspiration for this music, a Christmas thought about all the children not getting gifts that year. His one saving thought was that, since they were still young, they still had hope. He put both these emotions into his solo piano, and these two tracks came from it. These two poems are the thoughts, in words, I had while listening to the music...

Heart of the Night

Oh, the shivers
 The lips quiver.
 Air so bitter.

A child, eight years old,
 Sits in the cold.
 He dreams of the warmth
 By a fire's hearth.

His parents return
 With paper to burn.
 he gives a smile
 But feels so defiled.

He sleeps in a ball
 So frail and so small.
 he is soon enthralled
 With his dreams that call.

--Joe Wiman

YOUR POEM HERE.

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

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

We have the right to reject any poem.

-SECRET INTIMIDATION-

As I awake today there is a presence over me engulfing me and transforming me into a shadow. My heart freezes with an intent desire to beat, but doesn't because it fears it may be its last. So I lay in silence minute after minute with my eyes closed pretending to be asleep. Just moments later I leap up just to discover that there is only one person in the room...me.

Then I go into the bathroom and get into the shower, but yet I feel a violation. As if it is watching me. So I turn off the water and prepare for the worst. I inhale a deep breath and then plunge through the shower curtain. Then anxiety overwhelmed me as I was struck right in the face. Although I still didn't budge. I stood there with courage and dressed myself. I paced through the house gathering my materials for work, while it attacked me every step of the way. I finally got to the driveway and leaped in my car just for it to pounce across my windshield. So did I get out? No, what I did do is drive all the way to work with it beating on the windshield.

When I arrived at work he followed me to the door and then as I shut it he vanished.

So at night when I felt
 all dangers were gone;
 I was astonished to discover
 it was right back at dawn.

--Stephen Capranica

Poetry

There's an intricate fusion
 Of the language and the thought
 It's always hard choosin'
 What words go in and which do not.

Having a large vocabulary
 Helps the poet write their works.
 Sometimes it's rather scary
 That they have these little quirks.
 Of course poems can be stylized,
 Having to fit a rigid form.
 But I have realized
 I like to break from that norm.

The concept of "poetry"
 Is such a big, huge deal.
 But this word means, to me,
 To make a concept *real*.

I like my poems as conversation--
 Like I would regularly talk,
 But with certain realizations
 Rhyming to the rhythm of a walk.

Some people believe style
 Is what makes poetry strong.
 That's okay to think, while
 I think, with poetry, you can't go wrong.

--Joe Wiman



Yes, it can get better than this!

The *Pantagraph* promoted last August's Prairie Air Show, that they co-sponsored, with the words "It doesn't get any better than this."

There were a dozen or so people who apparently disagreed with that assessment. Several Bloomington-Normal area residents staged a protest to voice opposition to the presence of the B-2 and F-117A Stealth bombers. The group was a mixture of Catholics, Quakers, new agers, old and new lefties, kids and adults.

Drivers entering the airshow were greeted with signs and leaflets. The signs the demonstrators held said things like: "The stealth is not a carnival attraction. It is an instrument of war." and "\$12 million for repair for a bomber -- how much for the poor???" and "We want a nuclear-free world" and "Jesus would ask why."

Tina Sipula, one of the organizers of the demonstration, said "I am happy that the number of people showed up on such short notice. They represented many denominations, all believing that it is a sin to have weapons of destruction. Personally, I see hundreds of people every week within our community who are suffering from poverty and hunger. How can we justify this and call ourselves people of faith?"

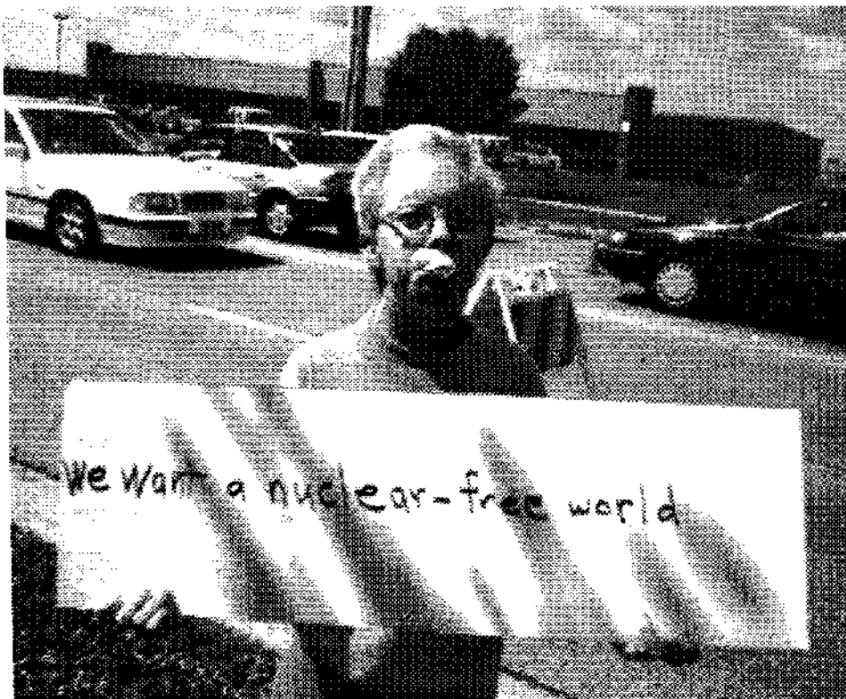
Father Larry Morlan of St. Patrick's Church, another participant in the demonstration, said "It is an obligation to say 'no' to the military buildup that is taken as 'business as usual' in this country. I don't know of any other way to say yes to God, who is a God of life. I know it is hard for people who have grown up thinking of the U.S. military as being just there for our defense, but I think that the record shows that all too often it is a matter of might making right. And when I think of the victims of our military policies, including U.S. soldiers, I feel like our witness was a small way of saying we don't have to be captives of our own power."

A third participant asked me to quote from a statement made by former President Eisenhower, regarding the effects of excessive military spending on society as a whole. Eisenhower said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world at arms is not spending money alone, it is spending the sweat of its labors, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. This is not a way of life at all in any sense, under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging on a cross of iron."

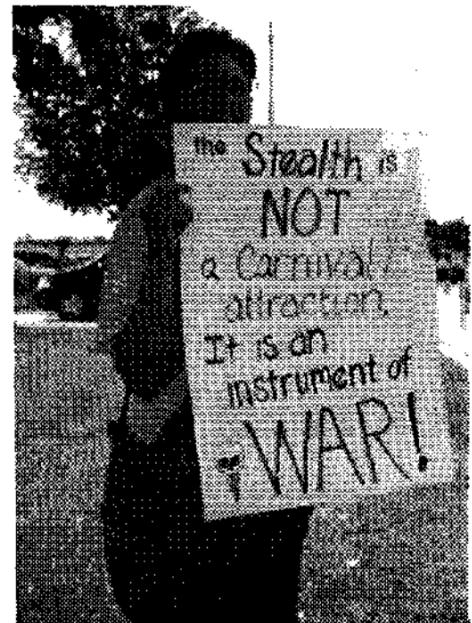
The air show and the evil-looking bat-winged monster that flew over our heads on that beautiful summer afternoon, represents excessive military spending to a degree that deprives and corrupts every other segment of our society.

So, a small group of people, who were determined not to be captives of our own power, gathered to say "Yes it can get better than this. It can get a lot better."

