

# WE

This is a story about  
AIDS in Africa.  
Look at the pictures.  
Read the words.  
And then try not to care.



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# DEATH STALKS A CONTINENT

In the dry timber of African societies, AIDS was a spark. The conflagration it set off continues to kill millions. Here's why ■ By Johanna McGeary

Imagine your life this way.

You get up in the morning and breakfast with your three kids. One is already doomed to die in infancy. Your husband works 200 miles away, comes home twice a year and sleeps around in between. You risk your life in every act of sexual intercourse. You go to work past a house where a teenager lives alone tending young siblings without any source of income. At another house, the wife was branded a whore when she asked her husband to use a condom, beaten silly and thrown into the streets. Over there lies a man desperately sick without access to a doctor or clinic or medicine or food or blankets or even a kind word. At work you eat with colleagues, and every third one is already fatally ill. You whisper about a friend who admitted she had the plague and whose neighbors stoned her to death. Your leisure is occupied by the funerals you attend every Saturday. You go to bed fearing adults your age will not live into their 40s. You and your neighbors and your political and popular leaders act as if nothing is happening.

Across the southern quadrant of Africa, this nightmare is real. The word not spoken is AIDS, and here at ground zero of humanity's deadliest cataclysm, the ultimate tragedy is that so many people don't know—or don't want to know—what is happening.

As the HIV virus sweeps mercilessly through these lands—the fiercest trial Africa has yet endured—a few try to address the terrible depredation. The rest of society looks away. Flesh and muscle melt from the bones of the sick in packed hospital wards and lonely bush kraals. Corpses stack up in morgues until those on top crush the identity from the faces underneath. Raw earth mounds scar the landscape, grave after grave without name or number. Bereft children grieve for parents lost in their prime, for siblings scattered to the winds.

The victims don't cry out. Doctors and obituaries do not give the killer its name. Families recoil in shame. Leaders shirk responsibility. The stubborn silence heralds victory for the disease: denial cannot keep the virus at bay.

The developed world is largely silent too. AIDS in Africa has never commanded the full-bore response the West has brought to other, sometimes lesser, travails. We pay sporadic attention, turning on the spotlight when an international conference occurs, then turning it off. Good-hearted donors donate; governments acknowledge that more needs to be done. But think how different the effort would be if what is happening here were happening in the West.

By now you've seen pictures of the sick, the dead, the orphans. You've heard appalling numbers: the number of new infections, the number of the dead, the number who are sick without care, the number walking around already fated to die.

But to comprehend the full horror AIDS has visited on Africa, listen to the woman we have dubbed Laetitia Hambahlane in Durban or the boy Tsepho Phale in Francistown or the woman who calls herself Thandiwe in Bulawayo or Louis Chikoka, a long-distance trucker. You begin to understand how AIDS has struck Africa—with a biblical virulence that will claim tens of millions of lives—when you hear about shame and stigma and ignorance and poverty and sexual violence and migrant labor and promiscuity and political paralysis and the terrible silence that surrounds all this dying. It is a measure of the silence that some asked us not to print their real names to protect their privacy.

Theirs is a story about what happens when a disease leaps the confines of medicine to invade the body politic, infecting not just individuals but an entire society. As AIDS migrated to man in Africa, it mutated into a complex plague with confounding social, economic and political mechanics that locked together to accelerate the virus' progress. The region's social dynamics colluded to spread the disease and help block effective intervention.

We have come to three countries abutting one another at the bottom of Africa—Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe—the heart of the heart of the epidemic. For nearly a decade, these nations suffered a hidden invasion of infection that

concealed the dimension of the coming calamity. Now the omnipresent dying reveals the shocking scale of the devastation.

AIDS in Africa bears little resemblance to the American epidemic, limited to specific high-risk groups and brought under control through intensive education, vigorous political action and expensive drug therapy. Here the disease has bred a Darwinian perversion. Society's fittest, not its frailest, are the ones who die—adults spirited away, leaving the old and the children behind. You cannot define risk groups: everyone who is sexually active is at risk. Babies too, unwittingly infected by mothers. Barely a single family remains untouched. Most do not know how or when they caught the virus, many never know they have it, many who do know don't tell anyone as they lie dying. Africa can provide no treatment for those with AIDS.

They will all die, of tuberculosis, pneumonia, meningitis, diarrhea, whatever overcomes their ruined immune systems first. And the statistics, grim as they are, may be too low. There is no broad-scale AIDS testing: infection rates are calculated mainly from the presence of HIV in pregnant women. Death certificates in these countries do not record AIDS as the cause. "Whatever stats we have are not reliable," warns Mary Crewe of the University of Pretoria's Center for the Study of AIDS. "Everybody's guessing."

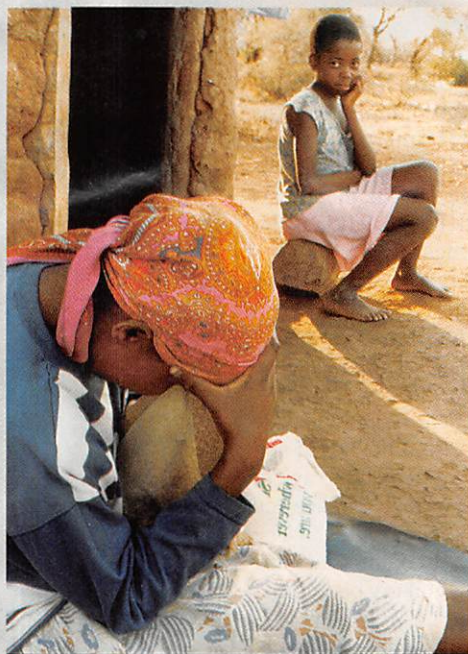
## THE TB PATIENT

**CASE NO. 309 IN THE TUGELA FERRY HOME-CARE PROGRAM** shivers violently on the wooden planks someone has knocked into a bed, a frayed blanket pulled right up to his nose. He has the flushed skin, overbright eyes and careful breathing of the tubercular. He is alone, and it is chilly within the crumbling mud walls of his hut at Msinga Top, a windswept outcrop high above the Tugela River in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province. The spectacular view of hills and veld would gladden a well man, but the 22-year-old we will call Fundisi Khumalo, though he does not know it, has AIDS, and his eyes seem to focus inward on his simple fear.

Before he can speak, his throat clutches in gasping spasms. Sharp pains rack his chest; his breath comes in shallow gasps. The vomiting is better today. But constipation has doubled up his knees, and he is too weak to go outside to relieve himself. He can't remember when he last ate. He can't remember how long he's been sick—"a long time, maybe since six months ago." Khumalo knows he has TB, and he believes it is just TB. "I am only thinking of that," he answers when we ask why he is so ill.

But the fear never leaves his eyes. He worked in a hair salon in Johannesburg, lived in a men's hostel in one of the cheap townships, had "a few" girlfriends. He knew other young men in the hostel who were on-and-off sick. When they fell too ill to work anymore, like him, they straggled home to rural villages like Msinga Top. But where Khumalo would not go is the hospital. "Why?" he says. "You are sick there, you die there."

"He's right, you know," says Dr. Tony Moll, who has driven us up the dirt track from the 350-bed hospital he heads in



GREG MARINOVICH—LIAISON FOR TIME

**FORCED OUT OF HOME** A child has to care for her mother, paralyzed by the AIDS virus and ostracized by the community

Tugela Ferry. "We have no medicines for AIDS. So many hospitals tell them, 'You've got AIDS. We can't help you. Go home and die.'" No one wants to be tested either, he adds, unless treatment is available. "If the choice is to know and get nothing," he says, "they don't want to know."

Here and in scattered homesteads all over rural Africa, the dying people say the sickness afflicting their families and neighbors is just the familiar consequence of their eternal poverty. Or it is the work of witchcraft. You have done something bad and have been bewitched. Your neighbor's jealousy has invaded you. You have not appeased the spirits of your ancestors, and they have cursed you. Some in South Africa believe the disease was introduced by the white population as a way to control black Africans after the end of apartheid.

Ignorance about AIDS remains profound. But because of the funerals, southern Africans can't help seeing that something more systematic and sinister lurks out there. Every Saturday and often Sundays too, neighbors trudge to the cemeteries for costly burial rites for the young and the middle-aged who are suddenly dying so much faster than the old. Families say it was pneumonia, TB, malaria that killed their son, their wife, their baby. "But you starting to hear the truth," says Durban home-care volunteer Busi Magwazi. "In the church, in the graveyard, they saying, 'Yes, she died of AIDS.' Oh, people talking about it even if the families don't admit it."

Ignorance is the crucial reason the epidemic has run out of control. Surveys say many Africans here are becoming aware there is a sexually transmitted disease called AIDS that is incurable. But they don't think the risk applies to them. And their vague knowledge does not translate into changes in their sexual behavior. It's easy to see why so many don't yet sense the danger when few talk openly about the disease. And Africans are beset by so plentiful a roster of perils—famine, war, the violence of desperation or ethnic hatred, the regular illnesses of poverty, the dangers inside mines or on the roads—that the delayed risk of AIDS ranks low.

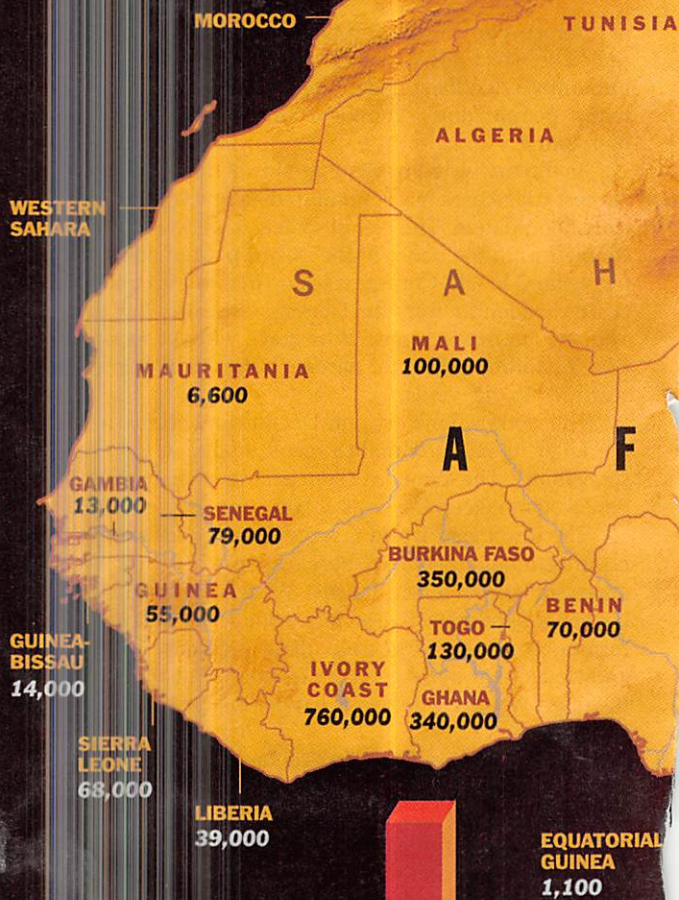
## THE OUTCAST

**TO ACKNOWLEDGE AIDS IN YOURSELF IS TO BE BRANDED AS monstrous.** Laetitia Hambahlane (not her real name) is 51 and sick with AIDS. So is her brother. She admits it; he doesn't. In her mother's broken-down house in the mean streets of Umlazi township, though, Laetitia's mother hovers over her son, nursing him, protecting him, resolutely denying he has anything but TB, though his sister claims the sure symptoms of AIDS mark him. Laetitia is the outcast, first from her family, then from her society.

For years Laetitia worked as a domestic servant in Durban and dutifully sent all her wages home to her mother. She fell in love a number of times and bore four children. "I loved that last man," she recalls. "After he left, I had no one, no sex." That was 1992, but Laetitia already had HIV.

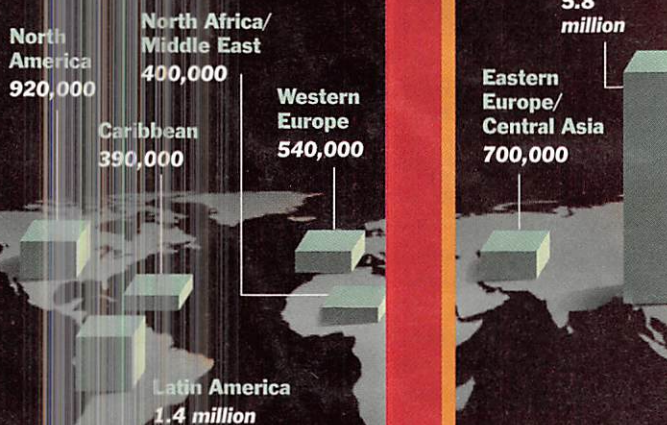
She fell sick in 1996, and her employers sent her to a private doctor who couldn't diagnose an illness. He tested her blood and found she was HIV positive. "I wish I'd died right then," she says, as tears spill down her sunken cheeks. "I asked the doctor, 'Have you got medicine?' He said no. I said, 'Can't you keep me alive?'" The doctor could do nothing and sent her away. "I couldn't face the word," she says. "I couldn't sleep at night. I sat on my bed, thinking, praying. I did not see anyone day or night. I ask God, Why?"

