



### New York Post

A brief moral disquisition from Garry Wills, never an inmate of a Castro prison, a Castro torture chamber, a Castro Cuba—but wouldn't it be pleasing to send him there?

... It is difficult to see any moral difference between hit teams sent out to dispatch Castro on the one side, and to dispatch Bush on the other.

[June 25, 1993]

### TCR

(Times Company Report)

Anna Quindlen, crusader from the powder room, drops her guard:

About six months ago I looked at page one and saw that every story on it had been written by a woman, except for one story that had been written by an African-American man. And my heart soared. I thought, Anna, the next time you convince yourself things haven't changed, remember this.

[1993]

### The Catherine Johns Program

(WLS 94.7 FM, Chicago)

Eric in Peoria calls Catherine Johns to do his uncanny impersonation of George Stephanopoulos:

ERIC: I—I honestly think—you know, Brit Hume—it—it goes a little beyond just this specific question. I think Brit Hume has just become downright snotty and I think Bill Clinton—you know, the press has been giving him such a hard time, I don't blame him for stand—I think it'll do nothing but help him. And I—I—you know, maybe it's just my personal bias, but when you look at Brit Hume—one of George Bush's best friends, contributor to *The American Spectator*—you know, it—you just almost begin to wonder if at some point where Brit Hume—his, you know, humanity and personal agenda—maybe just it—edging in.

[June 14, 1993]

### McLaughlin Group

John McLaughlin tries to get off scot-free:

A final note: On a recent program, the word "welshing" was used as a synonym for reneging. We regret any offense this usage may have given to the people of Welsh ancestry or to the people of Wales.

[July 9, 1993]

### Naval Reserve Association News

Arch-conservative Pat Schroeder, the hansdoodle of the House, tyrannizes the present with another of her *obligatos* from the hoary past:

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your thoughts on gays and lesbians in the military. I'm sorry for the form letter, but I'm swamped!

For most of our nation's history, sexual orientation was not only not a bar to military service, it wasn't even an issue. The present ban was imposed in 1982 when DoD Secretary Caspar Weinberger issued an order that tightened policy first established in the 1940s. The fact is, tens of thousands of gays and lesbians, banned or not, have served our country with distinction and valor in every war from the American Revolution to Operation Desert Storm.

One gay soldier, in particular, Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, George Washington's inspector general and chief training officer, is perhaps worth mentioning. Known as the "drill master of the Revolution," von Steuben trained Washington's rag-tag Continental army during the winter at Valley Forge and turned it into a disciplined force. Military historian T. Harry Williams said that "thanks to [von Steuben], the American army took the field in 1778 prepared to fight."

Two hundred and twenty-five years later, some military leaders argue that gays are incompatible with military service. Hokum. As far as I'm concerned, what was good enough for George Washington is good enough for me.

[June 1993]

### Flyer

In a flyer booming a forthcoming Montreal conference of the highest intellectual sonorities (titled "Yes to Self-Love" in the English version, or "Oui à la Masturbation" in the French), the disgusting contents of speaker Betty Dodson's disgusting thoughts are summoned from her diseased mind:

"My futuristic fantasy for sexual liberation goes like this: It is New Year's Eve 1999... At the stroke of midnight, the entire population will be masturbating to orgasm for world peace."

[1993]

### Washington Post

Glad tidings! The forward-looking dogmata of Dr. Joycelyn Elders, anointed by our Boy President to be surgeon general, have even been fetched by the noble swordsmen of the NBA:

On a Saturday afternoon in January four Trail Blazers—rookies Dave Johnson, Tracy Murray and Reggie Smith and nine-year veteran Jerome Kersey—met three teenage girls at a shopping mall in Salt Lake City.

With little to do until a Sunday afternoon, nationally televised game against the Utah Jazz, the players invited the girls to their team's hotel.

What happened on the 12th floor of the Salt Lake City Marriot that night became the subject of a police investigation...

Although no charges were filed, the Trail Blazers fined Kersey and Smith \$15,000 each and suspended Murray and Johnson for three games, costing them \$46,500 and \$38,300, respectively.

"They were disciplined for their involvement with underage women," said Petrie, the Trail Blazers' executive. "You need to be smarter than that, being up until 3 or 4 in the morning before an important game..."

Petrie said there was one encouraging sidelight to the incident. "In their testimony, the girls said the players used condoms," he said.

[June 13, 1993]

## Details

The chaos that ensues when within the mind of a rock-'n'-roll analyst the metaphysical, the poetic, the prophetic all well up together, and after the poor slob has overindulged his coffeecake:

My capacity for outrage has been short-circuited. I'm trying to sharpen the knife with David Baewald's no-hope album *Triage* (cover: gruesomely bloody hands with the flag behind them), but not even that seems to be helping (or hurting). Our times are, less fixed than they were a year ago; disaster may be no less likely, but it's no longer *obvious*. I think that Bill Clinton is an unfinished man; that the future, at least in the near term, is now unpredictable; that the next few years will be full of surprises, some of them thrilling. How all this will translate culturally—and specifically, musically—is up for grabs, but there is no question the Clinton presidency *will* translate.