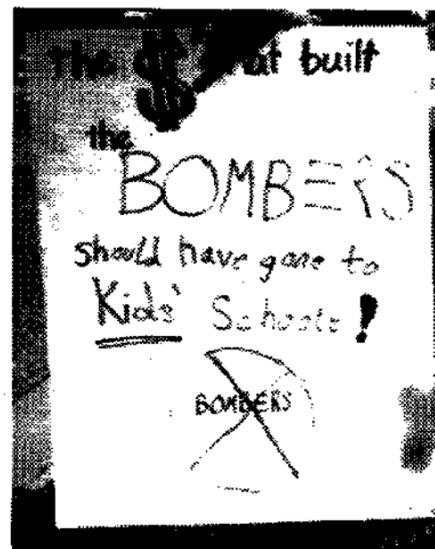
-Gregg Brown



Doesn't everybody, baby?!



It's funny how many people forget that



Why? So kids might grow up smart enough to stop all this crap?



Gay, lesbian & bisexual issues

Connections adult nights every Saturday

Each Saturday evening, beginning September 6, Connections Community Center will open for 21 and over gay, lesbian, bisexual and questioning adults. Activities will vary from specific events to unstructured social nights. Most of the time there will be a movie or other event from about 7:30-9:30, with social time before and after. Connections will remain open afterwards until 1:00 or so as a coffee house. "The Ritz" was shown as the first movie night earlier this month.

Connections coffee house

On Friday, October 31, Halloween, a late night coffee house will be held at Connections. It will begin about 10:30PM and run until 2:00AM. Coffee and a small assortment of other refreshments will be available. Donations will be accepted to defray costs and to go toward supporting the center. Stop in and say hello, see the center if you haven't already, and spend a little time socializing. Other regular late night coffee houses are being planned. Watch for announcements.

Youth nights every Friday

Each Friday evening, beginning September 5, Connections community Center will open from 7:30-10:30 for 14-20 year-old gay, lesbian, bisexual and questioning youth. Activities will vary from specific events to "hanging loose" nights.

This is a project of PFLAG, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, in collaboration with MCATF and is partially funded by a grant from the CDC.

GLTV now seen on Thursday

Gay and Lesbian TV, central Illinois' only locally-produced gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered newsmagazine, can now be seen on alternating Thursdays at 7:30 pm on Bloomington/Normal TCI channel 10. The show, produced by Patrick Baikauskas and the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force, has been a part of TCI's lineup in the Twin Cities for almost a year. It is also shown in the Springfield market. Past shows have included interviews with Andrew Sullivan, former editor of the *New Republic*; Quentin Crisp, author of *The Naked Civil Servant*; and Larry McKeon, Illinois' first openly-gay elected official. GLTV is sponsored locally by the Advocacy Council for Human Rights.

MCATF commits to community center

The McLean County AIDS Task Force Board is announcing that it has committed to keeping the community center immediately to the south of its offices open for use by the community and by various community groups such as the *Advocacy Council for Human Rights, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Gay A A*, and others.

This center was started by Tana Meldrum of OUTABAG and Jan Lancaster of The Bistro about a year and a half ago to provide a meeting place for community groups and events. MCATF will manage the center, renamed "Connections Community Center," for the same essential purpose. The center will provide meeting space for these groups and for other community events. MCATF hopes to continue building on the base established by Tana and Jan.

You may be crazy, but not mentally ill

The American Psychological Association passed a resolution affirming that "homosexuality is not a mental disorder and the APA opposes all portrayals of lesbian, gay and bisexual people as mentally ill and in need of treatment due to their sexual orientation." The resolution represents a serious setback to proponents of so-called "reparative" or "conversion" therapy.

The resolution, which passed overwhelmingly at the APA convention in Chicago, asserts that there is no sound scientific evidence on the efficacy of these therapies. The resolution strongly reaffirms that homosexuality is not a mental illness and that psychologists must not "participate in or condone discriminatory practices with sexual minority clients." In addition, the APA resolution calls on psychologists to "respect the rights of individuals, including sexual minority clients, to privacy, confidentiality, self determination and autonomy." And it directs psychologists to obtain appropriate informed consent to therapy when working with sexual minority clients, including minors.

Supporters of the resolution, which overwhelmingly passed the APA Council of Representatives on August 14, believed it was critical for the APA to make such a statement due to the questions of the ethics, efficacy and benefits of "conversion therapy" which are now being debated within the profession and within a society as a whole.

Play about gay scientist at ISU

On October 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, and 26 the Allen Theater at ISU will present *Breaking the Code*, a play about the life of the gay British scientist Alan Turing (1912-1954). Turing was the chief scientist responsible for cracking Germany's Enigma code during WWII. His work undoubtedly shortened the war and saved thousands of lives. Unfortunately, he also faced great persecution for his homosexuality. In the early 1950s he was arrested for sodomy, and he soon fell out of favor with the conservative British government.

This is a great play, and it is fitting that it is being presented in October, during National Lesbian and Gay History Month. Our history is rich with examples of gay men and lesbians who played influential roles in the development of our world; unfortunately, history is often revised to exclude or play down their contributions.



Transgender College Conference

February 20-22, 1998: Across the Fruited Plain, 1998 Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender College Conference, University of Illinois at Chicago, information available at: (312) 413-8619, mblgcc@uic.edu or on the www at <http://www.uic.edu/depts/quic/mblgtcc>



TV and convicts

Living in prison isn't happy time; it's a necessary way of life I've learned to accept. You know how nice the Illinois prison industry is these days. I have a small radio. My cellie (roommate) has a 12-inch color TV. We get three meals a day, and our housing is rent-free. A medical and dental plan is provided by your hard-earned tax dollars. Maybe this is why the crime rate is high-people are sacrificing their freedom for the easy prison life.

Yes, that last sentence is pure bunk.

Prisons are supposed to be humane. Convicts ought to be treated decently. No prison is actually nice, but even the most heinous criminal should be left with human rights, even a few basic privileges. Let me explain why.

Do you think inmates should be allowed TVs and radios in their cells? Be able to wear Nike gym shoes, blue jeans, and sweatshirts, and buy music cassettes for their walkmans? The inmate commissary sells sweets and tobacco to those who can afford them. Are these privileges too much for the Illinois convict? I say "Illinois convict" because all states have different policies regarding privilege items, some more, some less. In Illinois, most privilege items must be purchased with the inmate's personal funds. They are not paid for with tax dollars.

Still, it sounds extravagant, doesn't it? Somehow, convicts and punishment, sweets and TV don't sound like justice.

Now I won't say TV is an educational tool; there are too many hours of pure crap on television, and, unfortunately, many inmates watch nothing but that crap. Nevertheless, a TV keeps an inmate's mind occupied, no matter what he or she watches. It's simple: a constantly, bored inmate is a more dangerous inmate. TVs are great babysitters.

Privileges give the guards and administration discipline leverage over the inmate. When inmates get into trouble, they lose them. It's one more method prison officials can use to enforce order and safety. Convicts come to prison basically empty-handed, and it's harder to control someone who has nothing to lose. Of course, providing privileges doesn't mean prison is violence-free, although if the administration banned all privileges, prison would be a deadlier place. That might mean zero to the free citizen, but not to the people who live and work in penitentiaries.

The free community also benefits in a small way from allowing inmates privileges. The sweets and electronics and brand-name tobacco an inmate buys at the commissary with his or her money are items from the free community.

The products don't come from IDOC. The free community, especially the local one, profits from inmate privileges by way of goods and services provided.

Here's the point to all this: American prisons should be elite. This country is not a leader for human rights because it drags its feet. If you hear someone say that American prisons have better living conditions than some countries, that's a positive statement about us. America cannot have it any other way. Some old Russian writer said --I'm paraphrasing -- you can see the reflection of a society by walking through its jails. Our prisons are not harsh because we believe when you take a person's freedom, you take a lot. Loss of freedom ... isn't that enough? Law and human rights are ideas above all others. Human rights matter!