Laetitia's employers fired her without asking her exact diagnosis. For weeks she could not muster the courage to tell anyone. Then she told her children, and they were ashamed and frightened. Then, harder still, she told her mother. Her mother raged about the loss of money if Laetitia could not work again. She was so angry she ordered



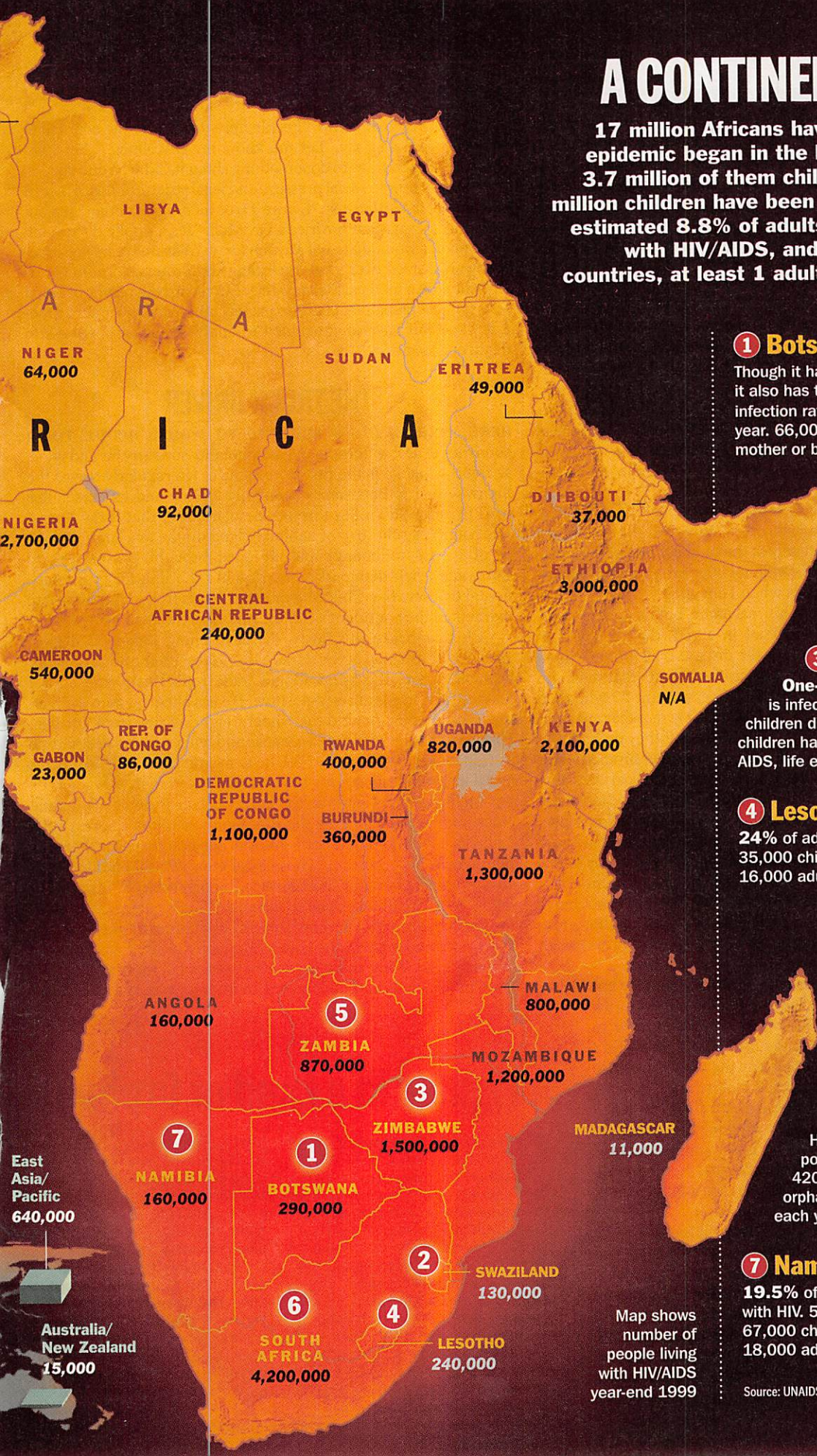
## HOT SPOT

Of the 36 million adults and children in the world living with HIV/AIDS in 2000, more than 70% were in sub-Saharan Africa. 3.8 million Africans were newly infected last year



# A CONTINENT IN PERIL

17 million Africans have died since the AIDS epidemic began in the late 1970s, more than 3.7 million of them children. An additional 12 million children have been orphaned by AIDS. An estimated 8.8% of adults in Africa are infected with HIV/AIDS, and in the following seven countries, at least 1 adult in 5 is living with HIV



## 1 Botswana

Though it has the highest per capita GDP, it also has the highest estimated adult infection rate—36%. 24,000 die each year. 66,000 children have lost their mother or both parents to the disease

## 2 Swaziland

More than 25% of adults have HIV/AIDS in this small country. 12,000 children have been orphaned, and 7,100 adults and children die each year

## 3 Zimbabwe

One-quarter of the adult population is infected here. 160,000 adults and children died in 1999, and 900,000 children have been orphaned. Because of AIDS, life expectancy is 43

## 4 Lesotho

24% of adults are infected with HIV/AIDS. 35,000 children have been orphaned, and 16,000 adults and children die each year

## 5 Zambia

20% of the adult population is infected, 1 in 4 adults in the cities. 650,000 children have been orphaned, and 99,000 Zambians died in 1999

## 6 South Africa

This country has the largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS, about 20% of its adult population, up from 13% in 1997. 420,000 children have been orphaned, and 250,000 people die each year from the disease

## 7 Namibia

19.5% of the adult population is living with HIV. 57% of the infected are women. 67,000 children are AIDS orphans, and 18,000 adults and children die each year

Map shows number of people living with HIV/AIDS year-end 1999

Laetitia out of the house. When her daughter wouldn't leave, the mother threatened to sell the house to get rid of her daughter. Then she walled off her daughter's room with plywood partitions, leaving the daughter a pariah, alone in a cramped, dark space without windows and only a flimsy door opening into the alley. Laetitia must earn the pennies to feed herself and her children by peddling beer, cigarettes and candy from a shopping cart in her room, when people are brave enough to stop by her door. "Sometimes they buy, sometimes not," she says. "That is how I'm surviving."

Her mother will not talk to her. "If you are not even accepted by your own family," says Magwazi, the volunteer home-care giver from Durban's Sinoziso project who visits Laetitia, "then others will not accept you." When Laetitia ventures outdoors, neighbors snub her, tough boys snatch her purse, children taunt her. Her own kids are tired of the sickness and don't like to help her anymore. "When I can't get up, they don't bring me food," she laments. One day local youths barged into her room, cursed her as a witch and a whore and beat her. When she told the police, the youths returned, threatening to burn down the house.

But it is her mother's rejection that wounds Laetitia most. "She is hiding it about my brother," she cries. "Why will she do nothing for me?" Her hands pick restlessly at the quilt covering her paper-thin frame. "I know my mother will not bury me properly. I know she will not take care of my kids when I am gone."

Jabulani Syabusi would use his real name, but he needs to protect his brother. He teaches school in a red, dusty district of KwaZulu-Natal. People here know the disease is all around them, but no one speaks of it. He eyes the scattered huts that make up his little settlement on an arid bluff. "We can count 20 who died just here as far as we can see. I personally don't remember any family that told it was AIDS," he says. "They hide it if they do know."

Syabusi's own family is no different. His younger brother is also a teacher who has just come home from Durban too sick to work anymore. He says he has tuberculosis, but after six months the tablets he is taking have done nothing to cure him. Syabusi's wife Nomsange, a nurse, is concerned that her 36-year-old brother-in-law may have something worse. Syabusi finally asked the doctor tending his brother what is wrong. The doctor said the information is confidential and will not tell him. Neither will his brother. "My brother is not brave enough to tell me," says Syabusi, as he stares sadly toward the house next door, where his only sibling lies ill. "And I am not brave enough to ask him."

Kennedy Fugewane, a cheerful, elderly volunteer counselor, sits in an empty U.S.-funded clinic that offers fast, pinprick blood tests in Francistown, Botswana, pondering how to break through the silence. This city suffers one of the world's highest infection rates, but people deny the disease because HIV is linked with sex. "We don't reveal anything," he says. "But people are so stigmatized even if they walk in the door." Africans feel they must keep private anything to do with sex. "If a man comes here, people will say he is running around," says Fugewane, though he acknowledges that men never do come. "If a woman comes, people will say she is loose. If anyone says they got HIV, they will be despised."

Pretoria University's Mary Crewe says, "It is presumed if you get AIDS, you have done something wrong." HIV labels you as living an immoral life. Embarrassment about sexuality looms more important than future health risks. "We have no language to talk candidly about sex," she says, "so we have no civil language to talk about AIDS." Volunteers like Fugewane try to reach out with flyers, workshops, youth meetings and free condoms, but they are frustrated by a culture that values

its dignity over saving lives. "People here don't have the courage to come forward and say, 'Let me know my HIV status,'" he sighs, much less the courage to do something about it. "Maybe one day..."

Doctors bow to social pressure and legal strictures not to record AIDS on death certificates. "I write TB or meningitis or diarrhea but never AIDS," says South Africa's Dr. Moll. "It's a public document, and families would hate it if anyone knew." Several years ago, doctors were barred even from recording compromised immunity or HIV status on a medical file; now they can record the results of blood tests for AIDS on patient charts to protect other health workers. Doctors like Moll have long agitated to apply the same openness to death certificates.

## THE TRUCK DRIVER

**HERE, MEN HAVE TO MIGRATE TO WORK, INSIDE THEIR** countries or across borders. All that mobility sows HIV far and wide, as Louis Chikoka is the first to recognize. He regularly drives the highway that is Botswana's economic lifeline and its curse. The road runs for 350 miles through desolate bush that is the Texas-size country's sole strip of habitable land, home to a large majority of its 1.5 million people. It once brought prospectors to Botswana's rich diamond reefs. Now it's the link for transcontinental truckers like Chikoka who haul goods from South Africa to markets in the continent's center. And now the road brings AIDS.

Chikoka brakes his dusty, diesel-belching Kabwe Transport 18-wheeler to a stop at the dark roadside rest on the edge of Francistown, where the international trade routes converge and at least 43% of adults are HIV-positive. He is a cheerful man even after 12 hard hours behind the wheel freighting rice from Durban. He's been on the road for two weeks and will reach his destination in Congo next Thursday. At 39, he is married, the father of three and a long-haul trucker for 12 years. He's used to it.

Lighting up a cigarette, the jaunty driver is unusually loquacious about sex as he eyes the dim figures circling the rest stop. Chikoka has parked here for a quickie. See that one over there, he points with his cigarette. "Those local ones we call bitches. They always waiting here for short service." Short service? "It's according to how long it takes you to ejaculate," he explains. "We go to the 'bush bedroom' over there [waving at a clump of trees 100 yds. away] or sometimes in the truck. Short service, that costs you 20 rands [\$2.84]. They know we drivers always got money."

Chikoka nods his head toward another woman sitting beside a

## UNVANQUISHED

# A Fighter in a Land of Orphans

**S**ilence and the ignorance it promotes have fed the AIDS epidemic in Africa perhaps more than any other factors. In Malawi, where until the end of dictator Hastings Banda's rule in 1994 women were barred from wearing short skirts and men could be jailed for having long hair, public discussion of AIDS was forbidden. According to the government, AIDS didn't exist inside Malawi. Catherine Phiri, 38, knew otherwise. She tested positive in 1990, after her husband had died of the disease. Forced to quit her job as a nurse when colleagues began to gossip, she sought refuge with relatives

in the capital, Lilongwe. But they too shunned her and eventually forced her to move, this time to Salima on beautiful Lake Malawi. "Even here people gossiped," says Phiri, whose brave, open face is fringed by a head of closely cropped graying hair.

Determined to educate her countrymen, Phiri set up a group that offers counseling, helps place orphans and takes blood that can then be tested in the local hospital. "The community began to see the problem, but it was very difficult to communicate to the government. They didn't want to know."

They do now. According to a lawmaker, AIDS has killed dozens of

stack of cardboard cartons. "We like better to go to them," he says. They are the "businesswomen," smugglers with gray-market cases of fruit and toilet paper and toys that they need to transport somewhere up the road. "They come to us, and we negotiate privately about carrying their goods." It's a no-cash deal, he says. "They pay their bodies to us." Chikoka shrugs at a suggestion that the practice may be unhealthy. "I been away two weeks, madam. I'm human. I'm a man. I have to have sex."

What he likes best is dry sex. In parts of sub-Saharan Africa, to please men, women sit in basins of bleach or saltwater or stuff astringent herbs, tobacco or fertilizer inside their vagina. The tissue of the lining swells up and natural lubricants dry out. The resulting dry sex is painful and dangerous for women. The drying agents suppress natural bacteria, and friction easily lacerates the tender walls of the vagina. Dry sex increases the risk of HIV infection for women, already two times as likely as men to contract the virus from a single encounter. The women, adds Chikoka, can charge more for dry sex, 50 or 60 rands (\$6.46 to \$7.75), enough to pay a child's school fees or to eat for a week.

Chikoka knows his predilection for commercial sex spreads AIDS; he knows his promiscuity could carry the disease home to his wife; he knows people die if they get it. "Yes, HIV is terrible, madam," he says as he crooks a finger toward the businesswoman whose favors he will enjoy that night. "But, madam, sex is natural. Sex is not like beer or smoking. You can stop them. But unless you castrate the men, you can't stop sex—and then we all die anyway."

Millions of men share Chikoka's sexually active lifestyle, fostered by the region's dependence on migrant labor. Men desperate to earn a few dollars leave their women at hardscrabble rural homesteads to go where the work is: the mines, the cities, the road. They're housed together in isolated males-only hostels but have easy access to prostitutes or a "town wife" with whom they soon pick up a second family and an ordinary STD and HIV. Then they go home to wives and girlfriends a few times a year, carrying the virus they do not know they have. The pattern is so dominant that rates of infection in many rural areas across the southern cone match urban numbers.

If HIV zeros in disproportionately on poor migrants, it does not skip over the educated or the well paid. Soldiers, doctors, policemen, teachers, district administrators are also routinely separated from families by a civil-service system that sends them alone to remote rural posts, where they have money and women have no men. A regular paycheck procures more access to extramarital sex. Result: the vital professions are being devastated.



SHAMSUZ ZAMAN—UNDP

year plan to fight the disease, and last July he ordered a crackdown on prostitution (though the government is now thinking of legalizing it). At the least, his awareness campaign appears to be working: 90% of Malawians know about the dangers of AIDS. But that knowledge comes too late for the estimated 8% of HIV-positive citizens—800,000 people in 1999—or the 276,000 children under 15 orphaned by the disease.

Last October, Phiri picked up an award for her efforts from the U.N. But, she says, "I still have people who look at me like trash..." Her voice trails off. "Sometimes when I go to sleep I fear for the future of my children. But I will not run away now. Talking about it: that's what's brave."

—By Simon Robinson/Salima

Schoolmaster Syabusi is afraid there will soon be no more teachers in his rural zone. He has just come home from a memorial for six colleagues who died over the past few months, though no one spoke the word AIDS at the service. "The rate here—they're so many," he says, shaking his head. "They keep on passing it at school." Teachers in southern Africa have one of the highest group infection rates, but they hide their status until the telltale symptoms find them out.

Before then, the men—teachers are mostly men here—can take their pick of sexual partners. Plenty of women in bush villages need extra cash, often to pay school fees, and female students know they can profit from a teacher's favor. So the schoolmasters buy a bit of sex with lonely wives and trade a bit of sex with willing pupils for A's. Some students consider it an honor to sleep with the teacher, a badge of superiority. The girls brag about it to their peers, preening in their ability to snag an older man. "The teachers are the worst," says Jabulani Siwela, an AIDS worker in Zimbabwe who saw frequent teacher-student sex in his Bulawayo high school. They see a girl they like; they ask her to stay after class; they have a nice time. "It's dead easy," he says. "These are men who know better, but they still do it all the time."