[July 1993]

## New York Times

On the editorial page of the venerable *Times*, proof again that there is no silliness too silly to elicit purple pontifications from a liberal with a word processor:

The most interesting question is whether, if they could, scientists *should* resurrect a dinosaur. After all, the nations of the world are scrambling to preserve species before they become extinct. So why not bring them back if they tip into oblivion?

In *Jurassic Park*, an entrepreneur wants the dinosaurs for an open-air zoo on an island off Central America. Profits aside, who wouldn't drool to see such magnificent creatures, study them up close, gawk in amazement?

But is anyone thinking of the welfare of the dinos? They would be brought back to face an environment far different from the one they dominated for 160 million years—with different air, plants and animal life. Even the fiercest dino could be felled by some tiny virus for which it lacked natural defenses.

And what about human welfare? The film leaves the impression that the monsters trashing the island would be containable with just a little better zoo keeping. But Mr. Crichton's book had a darker ending. When last heard from, the dinosaurs had escaped and were eating their way toward the rain forest; one just *knew* there would be further trouble.

[June 13, 1993]

## Santa Barbara News-Press

The world perceived by a suspected survivor of Jim Jones's Jonestown, Mr. George Gaynes, what has just been to Europe for three whole months and come back sounding like the Rev. Michael Kinsley:

It is most comforting to come home to Santa Barbara after three months in Europe, and a steady diet of derogatory reports about the new presidency in the *International Herald Tribune*, to find so many letters to the *News-Press* supportive of the president and chiding the doomsayers, the rats who think the ship is sinking, the fair-weather friends of Bill, and the rest of the defeatists.

It is true that the political establishment, mostly Republican of course, would bring on economic Armageddon rather than go along with a rational, revolutionary, and refreshing reversal of handling the important issues, which endangers the business as usual routine of the entrenched protectors of industrial power, the wealthy, and the not-so-rich with dim awareness.

The prime minister of France, a conservative, faced with exactly the same economic situation and appointed by a conservative coalition of parties, is trying to enact the very same measures, give or take, that President Clinton is persuading Congress to adopt, and getting exactly the same flack for it, mostly from his own side.

A president who is compassionate, an intellectual, has public appeal, is attractive, fun, witty, plays music, and is, at the same time, a master politician is bound to rock the boat considerably in the fortress of custom, conservatism, and cupidity that is Washington, D.C.

A prophet in his own country always gets crucified.

[June 29, 1993]

## Chicago Tribune

Mrs. Elizabeth Austin provides a rare glimpse into the inner sanctum of the Austin family where, as you can see, it is always think-think-think, talk-talk-talk, and pass the Librium and carrot juice:

At the fireworks this weekend, I'll be wearing a brand-new red, white and blue dress, bought especially for the occasion. When the orchestra at Grant Park plays "The Star-Spangled Banner," I will stand up and sing, with my right hand over my heart. And tomorrow morning, over breakfast, I will

read the Declaration of Independence out loud. . . .

All this patriotism makes my husband squirm visibly. He can't understand how a liberal can be so enthusiastic about her country and flag. To him, flag-waving is the first step toward membership in the John Birch Society.

Like him, most liberals are uncomfortable with the paraphernalia of patriotism. We have a hard time keeping a straight face when the high school band marches past, playing a barely recognizable Sousa march. We chuckle knowingly when Roseanne Arnold screeches out the National Anthem, then grabs her crotch for an encore. And when a cynical politician wraps himself in the flag, we blame the flag as much as the man. . . .

Part of this, of course, goes to the heart of what it means to be a liberal. We liberals are an odd mixture of pessimism and optimism; we focus on the hole instead of the doughnut, but only because we can envision a future of doughnuts that are completely hole-free, for everybody. That makes it hard for us to feel completely at ease when it's time to salute the flag.

[July 3, 1993]

## New York Times

Dr. Norman E. Rosenthal, man of science, proposes dramatic therapy for "summer blues":

The blues are more commonplace in winter, and behaviorists have found that deprivation of sunlight in the winter months can cause a form of depression labeled season affective disorder.

But more recently a condition that is believed to be caused by prolonged exposure to high heat and humidity has been described by researchers at the clinical psychobiology branch of the National Institute of Mental Health.

The "summer blues" cause sufferers to become lethargic and have difficulty functioning at work and home. . . . The problem is not a result of exposure to too much sunlight on long summer days, said Dr. Norman E. Rosenthal, a researcher at the mental health institute, but probably has to do with irregularities in areas of the brain, most notably the hypothalamus, that help regulate body temperature.

Just as the winter malady can be cleared up with exposure to artificial sunlight, the summer blues can be chased away if individuals cool down by remaining in air-conditioned environments or spending summers in colder climates, he said.