Sure, that idea loses shine if you've been a victim of a violent crime. Maybe you've lost a loved one to the hands of a killer. Revenge and brutal punishment appear to be the only form of closure.

But the stone-the-sinner, eye-for-an-eye idealism isn't much better than the idealism of Nazi Germany. You cannot hold the U.S. Constitution in one hand and a whip in the other.

Is freedom important? Does it mean anything when it's taken away? Are human rights important? Yes to all the questions. Human rights are still paramount even if a person treads on another's rights, sometimes grievously tramples them. There's a price to pay when anyone gets caught running over another's rights. Society will take your freedom, lock you up behind walls and razor wire in a hostile, mean environment. While you're there, society will still see that you are treated decently. Criminals are no less human.

It makes sense, because society must take partial responsibility for its criminals. Are people born criminals? Born murderers and thieves and drug users? Can the environment, the society we created, be blameless? I don't believe criminals are born law-breakers. After it's all said and done, society must take care of and deal with its crooks. America gets the job done well. This country treats its worst criminals with respect and decency. Whether human beings like it or not, they're obligated to each other.

Regardless, what about murderers, rapists, and child molesters? Do these heinous felons even deserve to breathe? Yes they do. Freedom they don't deserve.

Keep in mind, too, that despite America's Most Wanted, COPS, and your favorite kill'em all show, prison is not filled with murderers, rapists, and child molesters. Not even halfway.

True, Illinois inmates get to buy sweets and tobacco. They are fed and cared for adequately, and there are inmates with TVs in their cells. It's a great lifestyle, isn't it? Wouldn't you trade your freedom for my lifestyle? Come on in, prison is open 24 hours a day.

If you believe inmates are not being punished enough, you're wrong. The Illinois taxpayers are getting their money's worth. Believe it.

Less than two million of America's 260 million people are incarcerated. Somebody must be doing something right.

--Phillip Camus



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Transsexual prisoner being abused

I am a white preoperative transsexual from Pittsburgh, PA. I have legally changed my name and gender to female, but I have had no surgeries of any kind. I have gone through evaluations and was approved for hormonal therapy by a place called (Persad Center, Inc.) and an endocrinologist in Pittsburgh.

On March 13, 1996, I was incarcerated at the Allegheny County Jail in Pittsburgh, PA. I was stripped of all female items and legal name but, was given my medications (Estrance and Lupron). I was then sent to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (known as Western Penn) on July 29, 1996. Once there, I was evaluated and given my medications and put into administrative custody.

On August 6, 1996, I was transferred to SCI-Camp Hill where my medications were cut and I was put into a heterosexual male dominant general population known for high levels of violence. After six inmates assaulted me and my friend by throwing rocks and/or stones, only

one inmate was taken to the hole for that assault. My friend and I had to be treated in the infirmary. Shortly afterwards, I went through major medical withdrawal and medapus at the same time. I thought I was going to die. I was soon transferred to SCI-Mahanoy after my friend and I filed a grievance against a guard for sexual harassment.

On November 19, 1997, I arrived at SCI-Mahanoy where I not only had my hormones cut, but am denied psychological therapy and left to fend for myself. I was also given an explosive cellie for about 5 or 6 months - putting my life in substant, still in a heterosexual male dominant general population. I have been losing my hair since my medications were cut, which also gives me some major mood swings.

If you are a person who lives a transgendered or other alternative life style, do not get arrested for any reason, or plan for a life style change and abuse in many ways.

I am looking for supporters against this type of abuse here in the United States because this is simply not part of the penalty that criminal offenders pay for their offenses against society. Nor is it within the meaning of humane ethics.

To contact me, please write:
 Jessica E. Wolfe
 DB 0954
 301 Morea Rd.
 Frackville, PA 17932

Send all complaints to:
 Commissioner, Martin F. Horn
 2520 Lisburn Rd.
 P.O. Box 598
 Camp Hill, PA 17001-0598

I have now filed a million dollar plus law suit in hopes to change these types of problems. I hope to hear from you soon.

 University of Pittsburgh
Medical Center

200 Lowry Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-2582

November 13, 1996

RE: Jessica E. Wolfe
DB0954 C-210
P.O. Box 200
Camp Hill, PA 17001-0200

To Whom It May Concern:

Jessica E. Wolfe, a 32 year old biological male-to-female transsexual was evaluated by me in February 1995 after referral from the PERSAD Program in Pittsburgh, where she was given the diagnosis of gender identity disorder of adult life. She has a history of depression and alcohol abuse with multiple suicide attempts. In addition, she has chronic back pain following an auto accident.

On physical examination her weight was 207 pounds. Blood Pressure: 140/95. Pulse: 82 and regular. There were multiple carious teeth. Laboratory testing revealed mild abnormalities of liver function with an ALT of 111 iul (normal <40) and an AST of 51 iul (normal <40). Treatment with Estrace 2 mg a day and Lupron LA 3.75 mg/im monthly was recommended. Treatment for hypertension may also be needed.

Feel free to contact me at 412-648-6423 if additional information is needed

Sincerely,

SJW/mas

(EXHIBIT)

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CLERK OF COURTS

November 26, 1996

RE: COMMONWEALTH VS. JAMES, JESSICA WOLFE
 CRIMINAL COURT # :
 LETTER REF. NUMBER:

Dear JAMES, JESSICA WOLFE,

This letter is in response to the recent correspondence we received from you. Your letter has been processed, and any details or messages are listed below. Only those paragraphs marked with an "X" are relevant to your inquiry. Please retain this copy for your records.

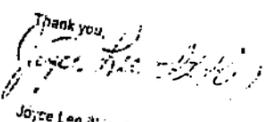
We cannot process your letter. Please send us your criminal case number, social security number, date of arrest and any aliases.

Your correspondence regarding:
 LEGAL NAME AND GENDER
 has been received and forwarded to:
 JUDGE LITTLE

As per your request, copies of your record are enclosed.

The county is required to provide transcripts and/or records at county expense to convicted defendants only when an order of court has directed that they be provided free of charge. Please file a formal petition.

OTHER:

Thank you,

 Joyce Lee Itkin, Clerk of Courts



Welcome to SprawlMart...

As of late, the big talk of the town has been the opening of the new Super Wal-Mart in Normal. It seems that everywhere you go, people are commenting on the new store – boasting of being one of the first people to shop in the store, of wading through crammed, narrow aisles and getting confused as to where they were and more importantly, where the item they wanted was. In my own personal experiences, I have met people that like and dislike the store, with the majority having negative comments. One of my co-workers said, "It's just as ugly as the old store, only it's bigger." She told me she left in disgust after not finding the item she was looking for. Another co-worker said, "It's the biggest piece of crap." Adding, "One minute you are in the personal care products and the next minute you are in hardware." Another said, "It's awesome."

Go figure.

Comprising a retail space similar to four football fields, it opened in August and proceeded to break sales records throughout the nation - in its very first week of operation. Its grand opening made the local news, both in print and television. A local high school band even participated in the gala event.

The new downtown

What makes it different from the previous Wal-Mart, which now stands vacant, is the services it offers. Unlike the previous store, the Super Wal-Mart boasts of its one-stop shopping. Not only does it offer a bigger

variety of goods than before, it offers many more modern day conveniences. For example, you can get your haircut, visit the eye doctor, change your automobile's oil, get a quick meal at McDonald's and do your weekly grocery shopping. There is now no longer a need to visit different stores in town, at least that's what Wal-Mart wants you to believe.