## THE PROSTITUTE

**THE WORKINGWOMAN WE MEET DIRECTS OUR CAR TO A** reedy field fringing the gritty eastern townships of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. She doesn't want neighbors to see her being interviewed. She is afraid her family will find out she is a prostitute, so we will call her Thandiwe. She looked quite prim and proper in her green calf-length dress as she waited for johns outside 109 Tongogaro Street in the center of downtown. So, for that matter, do the dozens of other women cruising the city's dim street corners: not a mini or bustier or bared navel in sight. Zimbabwe is in many ways a prim and proper society that frowns on commercial sex work and the public display of too much skin.

That doesn't stop Thandiwe from earning a better living turning tricks than she ever could doing honest work. Desperate for a job, she slipped illegally into South Africa in 1992. She cleaned floors in a Johannesburg restaurant, where she met a cook from back home who was also illegal. They had two daughters, and they got married; he was gunned down one night at work.

She brought his body home for burial and was sent to her in-laws to be "cleansed." This common practice gives a dead husband's brother the right, even the duty, to sleep with the widow. Thandiwe tested negative for HIV in 1998, but if she were positive, the ritual cleansing would have served only to pass on the disease. Then her in-laws wanted to keep her two daughters because their own children had died, and marry her off to an old uncle who lived far out in the bush. She fled.

Alone, Thandiwe grew desperate. "I couldn't let my babies starve." One day she met a friend from school. "She told me she was a sex worker. She said, 'Why you suffer? Let's go to a place where we can get quick bucks.'" Thandiwe hangs her head. "I went. I was afraid. But now I go every night."

She goes to Tongogaro Street, where the rich clients are, tucking a few condoms in her handbag every evening as the sun sets and returning home strictly by 10 so that she won't have to service a taxi-van driver to get a ride back. Thandiwe tells her family she works an evening shift, just not at what. "I get 200 zim [\$5] for sex," she says, more for special services. She uses two condoms per client, some-

**A VOICE: Phiri's idea changed Malawi** Members of Parliament in the past decade. And Malawi's government has begun to move. President Bakili Muluzi incorporates AIDS education into every public rally. In 1999 he launched a five-

times three. "If they say no, I say no." But then sometimes resentful johns hit her. It's pay-and-go until she has pocketed 1,000 or 1,500 Zimbabwe dollars and can go home—with more cash than her impoverished neighbors ever see in their roughneck shantytown, flush enough to buy a TV and fleece jammies for her girls and meat for their supper.

"I am ashamed," she murmurs. She has stopped going to church. "Every day I ask myself, 'When will I stop this business?' The answer is, 'If I could get a job'..." Her voice trails off hopelessly. "At the present moment, I have no option, no other option." As trucker Chikoka bluntly puts it, "They give sex to eat. They got no man; they got no work; but they got kids, and they got to eat." Two of Thandiwe's friends in the sex trade are dying of AIDS, but what can she do? "I just hope I won't get it."

In fact, casual sex of every kind is commonplace here. Prostitutes are just the ones who admit they do it for cash. Everywhere there's premarital sex, sex as recreation. Obligatory sex and its abusive counterpart, coercive sex. Transactional sex: sex as a gift, sugar-daddy sex. Extramarital sex, second families, multiple partners. The nature of AIDS is to feast on promiscuity.

Rare is the man who even knows his HIV status: males widely refuse testing even when they fall ill. And many men who suspect they are HIV positive embrace a flawed logic: if I'm already infected, I can sleep around because I can't get it again. But women are the ones who progress to full-blown AIDS first and die fastest, and the underlying cause is not just sex but power. Wives and girlfriends and even prostitutes in this part of the world can't easily say no to sex on a man's terms. It matters little what comes into play, whether it is culture or tradition or the pathology of violence or issues of male identity or the subservient status of women.

Beneath a translucent scalp, the plates of Gertrude Dhlamini's cranium etch a geography of pain. Her illness is obvious in the thin, stretched skin under which veins throb with the shingles that have blinded her left eye and scarred that side of her face. At 39, she looks 70. The agonizing thrush, a kind of fungus, that paralyzed her throat has ebbed enough to enable her to swallow a spoon or two of warm gruel, but most of the nourishment flows away in constant diarrhea. She struggles to keep her hand from scratching restlessly at the scaly rash flushing her other cheek. She is not ashamed to proclaim her illness to the world. "It must be told," she says.

Gertrude is thrice rejected. At 19 she bore a son to a boyfriend who soon left her, taking away the child. A second boyfriend got her pregnant in 1994 but disappeared in anger when their daughter was born sickly with HIV. A doctor told Gertrude it was her fault, so she blamed herself that little

Noluthando was never well in the two years she survived. Gertrude never told the doctor the baby's father had slept with other women. "I was afraid to," she says, "though I sincerely believe he gave the sickness to me." Now, she says, "I have rent him from my heart. And I will never have another man in my life."

Gertrude begged her relatives to take her in, but when she revealed the name of her illness, they berated her. They made her the household drudge, telling her never to touch their food or their cooking pots. They gave her a bowl and a spoon strictly for her own use. After a few months, they threw her out.

Gertrude sits upright on a donated bed in a cardboard shack in a rough Durban township that is now the compass of her world. Perhaps 10 ft. square, the little windowless room contains a bed, one sheet and blanket, a change of clothes and a tiny cooking ring, but she has no money for paraffin to heat the food that a home-care

worker brings. She must fetch water and use a toilet down the hill. "Everything I have," she says, "is a gift." Now the school that owns the land under her hut wants to turn it into a playground and she worries about where she will go. Gertrude rubs and rubs at her raw cheek. "I pray and pray to God," she says, "not to take my soul while I am alone in this room."

Women like Gertrude were brought up to be subservient to men. Especially in matters of sex, the man is always in charge. Women feel powerless to change sexual behavior. Even when a woman wants to protect herself, she usually can't: it is not uncommon for men to beat partners who refuse intercourse or request a condom. "Real men" don't use them, so women who want their partners to must fight deeply ingrained taboos. Talk to him about donning a rubber sheath and be prepared for accusations, abuse or abandonment.

A nurse in Durban, coming home from an AIDS training class, suggested that her mate should put on a condom, as a kind of homework exercise. He grabbed a pot and banged loudly on it with a knife, calling all the neighbors into his house. He pointed the knife at his wife and demanded: "Where was she between 4 p.m. and now? Why is she suddenly suggesting this? What has changed after 20 years that she wants a condom?"

Schoolteacher Syabusi is an educated man, fully cognizant of the AIDS threat. Yet even he bristles when asked if he uses a condom. "Humph," he says with a fine snort. "That question is nonnegotiable." So despite extensive distribution of free condoms, they often go unused. Astonishing myths have sprung up. If you don one, your erection can't grow. Free condoms must be too cheap to be safe: they have been stored too long, kept too hot, kept too cold. Condoms fill up with germs, so they spread AIDS. Condoms from overseas bring the disease with them. Foreign governments that donate condoms put holes in them so that Africans will die. Edu-

## FINANCIAL AID

### A Lending Tree

**G**etting ahead in Africa is tough. Banks lend money only to the middle class and the wealthy. Poor Africans—meaning most

Africans—stay poor. It's even harder if you're sick. Without savings to fall back on, many HIV-positive parents pull their kids out of school. They can't afford the fees and end up selling their few possessions to feed the family. When they die, their kids are left with nothing.

Though not directly targeted at people with AIDS, microcredit schemes go some way toward fixing that problem. The schemes work like minibanks, lending small amounts—often as little as \$100—to traders or farmers. Because they lack the infrastructure of banks and don't charge fees, most charge an interest rate of as much as 1% a week and repayment rates of over 99%—much better than that for banks in Africa, or in most places.

Many microcredit schemes encourage clients to set aside some of the extra income generated by the loan as savings. This can be used for medical bills or to pay school fees if the parents get sick. "Without the loans I would have had to look for another way to make money," says Florence Muriungi, 40, who sings in a Kampala jazz band and whose husband died of AIDS four years ago. Muriungi, who cares for eight children—five of her own and three her sister left when she too died of AIDS—uses the money to pay school fees in advance and fix her band's equipment. Her singing generates enough money for her to repay the loans and save a bit.

Seventeen of the 21 women at a weekly meeting of regular borrowers in Uganda care for AIDS orphans. Five are AIDS widows. "I used to buy just one or two bunches of bananas to sell. Now I buy 40, 50, 60," says Elizabeth Baluka, 47, the group's secretary. "Every week I put aside a little bit of money to help my children slowly by slowly." —By Simon Robinson/Kampala



cation programs find it hard to compete with the power of the grapevine.

## THE CHILD IN NO. 17

**IN CRIB NO. 17 OF THE SPARTAN** but crowded children's ward at the Church of Scotland Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal, a tiny, staring child lies dying. She is three and has hardly known a day of good health. Now her skin wrinkles around her body like an oversize suit, and her twig-size bones can barely hold her vertical as nurses search for a vein to take blood. In the frail arms hooked up to transfusion tubes, her veins have collapsed. The nurses palpate a threadlike vessel on the child's forehead. She mewls like a wounded animal as one tightens a rubber band around her head to raise the vein. Tears pour unnoticed from her mother's eyes as she watches the needle tap-tap at her daughter's temple. Each time the whimpering child lifts a wan hand to brush away the pain, her mother gently lowers it. Drop by drop, the nurses manage to collect 1 cc of blood in five minutes.

The child in crib No. 17 has had TB, oral thrush, chronic diarrhea, malnutrition, severe vomiting. The vial of blood reveals her real ailment, AIDS, but the disease is not listed on her chart, and her mother says she has no idea why her child is so ill. She breastfed her for two years, but once the little girl was weaned, she could not keep solid food down. For a long time, her mother thought something was wrong with the food. Now the child is afflicted with so many symptoms that her mother had to bring her to the hospital, from which sick babies rarely return.

She hopes, she prays her child will get better, and like all the mothers who stay with their children at the hospital, she tends her lovingly, constantly changing filthy diapers, smoothing sheets, pressing a little nourishment between listless lips, trying to tease a smile from the vacant, staring face. Her husband works in Johannesburg, where he lives in a men's squatter camp. He comes home twice a year. She is 25. She has heard of AIDS but does not know it is transmitted by sex, does not know if she or her husband has it. She is afraid this child will die soon, and she is afraid to have more babies. But she is afraid too to raise the subject with her husband. "He would not agree to that," she says shyly. "He would never agree to have no more babies."

Dr. Annick DeBaets, 32, is a volunteer from Belgium. In the two years she has spent here in Tugela Ferry, she has learned all about how hard it is to break the cycle of HIV transmission from mother to infant. The door to this 48-cot ward is literally a revolving one: sick babies come in, receive doses of rudimentary antibiotics, vitamins, food; go home for a week or a month; then come back as ill as ever. Most, she says, die in the first or second year. If she could just follow up with really intensive care, believes Dr. DeBaets, many of the wizened infants crowding three to a crib could live longer, healthier lives. "But it's very discouraging. We simply don't have the time, money or facilities for anything but minimal care."

Much has been written about what South African Judge Edwin Cameron, himself HIV positive, calls his country's "grievous ineptitude" in the face of the burgeoning epidemic. Nowhere has that been more evident than in the government's failure to provide



GRACE MARINOVICH—LIAISON FOR TIME

**VIRGINITY TESTING IS BACK** The practice of virginity testing used to be part of traditional Zulu rites. It is regaining popularity among anxious mothers who believe that if their daughters remain virgins, they won't get AIDS. Here, girls dance down the street in celebration after passing the test

drugs that could prevent pregnant women from passing HIV to their babies. The government has said it can't afford the 300-rand-per-dose, 28-dose regimen of AZT that neighboring nations like Botswana dole out, using funds and drugs from foreign donors. The late South African presidential spokesman Parks Makhahana even suggested publicly that it was not cost effective to save these children when their mothers were already doomed to die: "We don't want a generation of orphans."

Yet these children—70,000 are born HIV positive in South Africa alone every year—could be protected from the disease for about \$4 each with another simple, cheap drug called nevirapine. Until last month, the South African government steadfastly refused to license or finance the use of nevirapine despite the manufacturer's promise to donate the drug for five years, claiming that its "toxic" side effects are not yet known. This spring, however, the drug will finally be distributed to leading public hospitals in the country, though only on a limited basis at first.

The mother at crib No. 17 is not concerned with potential side effects. She sits on the floor cradling her daughter, crooning over and over, "Get well, my child, get well." The baby stares back without blinking. "It's sad, so sad, so sad," the mother says. The child died three days later.

The children who are left when parents die only add another complex dimension to Africa's epidemic. At 17, Tsepho Phale has been head of an indigent household of three young boys in the dusty township of Monarch, outside Francistown, for two years. He never met his father, his mother died of AIDS, and the grieving children possess only a raw concrete shell of a house. The doorways have no doors; the window frames no glass. There is not a stick of furniture. The boys sleep on piled-up blankets, their few clothes dangling from nails. In the room that passes for a kitchen, two paraffin burners sit on the dirt floor alongside the month's food: four cabbages, a bag of oranges and one of potatoes, three sacks of flour, some yeast, two jars of oil and two cartons of milk. Next to a dirty stack of plastic pans lies the mealy meal and rice that will provide their main sustenance for the month. A couple of bars of soap and two rolls of toilet paper also have to last the month. Tsepho has just brought these rations home from the social-service center where the "orphan grants" are doled out.

Tsepho has been robbed of a childhood that was grim even before his mother fell sick. She supported the family by "buying and selling things," he says, but she never earned more than a pittance. When his middle brother was knocked down by a car and left physically and mentally disabled, Tsepho's mother used the insurance money to build this house, so she would have one thing of value to leave her children. As the walls went up, she fell sick. Tsepho had to nurse her, bathe her, attend to her bodily functions, try to feed her. Her one fear as she lay dying was that her rural relatives would try to steal the house. She wrote a letter bequeathing it to her sons and bade Tsepho hide it.

As her body lay on the concrete floor awaiting burial, the relatives argued openly about how they would divide up the profits when they sold her dwelling. Tsepho gave the district commis-

sioner's office the letter, preventing his mother's family from grabbing the house. Fine, said his relations; if you think you're a man, you look after your brothers. They have contributed nothing to the boys' welfare since. "It's as if we don't exist anymore either," says Tsepho. Now he struggles to keep house for the others, doing the cooking, cleaning, laundry and shopping.

The boys look at the future with despair. "It is very bleak," says Tsepho, kicking aimlessly at a bare wall. He had to quit school, has no job, will probably never get one. "I've given up my dreams. I have no hope."

Orphans have traditionally been cared for the African way: relatives absorb the children of the dead into their extended families. Some still try, but communities like Tsepho's are becoming saturated with orphans, and families can't afford to take on another kid, leaving thousands alone.