[July 18, 1993]



## Reunion

I recently went to a field day at my tenth Harvard reunion, where the classes congregate in a row of tents lined up chronologically by class. A walk from, say, the '88 tent to the '33 tent is a walk from what you were to what you will become. It's also a good way of gauging how successive generations measure up to one another. Such appraisals always verge on tendentiousness, but they can be tested empirically against the surveys each reunion class mails out. Over 50 percent of alums respond, so you wind up with some figures that are of considerable—if hardly infallible—statistical significance. Some highlights:

The Class of '68 had its twenty-fifth reunion this year. Sixty-eight, of course, the hippie class, is a tempting target, given their tendency to talk like free spirits and act like snobs, tightwads, and prudes. Fully a quarter of the class are millionaires. Only one in ten has a net worth under \$100,000. One in five makes over \$300,000 a year. A fifth of the men are lawyers and a fifth doctors. Eighty-six percent give less than a tenth of their income to charity.

A third are atheists. Only 1 percent smoke a pack a day or more, and fewer than half have three drinks a week. Among women, 91 percent voted for Clinton, and 30 percent have had abortions.

That only 3-4 percent describe themselves as homosexual seems a particular embarrassment for *New York Times* journalist Linda Greenhouse '68, who introduced the survey ("gay and Lesbian members of the class are almost certainly underrepresented . . ."). So many in this generation regularly faulted those of us who went to school in the 1980s for lacking "empathy" and "idealism" that it is hard to suppress one's mirth at the news that the Harvard respondents to the Class of '68 survey are *1 percent black* (and Radcliffe '68 is *zero percent black*). In a telling show of arrogance, 68 percent said their "personal development" was greater than that of their same-gender parent, while only 6 percent said it was less—a pretty uncharitable assessment of the gen-

eration that not only survived the Depression and fought World War II, but even put these little snobs through college.

The Class of '78 has a more detailed survey, particularly on politics (compiled by Karen Falkenstein Green '78, chief of staff for Massachusetts Governor William Weld '66). A kind word for the class's political opinions would be schizophrenic. Three quarters (87 percent of women) believe Anita Hill more than Clarence Thomas; yet in response to the question "In order to reduce the federal deficit, Congress should first . . ." 68 percent say "reduce spending," while only 23 percent say "raise taxes." The class is split on whether political correctness is "the new McCarthyism" or "positive" (women like it 52-31; men don't, 56-37). Most favor term limits. But here's the old arrogance again: 81 percent describe their "political and cultural opinions and beliefs" as "more sophisticated than mainstream America's."

Now, my class: Between 1968 and 1983, Harvardians moved far to what passes here for the right. Only 71 percent of us voted for Clinton (and a mere 84 percent of women). Atheism plummeted to a bare 18 percent. Average number of sex partners took a steep dive to fifteen, from a high of nineteen in the Class of '78. (Who drove down the curve?)

Yet by a 56-44 percentage, those in my class identified with the generation before us more than the generation after. In many ways we were the lees of the sixties crowd. We got to college in 1979, the peak year for marijuana use on campus, and dabbled in drugs, only to discover on graduating that there was a War on Them. We arrived at Harvard with guitars, and graduated into a world of personal computers. We entered with the sexual revolution going full-bore, ran into herpes in college, and soon realized that that wasn't the half of it. (Half have lost a friend to AIDS, and the class report is filled with HIV-positives.)

In retrospect, the first half of the 1980s may have been the heyday of classical lib-

eralism in this country—with taxes dropping and the Scylla and Charybdis of strident moralism and p.c. still over the horizon. I am so grateful to have spent my college years in that interregnum that I cannot speak of it without sentimentality. Perhaps I flatter my classmates, but it seems that something left us a bit less insufferable than our predecessors. These autobiographical sketches from my class report aren't wholly apytical:

In March, I returned to San Francisco and gave birth to our first child. . . . The next week I lost my job . . . The next day, our car was stolen in Oakland. . . .

But you know what? None of it really mattered. . . . In the last ten years, the blessings of marriage and motherhood overshadow all the rest.

[My wife] and I are highly religiously active, and moderately politically active. I think the experience of having children . . . has proven to us the wisdom of the traditional Christian morality that we espoused—sometimes blatantly—when at Harvard. At times the shocking intolerance of the College toward those who share my conservative leanings makes me unwilling to express any gratitude for the institution and to support it financially. But it served a gracious purpose by placing [my future wife] and me in Thayer North in the fall of 1979, and that is sufficient to rekindle in me an affectionate, if strained, regard for the greatest place of learning on Earth.

Maybe that puts us in too good a light. For every write-up like the ones above there are two that mention "parenting" as "an experience I highly recommend" or "a satisfying challenge for me" or "a real growing experience for me" (*me, me, me*). Fortunately for us, our survey included no questions that would have measured arrogance, such as "Are you a better person in the eyes of God than your parents?"

As Linda Greenhouse suggests elsewhere in her '68 report, someone should have put that question to the parents.

—Christopher Caldwell