I've never been a big fan of Wal-Mart. On a personal level, I've never trusted a store that a) has no windows, and b) builds ugly temporary retail space. I never liked the old parking lot either, and was almost hit on more than one occasion by some schmuck driving the wrong way in an aisle or not yielding to pedestrians (me). Call me bourgeois, but the stereotypical clientele of Wal-Mart is not who I'd like to spend my afternoons with. On a business level, I've never respected Wal-Mart's business practices. Wal-Mart boasts of their ability to create jobs, but never mentions the jobs lost by competing businesses that are forced to shut down. While visiting my parents during a summer weekend, I was surprised to see a negative article in the *The Joliet Herald* directed towards Wal-Mart. In it, it described the town of Plano, IL (near the Fox River) and how the local commerce now consists of the Super Wal-Mart and a few higher-end specialty shops. Before Wal-Mart came into town, Plano had a relatively healthy business district, a local hairdresser or two, a flower shop, and the Red Fox grocery store, to name a few. The Red Fox serviced the residents for over 20 years. It closed last year as a result of Wal-Mart's ability to offer lower prices by buying goods in bulk. It just couldn't compete.

Company Description (Hoover's, Inc. 1997)

Wal-Mart is the world's largest retailer, operating more than 2,000 Wal-Marts, over 400 Sam's Clubs (membership-only warehouse stores), and about 370 Wal-Mart Supercenters (combinations discount and grocery stores). Wal-Mart competes with such discount retail chains as Kmart and Dayton Hudson's Target, as well as mom-and-pop variety and hardware stores. The company also operates stores in Argentina, Canada, and Puerto Rico, and by franchise in Brazil, China, Indonesia, and Mexico. In the US it is upgrading operations primarily by converting older, smaller Wal-Mart outlets into Supercenters.

Ticker Symbol: WMT
Exchange: NYSE

Fiscal Year End: January
Sales Year: 1997
Sales: 104,859.0 (\$millions)
Sales Change: 12% (over 1 year)
Employees: 728,000

Address: 702 SW Eight St.
Bentonville, AR
72716
Phone: 501-273-4000
Fax: 501-273-1917

CEO: David D. Glass
CFO: John B. Menzer
HR: Coleman Peterson



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Their side of the story

When Sam Walton opened the first Wal-Mart store in 1962, it was the beginning of an American success story that no one could have predicted. A small-town merchant who had operated variety stores in Arkansas and Missouri, Walton was convinced that consumers array of merchandise and friendly service.

In 1995, the company created 85,000 new Wal-Mart jobs and supported thousands of U.S. manufacturing jobs. More than 600,000 Americans work at Wal-Mart.

Still, a key to Wal-Mart's popularity with consumers is its hometown identity. Shoppers are personally welcomed at the entrance by People Greeters. Each store honors a graduating high school senior with a college scholarship. Bake sales to benefit a local charity are a common sight. Locally-made merchandise is frequently and proudly displayed. Associates determine where charitable funds are donated.



At its core, Wal-Mart is a place where prices are low and value and customer service are high- every day. Because Wal-Mart carefully controls expenses to maintain its low price structure, customers do not have to wait for a sale to realize savings.

According to Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. they:

*Provide industrial development grants each year to towns and cities which are attempting to bolster their economic base.

*Encourage American companies to bring offshore manufacturing operations "back home."

*Educate the public about recycling and other environmental topics with the help of the "Green Coordinator," a specially trained associate who coordinates efforts to make the store environmentally responsible.

*Underwrite Support American Manufacturing (S.A.M.), a program administered by Southwest Missouri State University which shows smaller companies how to improve their operations.

*Sponsor the American Hometown Leadership Award, which salutes small-town government leaders who are mapping out long-term goals for their community.

If you would like to read more of this bunk, try:

http://walmart.com/corporate/wm_story.shtml

The other side of the story

* Wal-Mart has been convicted in the U.S. of "predatory pricing." That's the practice of setting your prices lower than cost to drive your competitors out of business, then when the competition is gone, jacking prices up again. Wal-Mart is currently facing similar charges in 22 states.

*Wal-Mart rarely brings a net increase in jobs to a region. In fact, New York - based researchers found that for every job it creates, 1.5 jobs are lost when other firms are forced to cut back or shut down.

*Every day, stores' profits are transferred to the Wal-Mart head office in Bentonville, Arkansas, instead of being deposited in local banks or invested in local projects.

*Some Wal-Mart products are priced lower than you can find anywhere else, but others are about the same, and some are even higher. Wal-Mart puts all its lowest-priced items at the front of the store. Then, the further into the store you go, the higher the prices become. This is called "price stacking" and Wal-Mart has perfected the strategy.

*Wal-Mart employees in the U.S. are rarely paid more than the prevailing minimum wage, and most of them are given only part-time work. Their average annual income barely reaches \$12,000, which is below the poverty line. Wal-Mart is also fanatically anti-union. It has kept unions out of all its stores in the U.S., and has refused to buy the seven Canadian Woolco stores that were unionized.

*Wal-Mart does not have a pension plan for its workers, yet points to the profit sharing plan as a replacement, however, fewer than 2% of the Wal-Mart employees participate in the plan. They simply cannot afford to pay that additional deduction.

*Wal-Mart exploits child labor in Asia. NBC Dateline recently ran an expose of the appalling conditions in sweatshops of Bangladesh, where 9-to-12-year-old boys and girls were paid as little as 5 cents an hour to manufacture jeans and other clothing for Wal-Mart. They were often kept at their machines until late at night to finish their daily quotas.

*NBC also found that many of the products displayed under its slick "Made in America" signs were actually imported from Bangladesh, China, and other Asian countries.

*In 1992, Wal-Mart imported 288 million pounds of goods from Hong Kong and China-8,000 times more than it did before launching its Buy American campaign.

*There are over 250,000 uninsured workers employed by Wal-Mart, one of the largest groups without health care in the U.S.

What's a few more cents?

There are many other alternatives to shopping at Wal-Mart in the Bloomington/Normal area. When you can, please frequent mom and pop businesses. I do realize that there simply aren't many of these types of stores in business today. There are, although, other "corporate" stores that treat their employees decently. For instance, Kohls offers their part-time employees paid holidays. After one-year of employment, all workers are given stock in the company and paid vacations, depending on hours worked the previous year. It won't be hard to find other stores in the area who have a better reputation for fair pricing, community involvement, and rewarding their workers. Look into it, ask questions at the service desk, and if they are not to your liking, don't shop there. Companies such as Wal-Mart make billions of dollars in profit every year. Don't you think they should pass some of that down to the workers who show up every day to do the real work? Anyone who's worked retail can attest to the fact that it is a hard job and the environment is not always that friendly.

If Wal-Mart has its way, there will no longer be a wide variety of stores for you to shop at. The new SuperWal-Mart will be responsible for closing down businesses in the area, mark my word. Today it's Woolworth's...what will it be tomorrow?

Sources/for more information:

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Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
http://www.walmart.com/corporate/wm_story.shtml

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Underground Barfly reviews CII East

Howdy folks! I'm back with more barfly-checkin'-out-stuff scribbles so put on your glasses and check it out!

To be honest, I really don't remember the bars I scouted, but I'll give it my best shot. Aaah, yes...now I remember...



CII East

When I first saw the clientele that CII East seemed to attract, I thought that it would be yup-city. However, once my curiosity overcame me and I ventured into place I was pleasantly surprised. Though it was pretty much yup-city, I discovered that "they" are not so bad.