Now many must fend for themselves, struggling to survive. The trauma of losing parents is compounded by the burden of becoming a breadwinner. Most orphans sink into penury, drop out of school, suffer malnutrition, ostracism, psychic distress. Their makeshift households scramble to live on pitiful handouts—from overstretched relatives, a kind neighbor, a state grant—or they beg and steal in the streets. The orphans' present desperation forecloses a brighter future. "They hardly ever succeed in having a life," says Siphelile Kaseke, 22, a counselor at an AIDS orphans' camp near Bulawayo. Without education, girls fall into prostitution, and older boys migrate illegally to South Africa, leaving the younger ones to go on the streets.

EVERY DAY SPENT IN THIS PART OF AFRICA IS ACUTELY DEPRESSING: there is so little countervailing hope to all the stories of the dead and the doomed. "More than anywhere else in the world, AIDS in Africa was met with apathy," says Suzanne LeClerc-Madlala, a lecturer at the University of Natal. The consequences of the silence march on: infection soars, stigma hardens, denial hastens death, and the chasm between knowledge and behavior widens. The present disaster could be dwarfed by the woes that loom if Africa's epidemic rages on. The human losses could wreck the region's frail economies, break down civil societies and incite political instability.

In the face of that, every day good people are doing good things. Like Dr. Moll, who uses his after-job time and his own fund raising to run an extensive volunteer home-care program in KwaZulu-Natal. And Busi Magwazi, who, along with dozens of

others, tends the sick for nothing in the Durban-based Sinoziso project. And Patricia Bakwinya, who started her Shining Stars orphan-care program in Francistown with her own zeal and no money, to help youngsters like Tsepho Phale. And countless individuals who give their time and devotion to ease southern Africa's plight.

But these efforts can help only thousands; they cannot turn the tide. The region is caught in a double bind. Without treatment, those with HIV will sicken and die; without prevention, the spread of infection cannot be checked. Southern Africa has no other means available to break the vicious cycle, except to change everyone's sexual behavior—and that isn't happening.

The essential missing ingredient is leadership. Neither the countries of the region nor those of the wealthy world have been able or willing to provide it.

South Africa, comparatively well off, comparatively well educated, has blundered tragically for years. AIDS invaded just when apartheid ended, and a government absorbed in massive transition relegated the disease to a back page. An attempt at a national education campaign wasted millions on a farcical musical. The premature release of a local wonder drug ended in scandal when the drug turned out to be made of industrial solvent. Those fiascoes left the government skittish about embracing expensive programs, inspiring a 1998 decision not to provide AZT to HIV-positive pregnant women. Zimbabwe too suffers savagely from feckless leadership. Even in Botswana, where the will to act is gathering strength, the resources to follow through have to come from foreign hands.

AIDS' grip here is so pervasive and so complex that all societies—theirs and ours—must rally round to break it. These countries are too poor to doctor themselves. The drugs that could begin to break the cycle will not be available here until global pharmaceutical companies find ways to provide them inexpensively. The health-care systems required to prescribe and monitor complicated triple-cocktail regimens won't exist unless rich countries help foot the bill. If there is ever to be a vaccine, the West will have to finance its discovery and provide it to the poor. The cure for this epidemic is not national but international.

The deep silence that makes African leaders and societies want to deny the problem, the corruption and incompetence that render them helpless is something the West cannot fix. But the fact that they are poor is not. The wealthy world must help with its zeal and its cash if southern Africa is ever to be freed of the AIDS plague. ■

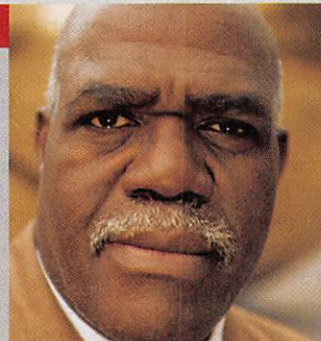
A UGANDAN TALE

## Not Afraid to Speak Out

Major Rubaramira Ruranga knows something about fighting. During Idi Amin's reign of terror in Uganda in the 1970s, Ruranga worked as a spy for rebels fighting the dictator. After Amin's ouster, the military man studied political intelligence in Cuba before returning to find a new dictator at the helm and a bloody war raging. Hoping for change, Ruranga supplied his old rebel friends with more secrets, this time from within the President's office. When he was discovered, he fled to the

bush to "fight the struggle with guns."

The turmoil in Uganda was fueling the spread of another enemy—AIDS. Like many rebel soldiers, Ruranga was on the move constantly to avoid detection. "You never see your wife, and so you get to a new place and meet someone else," he says. "I had sex without protection with a few women." Doctors found he was HIV positive in 1989. "They told me I would die in two to three years, so I started preparing for when I was away. I told my kids, my wife. Worked on finishing the house for



JAMES LEVENS—SABA FOR TIME

**REBEL: Fighting for the infected** them. I gave up hope." But as he learned about AIDS, his attitude changed. After talking to American and European AIDS activists—some had lived with the disease for 15 years or more—"I realized I was not going to die in a few years. I was reborn, determined to live."

He began fighting again. After announcing his HIV status at a rally on World AIDS Day in 1993—an extraordinarily brave act in Africa, where few activists, let alone army officers, ever admit to having HIV—he set up a network for those living with HIV/AIDS in Uganda, "so that people had somewhere to go to talk to friends." And while Uganda has done more to slow the spread of AIDS than any other country—in some places the rate of infection has dropped by half—"we can always do better," says Ruranga. "Why are we able to buy guns and bullets to kill people and we are not able to buy drugs to save people?" The fight continues. —By Simon Robinson/Kampala

# Paying for AIDS Cocktails

## Who should pick up the tab for the Third World?

By JOHANNA MCGEARY

**L**ET'S SAY THE COUNTRIES IN SOUTHERN Africa finally mobilize the political will to take on AIDS. If they are able to use only their own money, these countries will be forced to write off those who are already infected. The best they can do is try to slow new cases through preventive education and encouraging condom use, maybe reduce transmission from mothers to babies. Hardly enough to save a continent. So figuring out how to save the millions who are infected remains an agonizing challenge.

proper medical infrastructure—that deadly, drug-resistant strains would emerge. But at what point does the human benefit to desperate, destitute countries outweigh strict adherence to patents and profits?

During the tug of war so far, the pharmaceuticals and Western governments have prevailed. But increasingly, poor countries and AIDS advocates are finding ways to shift the balance. India and Brazil have vigorously exploited a time lag until international patent rules apply to them, manufacturing copies of AIDS drugs and selling them at deeply discounted prices. The practice opens the door for other

name—as a threat they are battling to wipe out. They feel that they alone should not have to pick up the tab for Africa. They want to stanch drug pirates who might make worthless fakes or flood drugs onto the black market. And they fear that making AIDS therapies cheaper for Africans will prompt lucrative Western markets to demand lower prices as well.

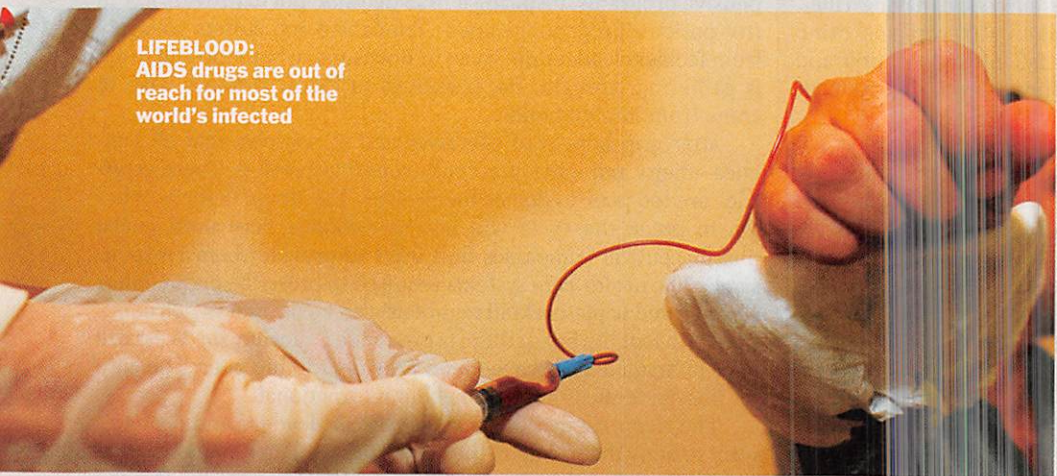
But the increasing activism to lower AIDS-drug prices has forced some grudging changes in boardrooms and government offices. Last May the U.S. reversed course when President Clinton, over fierce resistance from the Republican Congress, issued an Executive Order promising that the U.S. would not challenge laws in African countries that seek to improve access to AIDS drugs. For five years, UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations program on HIV/AIDS) jawboned the companies to set lower prices for developing countries. Finally, just before the international AIDS conference held last July in Durban, South Africa, five major pharmaceuticals joined an “Accelerated Access” program to negotiate 60% to 80% reductions in AIDS-drug prices for poor nations. To stave off a wave of compulsory licensing around the globe, one company has said it will match generic prices where it can't block copycat production.

On-the-ground impact from these moves in Africa is hard to find. Each country must negotiate the price of each AIDS-cocktail component with each company, and the tough bargaining has barely begun. While Senegal, for instance, might haggle prices down 75% or 80%, the therapy is still too costly at \$1,200 a year for people who earn \$510 a year, Senegal's per capita income. And to start, the company will provide sufficient drugs for only 800 patients over five years. Kim Nichols, policy director at the New York City-based African Services, calls it “too little, too late.”

Now all eyes are on the Bush Administration. Will it stick with Clinton's order to stop blocking Africa's efforts to get cheaper drugs? Or will it give way if Republicans and drug companies apply pressure to rescind the order? So far, says a trade official, “no one has said, ‘Hold your horses.’”

While access to antiretrovirals would bring a medical miracle to Africa, it would still provide no more than a holding action. Only a vaccine that could actually stamp out the virus would provide a lasting cure—and that remains tragically elusive. —Reported by Jay Branegan/Washington, William Dowell and Alice Park/New York

**LIFEBLOOD:**  
AIDS drugs are out of reach for most of the world's infected



SEBASTIAO MOREIRA—AGENCIA ESTADO

Life-extending drugs are out there. Wealthy countries use multidrug-cocktail therapies that transform AIDS from certain killer to chronic illness and reduce its spread by making the infected less contagious. The people you just read about could stop dying if they too had access to the drugs.

Despite years of evidence of AIDS' genocidal toll on poor countries, no one has brought these drugs within reach of ordinary Africans. In fact, the people who make the drugs—American- and European-owned multinational pharmaceutical corporations—and their home governments, notably Washington, have worked hard to keep prices up by limiting exports to the Third World and vigorously enforcing patent rights. They argue that drug firms legitimately need the profits to finance research on new wonder drugs. They say it's not wise to offer cheap AIDS drugs without a

countries to follow suit by taking advantage of a legal loophole in global-trade rules called compulsory licensing. In effect, it lets countries breach patents during national emergencies to manufacture generic versions of AIDS drugs. So a virtually identical version of the antiretroviral combination cocktail that sells for \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year in the U.S. costs \$3,000 in Brazil and less than \$1,000 in India. And when Brazil decided to provide the generic drugs free to all its AIDS victims, it disproved the argument that poor countries couldn't master the complex regime of AIDS pills. The government set up effective clinics, and reports indicate that Brazilian patients take their medicine as meticulously as American AIDS sufferers do.

The pharmaceutical firms see local manufacture and so-called parallel imports—where other countries buy the copycat generics instead of the brand

# "BIG TIME" PUI

By **JAMES CARNEY** and  
**JOHN F. DICKERSON** WASHINGTON

**I**N THE FIRST DAYS OF ANY ADMINISTRATION, the new President's schedule is picked over for clues to his priorities, his management style, his strengths and weaknesses. But this year White House watchers are following not only George W. Bush. Dick Cheney is being tracked with equal intensity. Last week, while Bush displayed his talents in a very public way—announcing new legislation to help the disabled, touring a school with former adversary Joe Lieberman, chatting up the minister while attending services at an African-American church—his Vice President was in the background, less visible but no less crucial to the workings of the new Administration. As a close look at his emerging schedule shows, "Big Time" Cheney's influence is vast, his portfolio unprecedented—just the way his boss wants it to be.

The key measure of stature for any presidential adviser is time spent "in the loop"—the magical, shifting circle of power and influence in which the most sensitive issues are debated, the most profound decisions made. Cheney never leaves the loop. The President not only put him in charge of the transition but allowed him to install allies atop both the Treasury and

Defense departments and place former aides at choke points throughout the government. After Bush's smooth first week in office, it was Cheney who appeared on the Sunday talk shows to tout the Administration's success. And last week Bush dealt with the first big crisis of his tenure—California's energy mess—by turning it, and the Administration's national energy policy, over to Cheney.

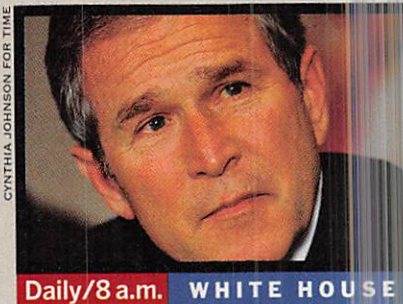
During the campaign, Cheney would sometimes go almost a week without talking to the man at the top of the ticket. Now they spend as much as two-thirds of every working day in each other's presence. Their togetherness begins at 8 a.m. with an intelligence briefing in the Oval Office. By the time Cheney settles into his yellow chair near the fireplace for that session, he has already received his daily CIA briefing. To maximize efficiency, he is briefed during the 25-minute ride from the McLean, Va., town house where he and his wife Lynne are living while the Vice President's residence is being renovated. In the Oval Office, fueled by a breakfast of black coffee, Cheney reviews intelligence issues with the President, then stays for a National Security briefing with Bush and senior staff.