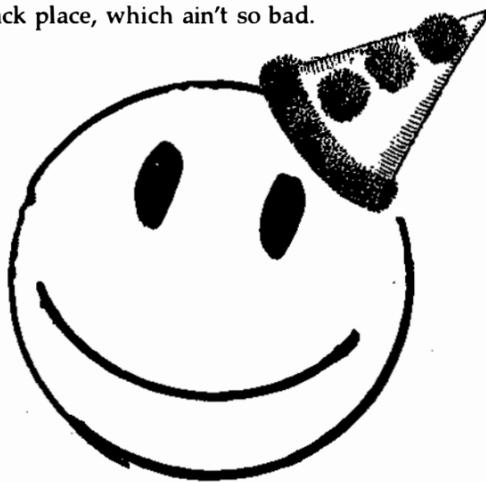
I was obviously dressed differently (sort of like the stereotypical "generation X" male) than the people that apparently frequented the bar (stereotypical yuppie attire), but they were very nice to me. They may have just been in the "I love you" phase of drunkenness, but what the heck, a smile is a smile. I give the clientele, at least the ones who were there when I visited the joint, a happy face!

As far as music is concerned, there is a pretty darn nice stereo behind the bar, which is controlled by the bartender (I assume). I don't know if the bartender takes requests or not, but the music that was playing (bluesy kind of stuff) I had no complaints about.

Speaking of bartenders, the service there was pretty darn good. Me, still affected by the weirdness all around me, suspected the bartender to be a bit of a jerk to me. I was pleasantly surprised.

Getting down to business, the most important thing that a barfly needs to know about a bar is its selection and prices of booze: Given the location of this bar (102 S. East St. in an office building), for some reason I expected the selection to be great and the prices to be high. As it turned out, the selection was average and the prices were too. Not too bad of a joint. I have to say that I would be willing to go back for a drink, or two, or three....

One thing that I found interesting about this place was that there was no pool table! I think that there were a couple dart boards and maybe a video golf machine but I could not get over the fact that they had no pool table. However, they did have other games--board games! They had Monopoly, checkers, backgammon, chess, and even Scrabble! And people were actually playing them! I could not believe it! What that said to me was that this was one laid back place, which ain't so bad.



As I said before, I really don't remember a lot of where I went, so I think I'm going to talk about something else that has been having an effect on the barfly community: downtown Bloomington's growing bar district.

Does anybody remember Susie's Cafe? Well guess what folks; it is now the bar Rhino's. I haven't gone in this place yet, but from the outside it looks like a typical meat-market type place with lame music, etc. Of course, we must remember that I have not even gone in the joint--it's just sort of an outside view sort of thing. Look for the inside inspection in future issues.

Another new place, which I'm sure that I will inspect, is Fat Jack's. I must admit that I have been inside this place, for lunch, and it seemed like a pretentious person's haven. However, I have never been inside during the usual "get

drunk" bar hours, so you can take this with a grain of salt (whatever the hell that means). But look in future issues for more barfly-checkin'-out-stuff scribbles!

This is the Underground Barfly, signing off!



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The Good the Bad and the Ugly: housing

Modern day housing conjures up images of two and three story houses, of master baths with jacuzzis, usually located in subdivisions and having a hefty price tag starting at \$150,000. Today's new houses are affordable to only a select few. Contractors and builders are reluctant to build smaller, more affordable houses because the profit margin is not as great, although the need is. How many new houses have you seen lately that cost less than \$125,000? How many new houses have you seen lately and admired?

During the past few years, Bloomington/Normal has seen a boom in new housing and with it, new subdivisions. Hedgewood, Ironwood, Pheasant Ridge are a few of the newest additions to Bloomington/Normal's own version of suburban sprawl. All developed with intention of attracting the same group of people - usually upper, middle class with children, who want to get away from older neighborhoods and some of its problems. These people are carrying hefty mortgages for the luxury of living in a three bedroom house with a two car garage, safely tucked away on the edge of town in their cul-de-sac street with others who have paid too much for their three bedroom house with two car garage.

The ugly

Mention Ironwood and most often you will hear oohhs and aahhs over how beautiful and nice the houses are in that area. But are they really? Take a close look at some of the houses being built today. There is a disturbing design (or lack of) trend that is reproducing at an alarming rate -- windowless walls. Or having only one window - that small octagon window that has absolutely no design aspects other to point out where the master bath and jacuzzi is. Check out the new houses and you will see

what I'm talking about. It seems that nobody wants to look at their neighbor's side yard, nor do they want anybody in the side yard looking into the house. In fact, they don't want to acknowledge the neighbor's existence. Maybe they just want to save a few thousand dollars on windows so they can tack on that guest bedroom they've always dreamed about.

As James Howard Kunstler points out in Home from Nowhere, "This results in a house that is built like a television set. Only the front matters. The windowless sides of the building are of no consequence."

Many of the new houses today do have a more attractive front than the sides. Brick and mortar - even some Italianette columns adorn some houses. They are usually also lavishly landscaped with every type of shrub (but no trees) But as you look at the sides, you see a whole other building, a plain, cheap aluminum sided, windowless wall of nothing. Yuck.

Where did modern day housing go wrong? Some may point to the popularity of the banal Leavittown designs, the affordable, mass produced ranch houses that were popular with the GIs after WWII. Others may blame the split level houses of the late 60s and 70s. The

difference between the two is that the GIs built modest houses-- albeit lacking any attractive features-- that were affordable. The homeowner of the 70s all tried to have a bigger version of basically the same house. Two and three bedrooms were simply not big enough, now they needed three bedrooms- and two car garages were a necessity. In the 80s and early nineties, it seems we are taking that a step further.

The good

Compare the home of a small-town bank president dating from the 1890s, with its masonry walls and complex roofs, to the flimsy house of a 1990s business leader, made of two-by-fours, sheetrock, and a fake fanlight windows. Look closely at the houses on Clinton Ave. and Broadway Place. Look closely at some of the houses in the Dimmitt's Grove neighborhood. Then, drive to a expensive subdivision. If you had the money, which would you prefer? Which houses are more interesting. Which have the best visual qualities? Which have the most charm?

Kunstler notes, "When we were a far less wealthy nation, we built things with the expectation that they would endure. The buildings our forefathers constructed paid homage to history in their design-including elegant solutions to age-old problems posed by the cycles of weather and light. -- and they paid respect to the future through the sheer expectation that they would endure throughout the lifetimes of the people who built them.

The bad

One thing that really bothers me, is the continued suburban sprawl of Bloomington/Normal. It seems that every available piece of farmland is being converted into new subdivisions, when there are a multitude of older houses on the real estate market. Building houses on farmland is offsetting the biodiversity of our local environment and forcing wildlife out of their habitat. Building on new farmland is very costly on our local governments, who are forced to build and maintain the roads and the water and sewer lines. Money that could be spent on beautifying older neighborhoods by repairing sidewalks and curbs and planting trees and building new parks. There are many older, homes in our community that could be refurbished and modernized. But until the last bit of farmland is gone and the demand for large homes is met, it doesn't look like that will happen any time soon in Bloomington/Normal.

--towanda!!-

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NATO on notice: Get rid of

A new phase of anti-nuclear civil disobedience has begun.

Over the next several months, nonviolent direct action for nuclear disarmament will be defended in the courts of seven nations, as part of an international citizens' campaign to enforce last year's International Court of Justice (the World Court, or ICJ) opinion on nuclear weapons. The ICJ Advisory Opinion of July 8, 1996 declared the threat or use of nuclear weapons to be generally contrary to international humanitarian law.

Exactly one year later, NATO heads of government meeting in Madrid, including the leaders of nuclear powers France, Great Britain and the United States, were legally and publicly served a Citizens' Summons. Delivered by an international delegation of peace activists, the Summons declared that unless NATO leaders "take immediate action to review NATO's illegal nuclear policy" in light of the World Court decision, "we shall use all means in our power, including direct nonviolent resistance, to intervene against all preparations for nuclear war at all the places where they are carried out."

The U.S.-led expansion of NATO endorsed at the Madrid summit carries the threat to use nuclear weapons first against any member nation's foes, as well as a commitment to defend non-nuclear member states with nuclear weapons. With these commitments, NATO nuclear policy strikes far from even the notable loopholes in the ICJ's detailed opinion.

Nuclear resisters who raise a defense based on necessity and supported by international law are often stymied. Judges routinely reject the defense, sometimes because options for legal protest remain, or because international judgment specific to nuclear arms is lacking.

The Madrid action pursued one legal protest option to a conclusion. Legal documents now verify that citizens have put the nuclear

powers and their NATO sycophants on notice. A stronger case for citizen action bringing global justice to local courts is now suggested, and the promised nonviolent direct action at the sites of nuclear crime has begun.

But can an appeal to International Law help bring about nuclear disarmament? What will really change if nukes are outlawed?

This past summer, the generous support of friends and subscribers to the Nuclear Resister, sent me to join three dozen international disarmament campaigners who marched to the gates of NATO's Madrid summit. Donors agreed it was important for an (U.S.) American to be present, and I was alone in that role.

The plan to serve the citizen's Summons was initiated by For Mother Earth International and the Nuclear Weapons Abolition Days network. Support came from Abolition 2000 (a global network to eliminate nuclear weapons), and activists who brought the case of nuclear arms before the world court. In Madrid, Paz Ahora (Peace Now) and Aedenat (an environmental group) helped with people, language, and office use, and more support came from the young men and women of the MOC the conscientious objectors movement (there are about 250 conscientious objectors now in Spanish prisons.)

Spanish police had denied many other applications to demonstrate near the NATO summit site. We made no such application. Instead, the media, NATO officials and the police were merely informed when the nonviolent event would take place.

On the morning of July 8, we assembled in the presence of an imposing Spanish police detachment and a number of international and local journalists at the Canillejas Metro station. Some of us donned white radiation suits, while three large, colorful banners were unfurled. The banners declared "NUCLEAR WEAPONS OFF ALERT NOW" and "NATO NUCLEAR PLANS ILLEGAL." Formal enlargements of the Citizens' Summonses, each individually addressed and decorated with the flag of the recipient country and a sunflower, symbol of the Abolition 2000 movement, were displayed for the media to photograph. Journalists also interviewed many of us.

Under a cloudless sky, we were permitted to proceed on foot, accompanied by police and media, nearly two miles to within 300 yards of the modern Palacio Municipal de Congressos, the site of the summit. There, delegates signed the impressive documents, the text of which had been endorsed by more than sixty international and national peace groups from around the globe, in addition to several members of the Belgian, British, Spanish, and European Parliaments.

After persistent and gentle persuasion, NATO finally agreed to receive three representatives: George Farebrother (World Court Project - United Kingdom), Florentina Carrasco (Asociacion Libre de Abogados - Spain) and Pol D'Huyvetter (For Mother Earth

International - Belgium) were escorted to the steps of the conference center, where they were met by Senior Angel Sancho Ampudia, director of the Spanish NATO Summit Organizing Committee.

The peace delegation informed the officials that these were not mere petitions, but copies of documents that had been legally certified by a Spanish notary. Senior Ampudia volunteered that he would personally give the documents over to NATO Secretary General Solano, and ask that they be personally delivered to the individual heads of government.

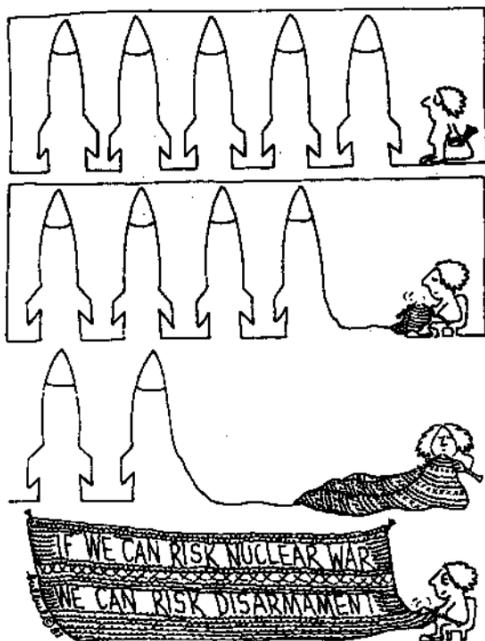
The notarized documents were also officially delivered the same day, creating documentary evidence that NATO heads of government have been duly informed that their actions regarding nuclear policy are held to be in violation of the World Court judgment. (Copies of these documents and strategy suggestions for nonviolent direct action are available from For Mother Earth International - address below.)

As expected, a change in NATO nuclear policy did not follow the Madrid meeting. In early August the Nuclear Weapons Abolition Days network requested a meeting with NATO officials at their Brussels headquarters. Request denied, the net work decided to close down the headquarters on Hiroshima Day. Pol D'Huyvetter explained: "NATO member states continue to oppose the worldwide call by, among others, the U.N. General Assembly, for starting multilateral negotiations to ban nuclear weapons. As citizens we have the obligation to act under the Nuremberg Principles to uphold international law. We have no choice but to engage in actions of civil resistance."

The headquarter doors were blocked for several hours by activists and banners reading "Closed due to War Crimes preparations." A "War crimes inspection team" entered the compound to search for documents about NATO nuclear targets. Instead of arrest, the four inspectors were given a brief audience with a secretary for NATO chief Solano, before being escorted from the building. Despite the day-long blockade, no arrests were made. Return inspections are likely.

In the United States, 43 Hiroshima Day demonstrators were arrested at Livermore nuclear weapons lab in California as they delivered an "Order to Cease and Desist Illegal Activity." A similar action in Pennsylvania at the headquarters of space war giant Lockheed-Martin resulted in nine arrests.

Three days later, to mark the 52nd anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, self-appointed "inspectors" and "honorary marshals of the World Court" turned up at weapons factories and military bases in Europe, Great Britain and the United States. Eviction notices were posted at such sites of nuclear crime as the United Kingdom's Aldermaston nuclear bomb factory, and the Faslane nuclear submarine base and nearby Coulport nuclear weapons bunkers in Scotland. A canoeing inspector was twice arrested at Faslane. Arrests were also made at the U.S. spy base at





illegal nukes

Menwith Hill in England, and nearby Forest Moor, from where the British Trident nuclear submarines receive their illegal orders.

In Wisconsin, the "Tromp Trident" peace walk concluded with arrests at Project ELF, Trident's first strike double-bass beeper.

Citizens inspecting for evidence of nuclear crimes were turned back by authorities at Volkel air base in the Netherlands and France's nuclear submarine base in Cherbourg. Other inspectors were arrested at bases in Germany and Belgium where U.S. nuclear weapons are stockpiled for NATO use. Reports on these citizens' inspections are being filed with the ICJ in The Hague.

At the Nevada Test Site, 27 people were arrested as they entered to inspect the site for ICJ and Test Ban violations. Two women who opened the site up for inspection early in the day by removing a kilometer of the fence were jailed for several days. These followed resistance actions earlier in the summer, sparked by the first "subcritical" nuclear weapons test.