Out of the Oval Office by 9, Cheney walks in his polished maroon cowboy boots down the hall to his West Wing

office, where he huddles with his chief of staff, Lewis ("Scooter") Libby, and other senior staff members to go over the day's schedule. Though Cheney has three other offices in town—two in the Capitol and one in the Old Executive Office Building, across the street from the White House—he, like Al Gore before him, plans to spend most of his time in the one closest to the President. That may be where the comparison between the two men ends. Unlike Gore and most other previous Vice Presidents, including the elder George Bush, Cheney is not treating this job as a stepping-stone. After briefly flirting with a campaign for

## In the Loop

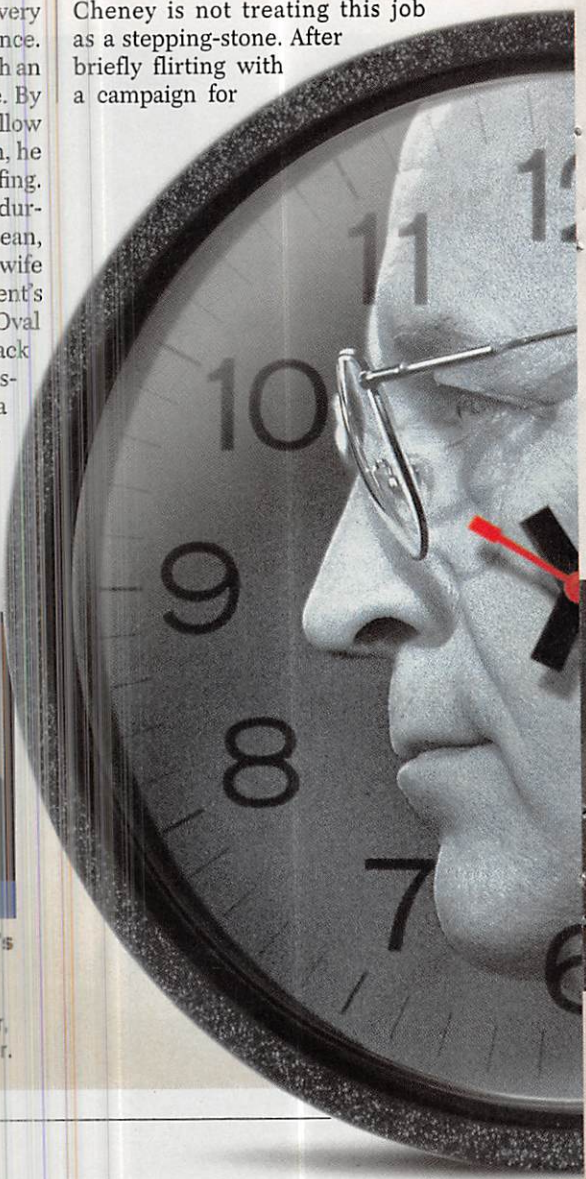
From his first cup of coffee with the President each morning, Cheney spends two-thirds of his workday with Bush. Cheney's views carry weight on all issues—from tax cuts to foreign affairs—and across all agencies, many of which are headed by longtime friends from his 30 years in Washington.



CYNTHIA JOHNSON FOR TIME

Daily/8 a.m. WHITE HOUSE

Cheney starts each day at **President Bush's** side for an intelligence briefing. Afternoons they devote to policy. And on Thursdays they have a private lunch. A de facto Prime Minister, Cheney is already the most powerful Veep ever.



# NCHES

## As Dick Cheney works the levers of power, a look at the Veep's schedule shows why he's a major league asset to President Bush

the presidency in 1995, Cheney—who just turned 60 and has survived four heart attacks—has ruled out running on his own. As the current President happily explained to a group of congressional visitors the other day, “Dick’s doing a good job because he’s told me he doesn’t want to be President.”

That’s one reason Cheney’s stature isn’t threatening to the new President. Bush trusts him completely and knows Cheney’s power is something he himself created. Bush has often told friends that he put Cheney in charge of his transition because he wanted lawmakers in Washington to understand that the new Vice President would be a ma-

major player. “I want Dick to build up some political capital,” he would say, “so he can go up to Capitol Hill and spend it.” Bob Strauss, a Democratic wise man who was called into a White House meeting two weeks ago, says all the talk about Cheney’s overshadowing the President “doesn’t bother Bush one goddam bit. He thrives on it.” At the Alfalfa Club dinner on Jan. 27, an annual black-tie gathering of the Washington elite, Bush even told a self-deprecating joke about “President Cheney.”

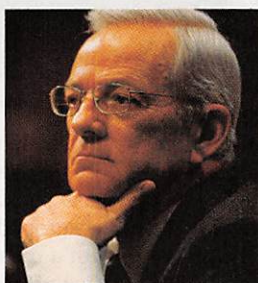
With more power than ambition, Cheney doesn’t need a big staff. His contingent of 50 is less than half the size of his predecessor’s and fully meshed into the Bush operation. Except for Mary Matalin, a former talk-show host and G.O.P. operative who is his senior counselor, Cheney doesn’t have a slew of political advisers weighing the impact of each development on his future. “He speaks with the authority of the President,” says Matalin, “because everyone understands the Vice President has no personal agenda.” According to Libby and Matalin, that means their boss will spend far less time than past Vice Presidents tending the gardens of politics—schmoozing and fund rais-

ing and campaigning for fellow party members—leaving him more time to work on the issues. And he is free to embrace politically perilous issues like the California energy crunch, something a future presidential candidate may have wanted to avoid.

Like Vice Presidents Gore and Dan Quayle, Cheney has a standing weekly lunch date with his President. The one-on-one with the boss is among a Veep’s most coveted perks. For all the alleged closeness between Gore and Bill Clinton, Gore had to ask for his lunch and fight to keep it on Clinton’s schedule. For Cheney and Bush, however, the

Thursday meal is almost superfluous since they spend so much of their day together. (In addition to the morning briefing and scheduled events, they reunite in the Oval Office every afternoon for economic- and domestic-policy meetings.) But the lunch is important because the two men are completely alone. There they discuss issues like whether some adviser has too broad a portfolio or whether a new Cabinet Secretary can handle a looming challenge.

Cheney’s lunch with Bush may be the least interesting of his midday meals. Each Tuesday the Vice President plans to travel to



DAVID BURNETT—CONTACT

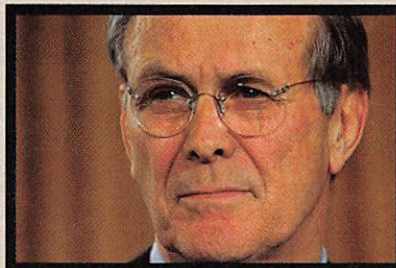
**TREASURY MAN Paul O'Neill is an old friend**



ROBERT TRIPETT—SIPA FOR TIME

**Tues./1:30 p.m. SENATE**

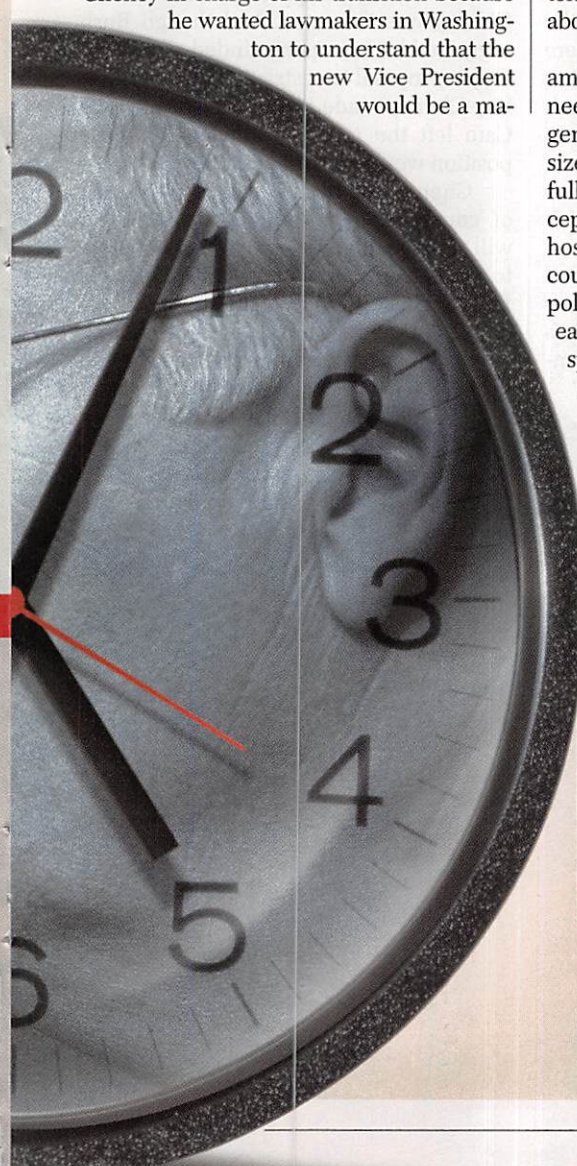
G.O.P. leader **Trent Lott** invited Cheney to join his weekly caucus lunches. Republicans hope the Veep’s Hill experience means he will understand *their* needs. Bush wants Cheney to explain *his*—and keep the troops in line.



CYNTHIA JOHNSON FOR TIME

**Wed./12:30 p.m. PENTAGON**

Returning to his old turf, Cheney meets with Defense Secretary **Donald Rumsfeld**, Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. All have worked together before; Rumsfeld is a mentor.



BURNETT—CONTACT FOR TIME

the Senate for the Republican conference lunch, and he has promised to make regular visits to the House on Wednesdays. Such visits are rare. When Quayle, the last Veep to have regular lunch dates on the Hill, met with Senators, he was not seen as a significant conduit to the White House. Cheney, however, sends all kinds of strong signals. Republican Senators already consider him their 51st member, the one who will be needed to break tie votes. Even more important, they see him as a reliable link to the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. "He has the delivery system and the capacity" to carry messages to and from the President, says a senior Senate aide. In meetings with lawmakers, Cheney holds back more than he holds forth. He doesn't work the room but sits quietly until he is introduced. Then he lays out the agenda quickly and without gassing on and on, a laconic style that few others in the room practice. He takes questions, but mostly he listens.

Inside Washington's chatterbox culture, Cheney's silence and trademark smirk make people nervous. In his office a picture from his Gulf War days captures the perfect Cheney pose—former President Bush and General Colin Powell standing in the foreground while Cheney lurks in the background with what an aide calls his "cockeyed look," his shoulders hunched and a slanted, slightly menacing smile on his face. Since his days as Gerald Ford's chief of staff and, later, as second-ranking Republican in the House, that look has invited all manner of interpretations.



ERIC DRAPER—WHITE HOUSE

**BUSH'S SHADOW** When the President chats up guests, Cheney listens, inscrutable behind his smirk

Returning from White House meetings last week, Republicans and Democrats were puzzling over what the man in the background was thinking. "He just sits there with a cat's grin," remarked one legislator. Maybe it was that opaque quality that Bush was referring to early last week when 15 Republican and Democratic Senators sat down at the long table in the White House Cabinet room and the President said, "Welcome to Cheney's charm offensive."

On the Hill, it's now widely assumed that while Bush spreads goodwill, Cheney will sow fear. He is the Administration's chief enforcer. His task is not to woo Democrats but to keep fractious Republicans in line. Senator John McCain got a glimpse of that Cheney two weeks ago, when he arrived at the White House for what he thought

would be a private meeting with the President to discuss campaign-finance reform. Cheney was there too. And though Bush suggested he was open-minded about McCain's proposal to restrict campaign funding, Cheney made it clear he wasn't. McCain left the meeting wondering whose position would carry the day.

Cheney will be soothing the concerns of conservatives, who worry that Bush will give too much away to the Democrats to get legislation passed. House Speaker Denny Hastert—whose son landed a job on Cheney's staff—has taken to calling Cheney an extra whip, the vote-corralling job he held in his days as a Wyoming Congressman. As a Hastert aide says, "It's hard to turn the



**BIG-TIME ADVISER**

## From TV to the West Wing

**M**ary Matalin may be just as well known as her boss, but that's not a notion the sharp-tongued former co-host of CNN's *Crossfire* wants to entertain. Drawing attention to oneself is frowned on in Dick Cheney's button-down world, in which the erstwhile TV opinionista is counselor to the Vice President and assistant to the President. Cheney, the ultimate company man, believes that no underling, including himself, should be too

eager to discuss his work for the "principal," George W. Bush.

And so the woman who for years wouldn't zip her lip declined to discuss her role for this story and asked that it not be written (cc: Vice President). She is delighted to be back on the inside—and wants to stay. A disciple of the late Lee Atwater, a G.O.P. strategist known for his barekuckle style, Matalin was

**TONGUE-TIED** Matalin, a talk-happy opinionista, is learning to zip her lip

ALEX WONG—NEWSMAKERS

White House down when Cheney calls.”

Cheney's biggest role may come in the sphere he mastered as Defense Secretary to the first President Bush—foreign policy. Last Wednesday the Vice President crossed the Potomac to the Pentagon for the first of another regular lunch session—this one with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. Though all four are friends, and Rice and Powell worked with Cheney in the first Bush Administration, it has already become a Washington parlor game to guess who will prevail in the inevitable infighting. Both Cheney and Rumsfeld, who was Cheney's mentor in the Ford Administration, are far more hawkish than Powell. Cheney watchers believe Cheney installed Rumsfeld as a counterweight to the charismatic Powell.

For all his responsibilities, Cheney, like his boss, knocks off from work earlier than the crowd that preceded him. The first weeks of the Clinton-Gore Administration were marked by frequent all-nighters. Not so Bush-Cheney. By 7 o'clock most nights, the Vice President is on his way home. Last Friday most of his senior staff members were gone by 6. “He is feeling wonderful because everything is working so well,” says an aide. But that's the Cheney way. On the first night of the Gulf War, Secretary of Defense Cheney ordered Chinese food and kicked back on his office sofa. Cheney's calm “comes from riding the range genetically for several generations,” says his chief of staff, referring to the Vice President's Western heritage. It is a disposition that should serve Bush well, especially when the days get longer. —*With reporting by Karen Tumulty and Douglas Waller/Washington*

## DIET AND EXERCISE REGIMEN

## Bye, Bye, Rib Eye

Of course Washington is talking about Dick Cheney's power. But like Leno and Letterman, the capital is also buzzing about his health. After all, the man has had four heart attacks, and though he's only 5½ years older than Dubya (Cheney turned 60 last week), his physique is decidedly old school—more like former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's than our gym-addicted President's. Does he have the stamina to be the most powerful Veep in history?

He appears to be holding up well so far. Since suffering a mild heart attack in November, Cheney has been working out for half an hour every morning on a treadmill and an elliptical trainer—one part cross-country ski machine, one part stair climber. The Veep's cardiologist, Jonathan Reiner, says Cheney is “doing great, doing all the right things, looking great.” That means sacrifice. Cheney, an able chef who is known for preparing grilled meats, beef stew and spaghetti—and for tucking into roast beef sandwiches, ribs and bratwurst on the campaign trail—seems to have trimmed the fat from his diet. Cheney's office says he no longer starts the day with a “Western-style breakfast.” Starbucks skim lattes are in, for both Dick and wife



SPENCER GREEN/AP

WHERE'S THE BEEF? Going easy on red meat

Lynne, when they can get them. During Inauguration week, the Cheneys barred chocolate, nuts and other fatty snacks from their Madison Hotel suite. And Cheney's butcher told TIME that the Vice President hasn't been coming by as often for his favorite cuts—porterhouse and rib-eye steaks. On his recent visits to the Someplace Special Giant Gourmet in McLean, Va., says meat manager Tim Bowman, Cheney moseyed right past the meat counter. “I guess as soon as they say he can eat more,” says Bowman, “he'll buy more.”