Still, for many nuclear resisters, international law is a troubled, if not doomed, concept. Throughout the history of international humanitarian and war crime law, only losing war criminals are prosecuted, while the crimes of the victorious have gone unchecked. Criminals were judged at Nuremberg and Tokyo, but not in Washington, London, or Los Alamos.

Ambivalence to international law is evidenced by the fact that while nuclear resisters raise the argument almost reflexively in words and action, the defense in court is often weakly developed.

Furthermore, as technology advances and the distinction between "nuclear" and "conventional" war becomes ever less clear, an international ban on nuclear weapons may only succeed in providing public relations cover and added government support for warriors already gone post-nuclear. United States Air Force generals envision a world free of nuclear madness but endowed with a new generation of dominating offensive weapons: the post-

nuclear guarantors of US global hegemony. The U.S. Space command Motto boasts that they are the "Masters of Space."

Admitting the crime or not, the Pentagon may come to accept nuclear disarmament, even by the year 2000. But it plans to leave the peace movement in a position comparable to that at the signing of the Atmospheric Test Ban Treaty and now also, with subcritical tests, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: trumped by advancing technology and rhetoric.

Attitudes, particularly illegitimate ones like global domination or mutually assured destruction, are not changed by new laws.

Nonetheless, international law evolved as an attempt to limit the devastation of war and ensure that some remnant of society would remain to rebuild. To the extent that it provides a platform to bring humanity into the legal equation, it educates the courts and public alike for future struggle against all forms of militarism.

While international law usually cuts for the powers that be, it is now a double edged sword. But to cut for nuclear abolition, that other edge must be honed. The whetstone is federal and local courts. Laws regarding trespass, obstruction, or destruction of property should be challenged when they are used to protect nuclear crimes, so that our jury peers and neighbors can learn of the ICJ opinion, and weigh it in the verdict.

The ICJ opinion and the Citizens' Summons presented in Madrid together make a solid footing and persuasive case for a renewed campaign of civil resistance to nuclear weapons. The time has come to bring it home to our own community.

Fifteen years after millions of anti-nuclear voices shook New York's Central Park and European capitols, we must reassert our right and accept our renewed obligation to inspect the sites of nuclear crime and impede the continuing preparations, for nuclear war.

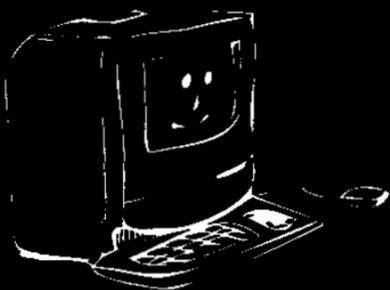
-- Jack Cohen-Joppa

Nuclear Weapons Abolition Days Network c/o For Mother Earth International
Lange Steenstraat 16/D, 9000 Gent, Belgium,
Phone/fax +32-9 233 84 39
E-mail: int@fme.knooppunt.be
http: // www.knooppuntbe/ ~fme

More information about the ICJ opinion is available from the World Court Project UK, (George Farebrother, UK Secretary) 67 Summerheath Rd., Hailsham, Sussex BN27 3DR, Great Britain. Phone & Fax 01323 844269 Email: geowcpuk@gn.apc.org

Jack Cohen-Joppa is co-editor of the Nuclear Resister newsletter, a comprehensive chronicle of anti-nuclear civil resistance and peace prisoner support. The views expressed are those of the author alone, and do not represent the editorial position of the Nuclear Resister. The Nuclear Resister, P.O. Box 43383, Tucson, AZ 85733, Email: nukeresisterc&igc.org (520)323-8697. Free sample issue on request.

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Seeing Red

The Mystery of the Silent Slaughter

by Steve Eckardt

If you count the massive killings in Rwanda and Yugoslavia as halted, where's the greatest human butchery going on today?

Of course, this bloody query is hardly a trivia question.

Yet judged by the number of people who can answer it, it almost is trivia.

No wonder, though, because coverage of Algeria rarely rates more than a few column inches. Given the scale of the killing (more on that in a moment), the lack of publicity is surely a curious matter.

Quite a curious matter indeed, because the news briefs are inevitably of "Muslim militants" hacking to death entire villages composed primarily of women and children.

Why is this story not being milked for its full fanatical-Islamic-terrorist potential? After all, it seems indisputable that some 60,000 people have been murdered in the past five years. How could the U.S. media-shameless and tireless portrayers of Muslims as insanely cruel-not squeeze this tale for all it's worth? Questions about what was happening in Algeria first burbled into my consciousness three years back when a news-blurb statistic caught my attention: some 30,000 people had been killed in two years.

Wait a minute, I thought, that's an easy 500 people a week. It takes a killing machine-an army-to rack up numbers like that. Either there's a massive rebel uprising bloodying the army so badly it's close to taking power ... or the government's on a bloodbath rampage.

Either way, here was an untold story.

But the story stayed untold, at least by me, as events in Mexico, Yugoslavia, Cuba, and Rwanda (not to mention my two daughters and my day job) took precedence.

Until recently, when telling revelations appeared in a singular Guardian (UK) article. More-much more-on that in a moment.

But first: there was a civil war underway in Algeria. It began with the December 1991 nullification of national election results, the installation of a military government, and the subsequent banning of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) which had won an overwhelming electoral mandate.

Behind these dictatorial moves-just across the Mediterranean-lay the "advanced industrial democracy" France, the former outright owner of Algeria which between 1953 and 1962 deployed some 2.3 million soldiers and killed one million Algerians in a losing attempt to prevent independence.

They feared that the FIS-despite being an utterly pro-capitalist party-would be less of a quisling regime than the one already in place. After all, mass support for the FIS had little to do with religion and everything to do with popular outrage at Western-imposed austerity-austerity which by 1995 had halved the value of their currency, put a good quarter of the workforce out of jobs, and idled half the state enterprises-while sending the country's entire export earnings to imperialist banks.

In short, the big majority of Algerians had had it with the pro-Western government and elected the FIS instead. The regime responded by simply abolishing democracy and set about systematically eliminating opposition: 30,000 people were imprisoned while "security forces carry out killings and extrajudicial execution daily and in total impunity," according to a March 1994 Amnesty International report.

France rewarded them with 1.2 billion dollars in aid.

For a while there was semblance of a civil war, as the opposition (that is, the majority of the country) attempted to fight back.

But by December 1995 the military was able to organize "elections" with a 75% turn-out despite a boycott called by a coalition of parties which together had tallied over 80% of the 1992 vote. No doubt this result was related to the electoral mobilization of 200,000 soldiers which by then had rung up over 80,000 dead or imprisoned....

However juicy this largely untold story (of course just routine business in the neo-colonial "Third World"), it still begs the question of why so little is made of reported slaughtering of innocents by "Islamic extremists." Certainly not for lack of color: "a one-year-old baby was beheaded and a pregnant woman disemboweled" as rebels "cut the throats of [47 villagers and] burnt some alive," reported a 29 July Reuters dispatch based on Algerian reports.

Enter the intrepid reporting of Victoria Brittain whose Guardian article I referred to earlier. True, says she, that "Algeria [is] held to ransom by terror-daily assassinations, car bombs, rail sabotage. The terror ... marks the struggle between the generals in power and a deep-rooted Islamic movement which refuses to lie down and die...."

"Gruesome stories of killer dwarfs, home-made guillotines, ...of women's throats slit, of small children decapitated, of dozens or hundreds of Islamists killed in fire fights with the authorities are the everyday fare of Algerian newspapers...."