But even the mighty have their weaknesses. Back in December, at a postelection lunch at the Capitol, some Senators dined on chicken salad and melon. Cheney had fried chicken. —*By Matthew Cooper, with Douglas Waller/Washington*

deputy manager of Bush Sr.'s '92 campaign, but “she's never worked in a White House,” says a friend. “She couldn't pass this opportunity up.” The decision hasn't sat well with her equally partisan husband, James Carville. With two kids under six, her job means more Mr. Mom duties for the vein-popping Cajun who helped elect Bill Clinton in 1992. It also means a serious drop in family income. Carville and Matalin's mix of celebrity, romance and adversarial politics has been a lucrative formula—joint speeches, talk-show gigs—since their public courtship during the '92 campaign.

Matalin's marriage drives some Republicans crazy. Not only does she consort with Democrats, but her views on some issues, like abortion and homosexuality, place her to the left of social conservatives. If some Republicans question the sanity of marrying a Clinton-loving Democrat, none doubt her fierce loyalty to the G.O.P. or her devotion to the Bush family. As an unpaid adviser to Bush 2000, Matalin remained his relentless booster on CNN, an arrangement she never saw as a conflict. Former President Bush has said that toward the end of his failing re-election bid, he and Matalin

were the only ones on the campaign who thought he still had a chance—proof that loyalty can sometimes lead to blindness.

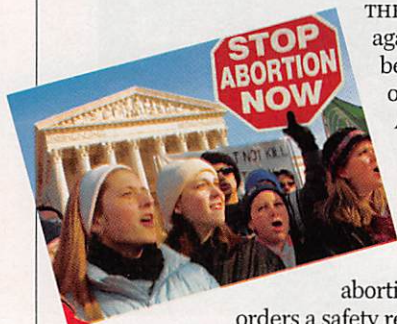
Although Matalin is close to the President, she remains even closer to his father, whom, friends say, she called almost every day during the 2000 campaign. That partly explains how she ended up as an adviser to the man who was the elder Bush's Defense Secretary. It was Cheney's daughter Liz who called Matalin after the election and asked if she would consider working for the Vice President. Matalin jumped at the chance.

Inside the White House, she defers to Karen Hughes and Karl Rove, Bush's top political and communications aides, and to Andy Card, the chief of staff. But as Cheney's adviser and a force in her own right, she is considered a major player. Though she's keeping a low profile in public, Bush aides say she's more like her true self on the inside. “She's very smart, and she's brutally honest,” says her former *Crossfire* adversary Bill Press. “She's not an a\_\_kisser. She's not a yes person. She'll tell it like it is. Every White House needs someone like that.” —*By J.C. and J.F.D.*

Charles Krauthammer

# Why Pro-Lifers Are Missing the Point

The debate over fetal-tissue research overlooks the big issue



THE ABORTION WARS ARE ON again. No, abortion is not about to be outlawed. There will be no overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. In America, this battle is fought, peculiarly, not at the center but at the periphery. The new President repeals the former President's directive allowing funding for

abortion counseling overseas. He orders a safety review of RU 486, the so-called abortion pill. He then expresses himself on perhaps the most peripheral issue of all: research that relies on fetal tissue. Bush opposes such research, and has asked the Department of Health and Human Services to study whether federal funding for it should be banned. Now, there may be good reason to pause before opening wide the doors to this kind of research—but not for the reasons being advanced by opponents of abortion. The real problem is not where the cells come from, but where they are going.

At immediate issue are “stem cells,” cells often taken from the very earliest embryo. Because they are potentially capable of developing into any kind of cell, they may help cure an array of intractable diseases. Pro-life forces find the procedure ethically impermissible, because removing the cells kills the embryo. Moreover, they argue, harvesting this biological treasure will encourage the manufacture of human embryos for precisely this utilitarian purpose.

But their arguments fail. First, stem cells are usually taken from embryos produced for in-vitro fertilization or from aborted fetuses. Both procedures are legal. They produce cells of incalculable value that would otherwise be discarded. Why not derive human benefit from them? Second, the National Institutes of Health guidelines issued last August take away any incentive to abort or otherwise produce embryos just for their useful parts: no payment for embryos and no dedication of embryonic cells for specific recipients (say, for injection into a sick family member). Finally, there is the potential benefit. Because embryonic stem cells can theoretically develop into any cell type in the body, they could cure all kinds of diseases, such as Parkinson's, diabetes and Alzheimer's. Will it work? We can't know without the research.

One can admire pro-lifers for trying to prevent science from turning human embryos into tissue factories. But theirs is a rearguard action. The benefits of such research will soon be-

come apparent. Stem cells are now being injected into monkeys with a Lou Gehrig's-like disease. Human trials will undoubtedly follow. Those resisting this research will find themselves outflanked politically, as the stampede of the incurably sick and their loved ones rolls through Congress demanding research and treatment. The resisters will also find themselves outflanked morally when the amount of human suffering that stem cells might alleviate is weighed against the small risk of increasing the number of embryos that do not see life.

In their desire to keep the embryo inviolable, opponents are missing the main moral issue. The real problem with research that manipulates early embryonic cells—whether derived from fetal tissue or from adult cells rejuvenated through cloning—is not the cells' origin but their destiny.

What really ought to give us pause about research that harnesses the fantastic powers of primitive cells to develop into entire organs and even organisms is what monsters we will soon be capable of creating.

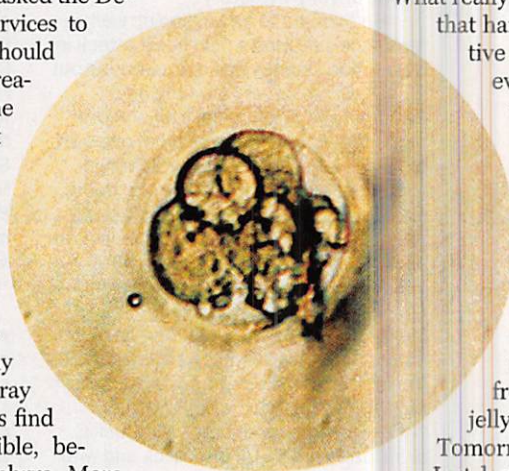
In 1998, Massachusetts scientists injected a human nucleus into a cow egg. The resulting embryo, destroyed early, appeared to be producing human protein, but we have no idea what kind of grotesque hybrid entity would come out of such a marriage. Last October, the first primate containing genes from another species—a monkey with a jellyfish gene—was born. Monkeys today.

Tomorrow humans. Just last month Britain legalized embryonic stem-cell research. But it did not stop there. Parliament also permitted “therapeutic” human cloning. That means that you cannot grow your clone in a uterus to produce a copy of yourself, but

you can grow it in a test tube to produce organs as spare parts. Anyone who believes that such lines will not be crossed is living on the moon.

The heart of problem is this: It took Nature 3 billion years of evolution to produce cells that have the awesome power to develop autonomously, through staggeringly complex chemical reactions, into anything from a kidney cell to a full thinking human being. We are about to harness that power for crude human purposes.

What will our purposes be? Of course there will be great medical benefits. They will seduce us into forging bravely, recklessly ahead. But just around the corner lies the logical by-product of such research: the hybrid human-animal species, the partly developed human bodies for use as parts, and other grotesqueries as yet unimagined. That is what ought to be giving us pause: not where we took these magnificent cells from but where they are taking us.



Embryonic stem cells are harvested from blastocysts, embryos less than a week old

DEMONSTRATORS: ALEX WONG—NEWSMAKERS; STEM CELLS: CHOO YOUNG-KONG—AFP





**CANINE KILLER** Bane, the Presa Canario that led the attack on Whipple, was destroyed; his companion Hera is still in custody



**VICTIM** Diane Whipple, 33, was a popular coach

FALABRO—CONTRA COSTA COUNTY TIMES/SP

NATION

# Terror on a Leash

A grisly dog attack leaves a city shaken, and mulling a hard question: Should the owners be prosecuted?

By **CHRIS TAYLOR** SAN FRANCISCO

**I**F ST. FRANCIS, THE PATRON SAINT OF animals, had walked the streets of the city that bears his name last week, he might have been the only pedestrian untroubled by the pets that until now were treated better here than in most American cities. "People are crossing the street to avoid dogs and phoning up to ask, 'Are my children safe?'" says Jean Donaldson, behavior and training director at San Francisco's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. So many hundreds have called that Donaldson is busily arranging town-hall meetings on how to protect yourself from dog attack (roll into a ball, covering your neck, face and gut). "You're more likely to get hit by lightning," she explains, "but there's a knowledge void. Our image of dogs has been shattered."

Until Jan. 26, all you needed to know about dogs in San Francisco was this: though most landlords won't allow them, most dotcoms will, and pet shelters won't kill them if they're at all adoptable. But that Friday Diane Whipple, 33, a lacrosse coach, stepped out of the elevator in her tony Pacific Heights apartment building with her shop-

ping bags. She was set upon by Bane and Hera, 123-lb. and 112-lb. Presa Canarios belonging to the two attorneys down the hall. By the time the police arrived and rushed her to the hospital, she was mortally wounded. Officers who saw the grisly scene needed trauma counseling.

Bane was put down shortly thereafter (Hera is still awaiting her fate), but it was the dogs' owners, Robert Noel and Marjorie Knoller, who attracted most of the attention. It was later revealed that they had a close relationship with Paul ("Cornfed") Schneider, an Aryan supremacist, accomplished knife fighter and crayon artist serving a life term in California's maximum-security Pelican Bay prison. According to

prison authorities, Schneider—who covers his cell with pictures of furry animals—has been directing the raising of attack dogs from behind bars. Noel and Knoller got their pets from one of Schneider's pen pals in California, who was raising at least six of them for him. Even stranger, the attorneys last week legally adopted Schneider, 38, as their son.

The animals are a mix of English mastiff and Canary Island cattle dog, which as a purebred was considered so dangerous that Spain outlawed the Canario in the 1930s, nearly causing its extinction. Were the two dogs trained to kill? And if so, did the couple know what they were capable of? Noel and Knoller denied

any culpability in an unusual, 18-page letter faxed to local district attorney Terence Hallinan. In it Noel described Bane—whose name literally means "death"—as "a really gentle animal" and Hera as "a neighborhood favorite." He claimed that Knoller tried to hold the dogs back during the attack, but Whipple refused to get into her apartment and even punched Knoller in the eye. Knoller sustained injuries from the dogs too, he asserted.

There are no other witnesses to corroborate that account, but Hallinan is skeptical. For one thing, Knoller "does not have bruises or bites"; for another, he says, the letter's account contradicts some of what she told police right after the attack. "There could be an argument for second-degree murder," says Hallinan. Nevertheless, he expects Noel will fight him all the way: "He's a pretty litigious guy."

Others argue that even if the couple didn't know how deadly the dogs were, they still bear responsibility. "They took dogs bred for controlling cattle and pulling coal carts and put them in this small apartment," says Kenneth Phillips, California's leading dog-bite lawyer. "In my opinion that's negligence right there." (The dogs' previous owner told the *San Francisco Chronicle* that they killed her sheep, chickens and family cat.) Meanwhile, the people of Pacific Heights—many of whom say they lived in terror of the dogs—have another question to ponder. During the attack Whipple reportedly screamed for five minutes, yet no one opened a door to help. Not only is it hard to imagine St. Francis in San Francisco these days; seems it's even harder to find a Good Samaritan.



**WHO'S TO BLAME?** Attorney Noel, left, and his wife, the dogs' owners, have adopted Schneider, a convict accused of running an attack-dog ring

XIANG XING ZHOU—SF DAILY JOURNAL/GAMMA-LIAI

# Dial "M" for Misconduct

A judge's love affair, and her deceptions, has Michigan in an uproar. Should she be benched?

By JOSH TYRANGIEL

IF AARON SPELLING HAS TAUGHT THE world anything, it's that a story doesn't need redeeming social value to keep us riveted by the details. Plot is key; so are passion and powerful people behaving their worst when the stakes matter the most. As a craftsman, Spelling would no doubt appreciate the tortuous tale of Susan Chrzanowski, a Michigan judge and divorcée who, over the course of a year, journeyed from pillar of the community to key witness at her married lover's murder trial and then to focal point of public rancor over the deceit and misconduct produced by the desires that lurk beneath black robes.

Judge Chrzanowski, 34, and Michael Fletcher, 31, started working together in 1997, when Fletcher, fresh from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, was her clerk in Michigan's 37th District Court, in Warren. After Fletcher passed the bar exam, Chrzanowski, by now his lover, helped jump-start his practice by naming him the court-appointed attorney for 56 indigent defendants, giving him three times as much in fees as the court's three other judges gave him combined. What's more, she ruled on those cases without revealing to the opposing counsel her relationship with Fletcher. It's not uncommon for judges, especially elected judges like Chrzanowski, to send a little business to their friends. It is vastly uncommon—in fact, profoundly unethical—for judges to assign loads of cases to lawyers they're sleeping with, and then preside over those suits.

The cozy arrangement lasted until Aug. 16, 1999, when Fletcher made a 911 call from his home in Hazel Park to report that his manicurist wife Leann, who was one month pregnant with the couple's second child, had shot and killed herself with his Colt .45. While examining the scene, police discovered in a closet a brown folder stuffed with

drippy correspondence from Chrzanowski. It didn't take long to put the pieces together. At his murder trial last June, prosecutors surmised that Fletcher, having learned of Leann's pregnancy two days before her death, feared his mistress would leave him if she discovered he had lied when he said he was no longer sleeping with his wife. So Fletcher shot Leann in the head (after having sex with her), and tried to make it look like a self-inflicted wound. Fletcher was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

Police never linked Chrzanowski to the killing, but she has had to answer for other

of Senator Carl Levin, was appointed to study the case and make a recommendation to the JTC, Chrzanowski appeared to be in deep trouble. Levin sorted through the evidence and then, amazingly, determined that Chrzanowski had done nothing worthy of removal—or even suspension—from the bench. Levin wrote that channeling cases to "close personal friends" was a common practice and that he couldn't punish Chrzanowski for behavior that "other judges have and... will continue to indulge in." As for the misstatements to police, Levin concluded the judge had not lied because she had "no deliberate intent to deceive."

Levin's opinion provoked outrage from lawyers and editorialists alike. "Everyone should have a level playing field when they walk into a courtroom," said JTC executive director Paul Fischer. "How can it be fair when the judge is sleeping with one of the attorneys?" Said New York University legal ethicist Stephen Gillers: "There's no way of

“How can it be a level playing field when the judge is sleeping with one of the attorneys?”

THE JUDGE



THE LAWYER



THE WIFE



▶ **LETHAL TRIANGLE:** Chrzanowski gave Fletcher 56 cases—and ruled on them—without disclosing their affair. They were found out when Fletcher killed his wife Leann, apparently to hold on to Chrzanowski

sins. In the hours after the murder, the judge misled police. She told them the affair with Fletcher had lasted just a few weeks and had been over for months, although it had lasted more than a year and was still going on; in fact, she had had sex with Fletcher on the eve of the murder. Two days later, Chrzanowski apologized and set the record straight, claiming she had been in shock during the initial interview. But her behavior had caught the attention of Michigan's judicial tenure commission, a watchdog of the judiciary. In April, the JTC brought misconduct charges against Chrzanowski, and she was suspended, with pay, from her post.

When venerable former Michigan Supreme Court Justice Charles Levin, cousin

soft-pedaling Chrzanowski's conduct, no way of defending it." Wrote the *Detroit Free Press*: "There's surely something wrong with a system that can't hold [Chrzanowski] accountable." The judge's supporters are few. In her own defense, Chrzanowski released a statement to *TIME* last week in which she claimed to be a victim of "media hype."

This week the JTC will meet for a one-day hearing to consider Levin's report and make its final recommendation to the Michigan Supreme Court, which can do whatever it wishes, from exonerating Chrzanowski to removing her from the bench. If the judge manages to survive, her 2002 re-election campaign is sure to be one for the books. —Reported by John U. Bacon/*Ann Arbor* and Andrea Sachs/*New York*

# BUYOUT KINGS

ment from oil-services giant Halliburton for \$1.6 billion. More of that can't be far behind.

Already, unsolicited bids—the preferred '80s raider weapon—are on the rise. The value of these bids more than doubled last year, to \$5 billion, reports Thomson Financial. Meanwhile, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, which became a household name with its \$25 billion takeover of RJR Nabisco in 1989, is in the process of raising \$6 billion, its largest pool ever for deals.

Of course, a few key '80s players never went away. Bottom fisher Sanford Weill, for one, amassed an impressive array of financial companies on the cheap while others were getting tech-obsessed. He is now the head of Citigroup, one of the world's largest banks. Icahn, the '80s raider who shook Texaco and took TWA, has asserted influence in small doses throughout the '90s by buying large amounts of distressed corporate debt, as

has former Milken colleague Leon Black at Apollo Advisors.

Icahn, though, has clearly stepped up his pace, pushing Nabisco Holdings into the arms of Philip Morris and briefly rattling mighty GM's cage with a large stock purchase last year. Now he's thrusting himself into the middle of American Airlines' plans to buy TWA—long after he sold his controlling interest in the latter.

The '90s have punished some raiders, who proved to be better bomb throwers than managers. Saul Steinberg once stalked high-powered execs at Disney and Chemical Bank. Now, with his company Reliance Group imploding, he is in such

straits that he has liquidated his art-filled 34-room Park Avenue apartment. Even his mother is suing him. Ronald Perelman, another once formidable raider, is trying to clear up his own disaster at Revlon, which he controls. That company's stock has declined 90% in the past three years.

"Those of us who have survived are going back to acquiring companies because valuations have come down to reasonable levels," asserts Silverman, CEO of Cendant, which operates franchises in the real estate (Century 21) and travel (Ramada, Travelodge) industries. Silverman was a seller in recent years, shedding 18 businesses for \$4.5 billion in 1999 alone. Since the stock market tanked last year, he has been buying again—at prices, he says, that are a third of what he would have had to pay just two years ago. So far he has bagged Merrill Lynch Real Estate, Fairfield Communities and the 82% of Avis he didn't already own.

Forstmann, controlling partner at the LBO firm Forstmann Little, is perhaps best known for his stand against the use of junk bonds to finance takeovers during the Milken era. In fact, LBO pros like Forstmann are a different breed, focusing on buying broken companies, fixing them and selling at a profit five or so years later. Classic

raiders hope for a fast turnaround. Often they merely take a stake in a company and push for asset sales that produce immediate value to stockholders. Then they sell.

Still, Forstmann is another re-energized buy guy. On Jan. 16, he announced the \$1 billion takeover of Citadel Communications, which owns more than 200 radio stations. The deal is his first big U.S. acquisition in five years.

Forstmann and others hope to acquire more companies now that values have tumbled. "It's still not easy," cautions Joe Rice, managing partner at LBO firm Clayton Dubilier & Rice. "In some cases you can offer double what a stock is trading at, but that's still

half where it was a year ago—and the company says no thanks." After spending \$1 billion on three overseas companies in the past 18 months, Rice says he's eager to hunt in the U.S. again.

The biggest values are in what are known as deep cyclicals—paper, chemical and metals companies. Those don't usually make good takeover candidates for anyone but a strategic buyer looking to get bigger or fill out a business need. LBO firms and other "financial buyers" prefer recession-resistant businesses whose stable incomes securely cover the large interest expense incurred in a buyout. Such buyers now say they see values in the food, energy and utilities industries.

So where will the sharks strike? Struggling whales such as Xerox, Polaroid and AT&T are vulnerable; so are Perelman's Revlon, and Chiquita Brands (40% owned by onetime raider Carl Lindner)—all in vicious down cycles.

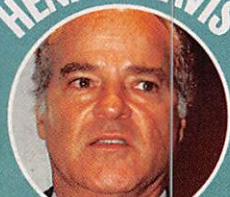
Irwin Jacobs, whose '80s buyout/bust-up raids on AMF, Kaiser Steel and Enron, among others, helped win him the nickname "Irv the Liquidator," has changed his style and gone back to work in this new climate. Last year he bought nearly 5% of the all-but-dead insurer Consec—some



**ICONOCLAST** Forstmann made his first big deal in five years

JOHN ABBOTT

## HENRY KRAVIS



**The \$6 Billion Man**

KKR? LBO? Kravis made both abbreviations (his firm, what it does) household terms. He's raising \$6 billion for new deals

## IRWIN JACOBS



**The Un-Liquidator**

Jacobs' new style led him to buy a chunk of struggling Consec. He pushed for management change—and doubled his money

SILVERMAN: JOHN ABBOTT; KRAVIS: PORTER GIFFORD; LAMSON: ICAHN: CHRIS POLK—AP; JACOBS: DAWN VILLELLA—AP

16 million shares, at about \$7 each. Jacobs helped install former GE star Gary Wendt as CEO, and with Conseco now trading at \$16, he has a paper profit of \$144 million.

The buyout game is more complicated today. The typical LBO has three layers of financing—equity (put up by the buyer), senior debt (borrowed from a bank), and junior debt, or junk bonds (most often provided by junk-bond mutual funds). Banks are reluctant to lend for speculative buyouts with the economy slowing, though the Fed's rate cuts are easing that condition.

The mathematics of obtaining capital has been the single biggest obstacle to the raiders' staging a full-fledged return, says Howard Marks, chairman of Oaktree Capital Management. "Buyout firms were able to purchase venerable U.S. icons in the '80s because they could borrow 20 times their money," he notes. (Remember those "highly confident" letters, as in, "I'm highly confident I can borrow the money to take over your company, bub," that Milken and pals used so effectively to terrorize CEOs?) "If you wanted to buy a company for \$10 billion, you could probably do it on \$400 million in equity. You can't do that anymore. Today you get maybe 3½ times your equity investment—not 20 times."

Leverage—popularized in the '80s as OPM (other people's money)—is what makes LBOs work. Think of it like this: You buy a house for \$200,000 with 20% down, or \$40,000. Say you later sell the house for \$400,000. Your profit is \$200,000 on a \$40,000 investment. That's a fivefold return on a property that merely doubled in value. Now imagine the math if you put down only 5%, which is how raiders did it in the '80s.

There have been other impediments to raider activity. Better management, for instance. Gone is the widespread corporate fat that marked the '80s. Two decades of shareholder activism and a hotly competitive global economy in the '90s have led CEOs to trim fat without prodding.

Besides, today "most LBO funds won't engage in hostile activity," says Greg Polle, who co-heads the mergers-and-acquisitions department at Salomon Smith Barney. "They spend more time trying to have good relations with boards so they will be viewed as a warm and friendly place."

Warm and friendly dealmakers. These are indeed very different times. But with capital getting easier to find and plenty of stocks still down, buyout kings may find that even the Ramones can still make sweet music. —With reporting by Bill Dowell/New York

# Your Bagel or Your Job

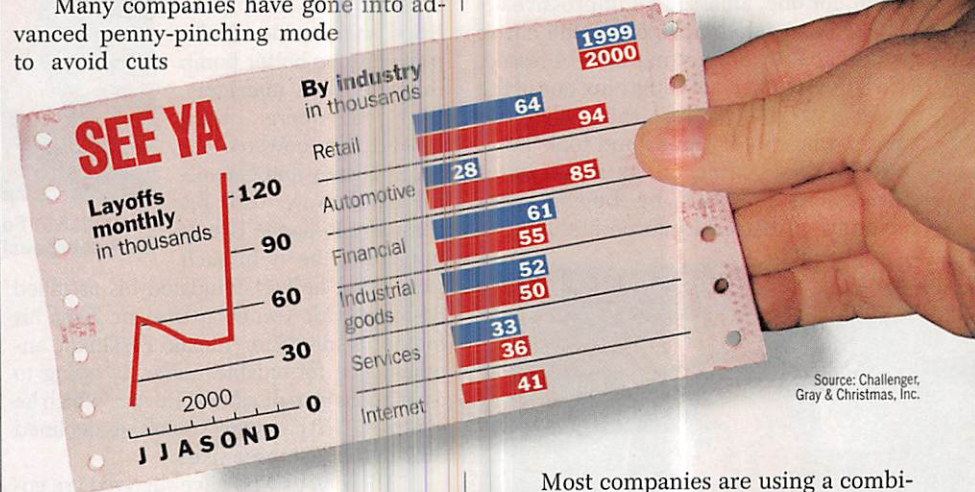
## Layoffs are increasing rapidly, yet many companies would rather cut perks and salaries than employees

**L**URING NEW HIRES WITH SIGNING bonuses and in-house massages was the game less than a year ago. But today, as the economy staggers, it's slash-and-burn—perks, pay and personnel. The numbers are getting ugly. Outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas says announced job cuts for December were the highest since the firm began tracking them in 1993. And January's are bound to be even higher. General Electric is poised to idle 75,000, according to BusinessWeek Online, though GE disputes that figure.

Many companies have gone into advanced penny-pinching mode to avoid cuts

roughly half its 2,600 "nonessential" employees—those not involved in customer support—to take three unpaid Fridays off during a five-week period starting Feb. 2. Schwab quickly had to scrap the Friday plan for legal reasons. The leaves will now be "voluntary."

Other companies are also trying to cut creatively. First Union in Charlotte, N.C., moved its in-house travel center online, then limited first-class travel by executives to red-eye flights. The bank has squeezed vendors, such as office suppliers, to get better pricing and has axed duplicate databases.



Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

or further cuts, something they haven't had to do in a decade. "The New Economy makes human capital the most important asset, yet paradoxically companies are finding they can't afford the fixed cost of large payrolls in turbulent times," says former Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, author of *The Future of Success* (Knopf; \$26).

Just ask Charles Schwab. Since November, the online broker has been trying to find ways to trim costs but not staff in the wake of last quarter's 27% drop in earnings. In late November, the company announced a hiring freeze, followed by discretionary spending controls and salary reductions—50% for co-CEOs and 5% to 20% for more than 700 managers. Then in mid-January, Schwab said it would pay first-quarter bonuses in stock, not cash. And just last week, the company told

Most companies are using a combination of layoffs and cutbacks. For example, at telecom-equipment maker Nortel, where 4,000 job cuts were announced (4% of its workforce), employees are keeping travel costs down by attending corporate meetings via webcasts. And telecommuting is in: 20,000 employees now roll out of bed into the office, compared with 230 in 1995.

For companies under pressure, no cut is too small. Aetna, the nation's largest health-insurance provider, told its Bluebell, Pa., employees that they'll have to start paying for coffee and tea. And for the stressed-out folks at Xerox, fresh bagels no longer grace morning meetings. A Xerox manager asked his group to limit, of all things, the number of copies by using both sides of the paper. Which suggests that along with the losers in the current slowdown, there may be one unexpected winner—trees.

—By Carole Buia

# HOW DO YOU JUNK YOU

A used PC can find life after death—but only if it comes out of the closet and goes to the recycler

By ANITA HAMILTON ENDICOTT

**I**N A CEMENT-FLOORED WAREHOUSE IN upstate New York, half a dozen women sit hunched over computer workstations. Holding a heat gun in one hand and metal tweezers in the other, they pry silicon chips from circuit boards like dentists extracting little metal teeth. Down the hall, a jumble of bright green motherboards spills out onto a conveyor belt headed toward a shredder that will rip them to cracker-size pieces of plastic. And around the corner, a clean-cut guy in a black work smock takes a big hammer and smashes one hard drive after another before tossing them into a huge bin marked ALUMINUM.

No, this is not a PC factory gone berserk. This is the place where old computers go to die. IBM's Asset Recovery Center in Endicott, N.Y., is one of the largest PC junkyards in the world. Some 40 million lbs. of computers are dismantled here each year.

It hardly makes a dent, however, in the annual bumper crop of dead computers. Every year an electronic trash heap nearly as tall as Mount Everest is tossed into garbage cans, stashed in garages or forgotten in closets. Some 500 million PCs will be rendered obsolete by 2007 in the U.S. alone—abandoned by users who have upgraded to faster and sexier machines—according to a report by the National Safety Council. Computers are ranked as the nation's fastest-growing category of solid waste by the Environmental Protection Agency.

And one of its most dangerous. Old PCs contain lead, cadmium, mercury and other unsavory components. Yet only 10% of the machines are recycled. Many of them find their way into landfills and incinerators, where they can threaten the environment. That's why the European Union has drafted rules that will hold manufacturers responsible for recycling their wares by 2008.

To fend off similar legislation here, U.S. manufacturers are scrambling to devise recycling programs of their own—and hoping to make a buck while they're at it. Last November, IBM launched the first nationwide program; it charges computer users a \$30

shipping-and-handling fee to take even an ancient PC off their hands. Hewlett-Packard plans to launch its consumer-PC take-back program in March. Regional efforts—such as Sony's "recycling days" begun in Minnesota last fall—have sprung up from Oregon to New York.

They face some consumer resistance. It's hard to pay a stranger to cart away a computer you bought for \$2,000. Yet by the time you're ready to part with that machine, it's often so obsolete that no school or charity will take it. If you put it on the curb with the trash, however, it will end up in a landfill, where toxins could leach into the soil.

A recycled PC, on the other hand, is literally a gold mine. Pentium and other processors have golden tips. A computer's main circuit board, fashioned from copper and fiber glass, is studded with silver and gold connectors. A steel frame keeps the unit sturdy, and aluminum or copper heat sinks prevent the CPU from overheating. The outer plastic case can be recycled to make everything from pothole filler to pencil holders. Even the cords dangling from the back have rich copper wiring that can be reincarnated as pipes, pans or furniture.