"But there is a growing credibility problem with these stories of massacres, [all] based on military communiqués and with virtually no reliable first-hand reports. Nor do the occasional interviews given to Western journalists by fierce young men claiming to be from the GIA [Armed Islamic Group] ring true to Algerians. [There is undeniable] infiltration of the GIA by security forces...."

The major political assassinations since 1993 are part of this picture of seemingly inexplicable violence from which the Islamists are not the beneficiaries."

This report goes a long way in answering the riddle of the Western media's virtual silence on Algeria. Of course small matters like the truth have never proven a barrier to Western media portrayals of "Muslim fanatics." But this is one "terrorist" story that the powers-that-be don't want exposed to scrutiny.

But even if you were to swallow the atrocity tales whole, the overwhelming bulk of the murders and repression is carried out by the military government-the darling of Western banks which has met and even exceeded every austerity demand of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

So that's why the world's greatest ongoing slaughter remains an untold story. Yet the dead and the imprisoned still must be answered for, while economically "even the Great Depression in the U.S. wasn't half this bad and it lasted only half as long," admitted one Western diplomat.

Mystery solved-but case far from closed.

(Visit the Seeing Red web-site (text at last all up, bells and whistles still missing) at www.SeeingRed.com or send e-mail to seckardt@aol.com).

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Gather your courage & walk in peace

"This we know: the earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. ...How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the waters how can you buy them? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. ...and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its creator."

Those are the words of Chief Seattle, Chief of the Suquamish, spoken in 1851 to the dominant European-derived culture.

If those words are true, what does that say about our society?

When the European settlers began landing on these shores only 500 years ago, this continent was almost pristine, even though the Native people had lived here untold tens of thousands of years. The way they lived did not harm the earth or heap contempt on its creator.

Almost the very first act of the settlers after landing here was to begin to "clear the land." And by now we have almost finished the job.

We Americans are not the good guys here, no matter how much the national mind wants to believe that myth.

Our military used to brag about how we have the power to destroy the world over and over again. You don't hear that anymore. I guess someone decided it was bad public relations. But the reality hasn't changed.

Think about what that means in terms of "sacred ground," and how much contempt that heaps on the creator.

Jerry Mander, in his book In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations, addresses the dominant culture with these words: "if we ever become more personally engaged than at present, and let into our hearts and minds the full spectrum of horrors that Indian peoples have faced and still face; if we ever accepted that American corporate and military interests and surely American commodity and technological visions drive the juggernaut, the pain of these realizations would be overwhelming."

So what can we do?

We can listen to and learn from the people that the dominant culture has tried and is still trying to destroy. I won't list any books like I have in past articles. I will just say go to a bookstore and choose a book on Native American culture and spirituality. There are so many beautiful books. You are bound to find one or several that catch your interest.

There are also pow-wows held occasionally in the area, and seminars where various speakers address these issues.

So there are opportunities to gain the necessary wisdom.

And, according to the Native Americans' spiritual beliefs, we are powerful and responsible beings.

So, gather your courage and walk in beauty.

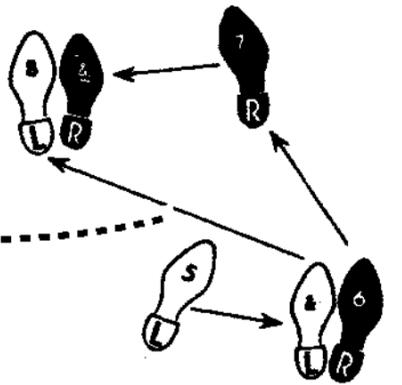
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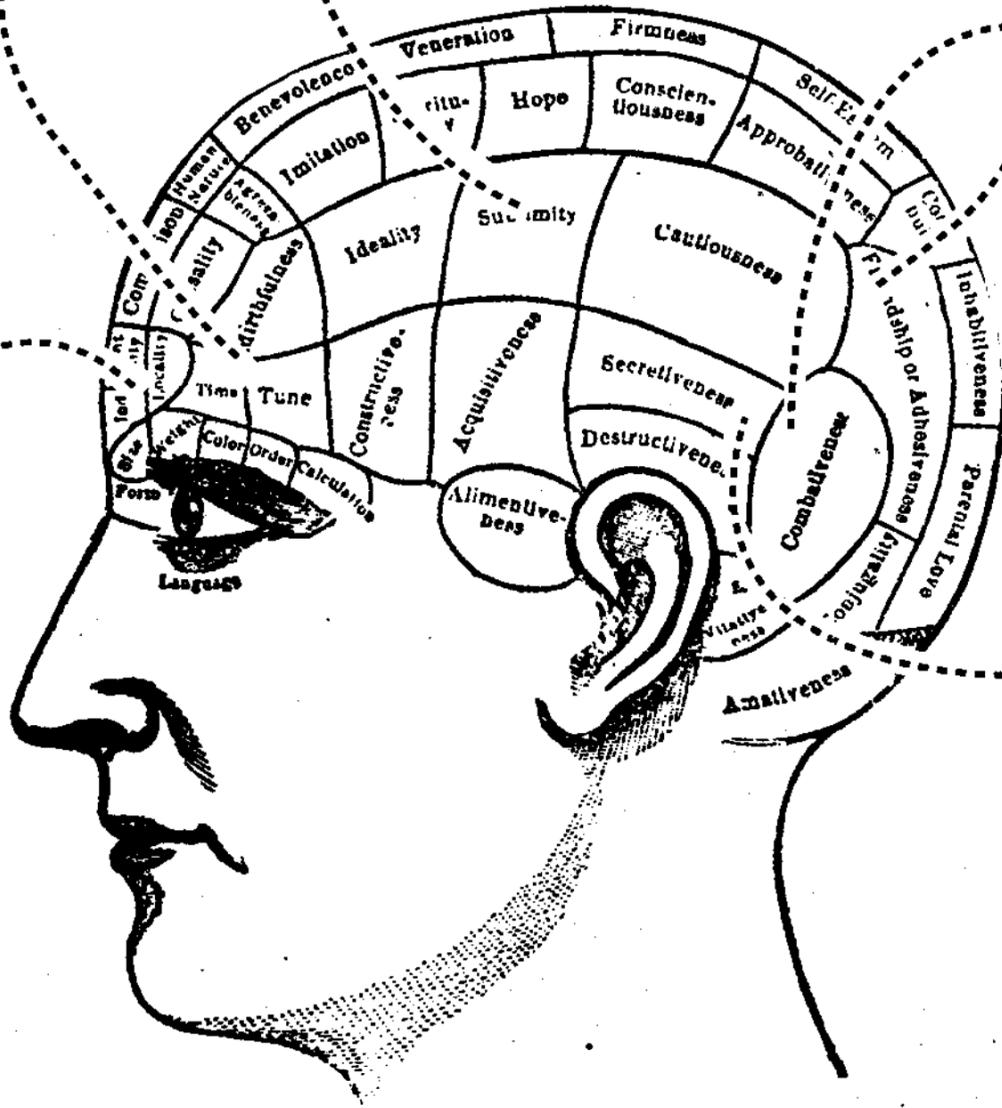
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—david. ☺



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monday

\$3.00 pitchers
 miller lite, bud lite

tuesday

\$3.00 pitchers miller lite, bud lite
 blues jam w/ sister groove 9pm

wednesday

\$3.00 pitchers miller lite, bud lite
 \$1.75 well drinks
 open mic w/ ed from brother jed

thursday

\$1.00 pitchers
 50 cent well drinks w/ \$3.00 cover

friday

\$5.00 32oz
 long islands

sunday

open mic w/ james cisco of
 3rd sunday market
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 \$2.50 pts of all micro brew drafts

saturday live music showcase \$1.50 leinie's all flavors

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