Yet for all the precious metals and other reusable parts, it's still tough to make any money recycling PCs. Minus the cost of processing, the average used system is worth a measly \$6 in raw materials, according to

## CASHING IN THE CHIPS

It may be a piece of trash to you, but that outdated

### FRAME

The 5 lbs. of steel bracing just inside the case is worth up to 25¢

### CPU

Located under the heat sink, processors have gold tips and wiring worth up to \$1 a chip

### MOTHERBOARD

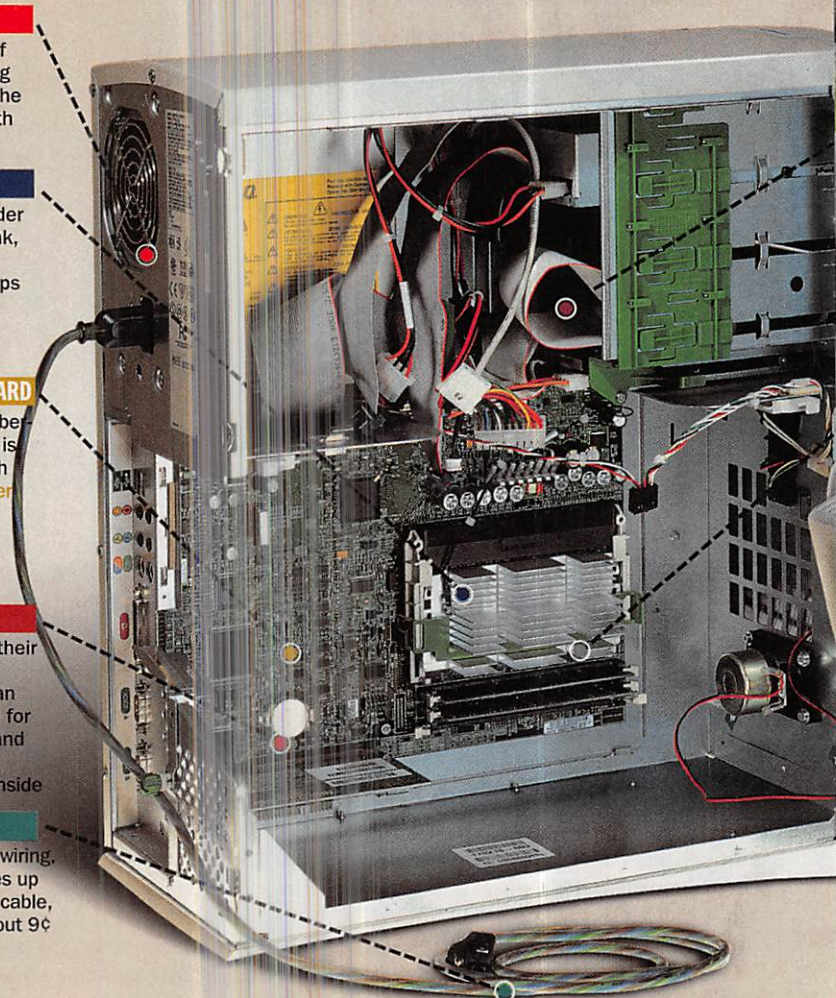
The green fiber-glass board is studded with copper, silver and gold connectors worth up to \$2

### BATTERY

Drained of their acid, used batteries can be recycled for the nickel and cadmium contained inside

### CABLE

The copper wiring, which makes up 30% of the cable, is worth about 9¢



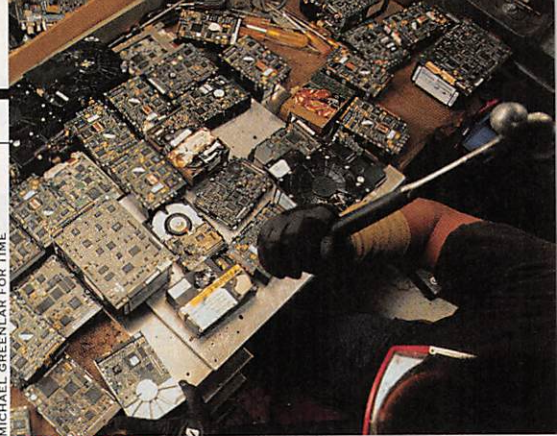
# R COMPUTER?

electronics recycler Envirocycle in Hallstead, Pa. The monitor is worth just \$2.50. When IBM announced its consumer-PC recycling program last fall, it decided to have the carcasses shipped not to its 700,000-sq.-ft. recycling center in Endicott (where it mines corporate PCs for parts) but to an independent recycler 30 miles away. The reason: "Typically all that low-end stuff is not profitable," says Lawrence Yehle, operations manager at IBM Endicott.

So low is the material value of each PC that the first step in recycling is to try to resell the machine—either whole or for its working parts. IBM resells a third of the used equipment it gets back from corporate leases in online sales and auctions. "It's a profitable business for us," says Joe

Lane, general manager for global financing. Old chips get second lives in electronic toys. Outdated CD-ROM and hard drives are reborn as replacement parts.

When components are too old to be salvaged, IBM ships them to specialists in plastic, metals and glass. At Envirocycle, which does monitors, the plastic cases are popped open, the power cables chopped off and the circuit boards removed. Next the glass is crushed into pieces and stripped of various coatings so it can be sent to monitor makers that will re-form the rubble into new displays. MBA Polymers in Richmond, Calif., feeds whole keyboards and joysticks into its machines. The metals get siphoned off, then the plastic is melted into tiny pellets, which are resold for use in industrial



MICHAEL GREENLAR FOR TIME

## HAMMER TIME Disabling used drives at IBM

flooring, auto parts and office supplies.

Because metals are especially valuable, Hewlett-Packard mines its own. Step inside its 200,000-sq.-ft. warehouse in Roseville, Calif. (which it runs with partner Micro-Metallics), and you will see computers stacked three stories high. A hulking blue machine swallows PCs and mainframes whole, grinds them up and a few minutes later spits them out in quarter-size pieces. A system of magnets, screens and electrical currents separates out aluminum and steel, while the remaining mixed metals go to Noranda Inc., a copper smelter in Quebec. The metal scrap HP produces by the ton has a higher percentage of copper than ore excavated from the ground, according to Bob Sippel, Noranda's vice president of recycling. Last year the Roseville operation retrieved more than \$5 million worth of gold, copper, silver, aluminum and steel.

As recycling ramps up, computer manufacturers are discovering new ways to make the process more efficient. Metal screws are being replaced with snap-open panels for quicker dismantling. Lead solder used to fasten parts to circuit boards is giving way to safer tin, silver and copper alloys. Spray-on flame retardants, which can be toxic when recycled, are being replaced with metal paneling. And those annoying plastic shipping peanuts are being replaced with packing material made of water-soluble starch.

Still, critics insist that more work needs to be done. "The efforts in the U.S. have been chaotic and will not be successful until companies start picking up the excess costs," says activist Ted Smith of the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition. In their defense, U.S. manufacturers insist that government and consumers must share the responsibility—and the cost.

"I can't go into people's houses and take their computers out for them," says Renee St. Denis, environmental-business-unit manager for HP. That's true. But if consumers aren't given sufficient incentive to turn their computers in, then all those recycling initiatives—not to mention all those PCs piling up in closets—could simply go to waste. ■

personal computer stashed in your closet can be a treasure trove for recyclers

### HARD DRIVE

Up to 15% of a typical drive is **aluminum**, worth about 10¢

### HEAT SINK

Designed to dissipate heat from the CPU, aluminum or **copper** heat sinks are worth about 40¢ each

### MONITOR YOLK

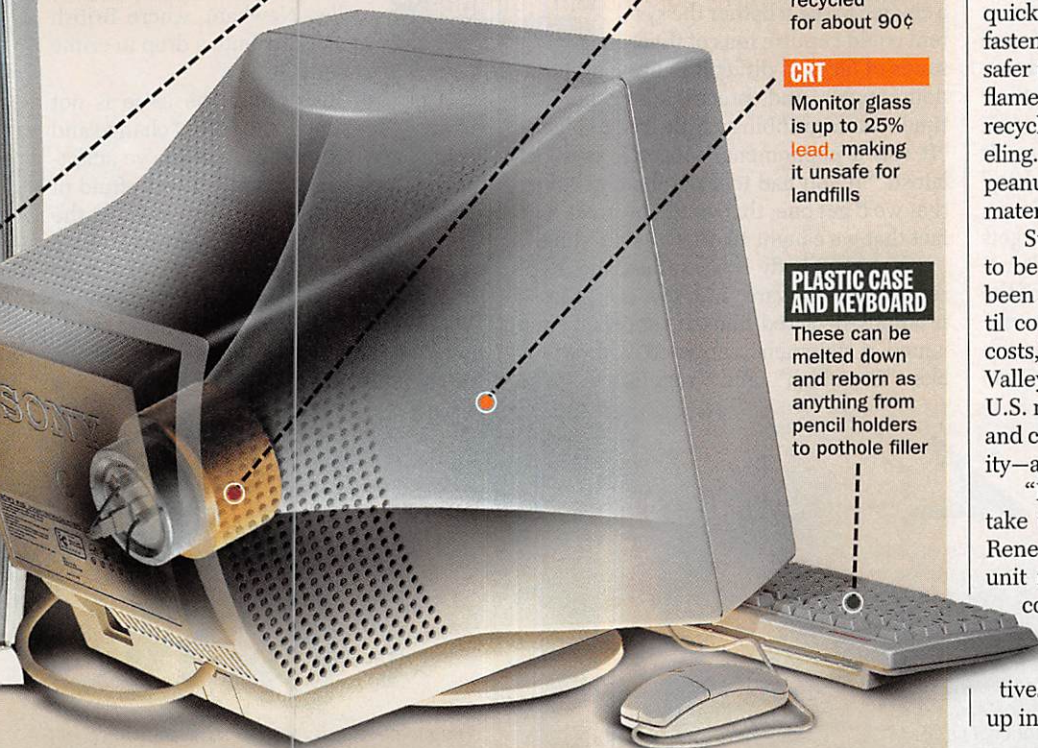
The yolk is 60% **copper** and is mixed with **rubber** and **plastic**. It can be recycled for about 90¢

### CRT

Monitor glass is up to 25% **lead**, making it unsafe for landfills

### PLASTIC CASE AND KEYBOARD

These can be melted down and reborn as anything from pencil holders to pothole filler



# Welcome to the Snooper Bowl

Big Brother came to Super Sunday, setting off a new debate about privacy and security in the digital age

By LEV GROSSMAN

**H**APPY, YELLING FACES. RED, DRUNKEN faces. Faces painted purple. Faces painted purple. Tens of thousands of faces—accompanied by plastic horns and giant foam hands—pouring into Raymond James Stadium in Tampa Bay last Sunday, ready to watch the biggest football game of the year. Meanwhile, someone—or rather, something—was watching them.

In a move that has been both hailed and decried, the Tampa Bay police department used the occasion of Super Bowl XXXV to conduct a high-tech surveillance experiment on its unsuspecting guests. In total secrecy (but with the full cooperation of the National Football League), the faces of each of the games' 72,000 attendees were scanned and checked against a database of potential troublemakers. The news, first reported in the *St. Petersburg Times*, raises some urgent questions: is this the end of crime—or the end of privacy?

The surveillance system, FaceTrac, is based on technology originally developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to teach computers to recognize their users, and was installed by a Pennsylvania firm called Graphco Technologies. "It takes everything from forehead to chin," explains Tom Colatosti, CEO of Viisage, whose software drives FaceTrac. "It gets the distance between the eyes, then it calculates the other features: thickness of the lips, angle of the cheekbones, and so on." The beauty of the system is that it is disguise-proof. You can grow a beard and put on

sunglasses, and FaceTrac will still pick you out of a crowd.

Tampa police insist that the experiment was harmless. The mugshots against which the fans were checked were drawn from state and federal computer files. According to police spokesperson Joe Durkin, they contained only "known criminals that are attracted to these large events," ranging from "pickpockets, scam artists, con-game players, all the way to terrorists." And the computers were carefully monitored by humans. When the software made a match, it alerted an officer who compared the two faces on screen. Although FaceTrac made 19 positive IDs, no one was arrested.

Everybody involved stresses that this was a test, not a serious attempt to catch bad guys. For the police, it was a chance to gauge FaceTrac's effectiveness as a crime-fighting tool. For Graphco and its partners, it was a chance to see whether the system could capture tens of thousands of faces in difficult lighting and random angles and process them in real time—while grabbing a little free publicity. "It was a phenomenal success," says Colatosti. "If you had told me the day before that we'd get one, that would be great. The fact that we caught 19, that's astounding!"

Not everybody is so enthusiastic. Representative Edward Markey (D., Mass.) promptly declared himself "appalled" and issued a statement peppered with words like "Orwellian" and "nightmare." The

American Civil Liberties Union is calling for public hearings and has requested all documents relating to the surveillance. "It's chilling, the notion that 100,000 people were subject to video surveillance and had their identities checked by the government," says Barry Steinhardt, associate director of the A.C.L.U. "We think the rights of the fans in Tampa were violated."

That may be a tough case to make. Under U.S. law, citizens have no reasonable expectation of privacy in public spaces like the Raymond James Stadium. Furthermore, as Colatosti points out, the Super

Bowl surveillance isn't the first of its kind, only the most dramatic. The Viisage system is already deployed in some 70 casinos across the country, from Atlantic City to Los Vegas, to identify cheats and card counters. A similar system has been used for the past two years in a tough section of East London called Newham, where British police attribute a drop in crime

to the 300 cameras.

Colatosti insists that the issue is not privacy. "It's simply the fear of change and technology," he says. "Once you've adapted, you look back and say, 'I was afraid of what?'" Perhaps. No one disputes that the deployment of cheap, ubiquitous video cameras has made an environment of near total surveillance technologically feasible. Whether that's a good thing or a bad thing, however, depends on how much you trust the cameraman. ■

**Cheap, ubiquitous cameras in an environment of near total surveillance**

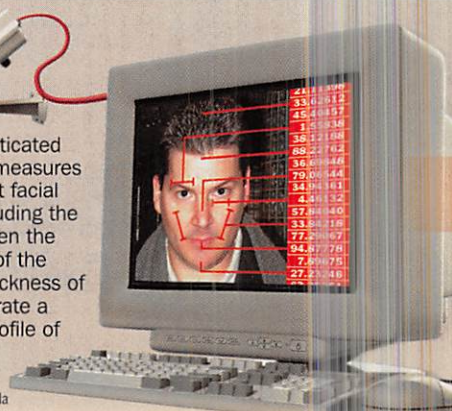
## HOW TO SCAN A FACE

Fans entering the arena are videotaped, and frames showing their faces are digitized and fed into a computer.



A sophisticated program measures 128 distinct facial features—including the distance between the eyes, the slope of the nose and the thickness of the lips—to generate a mathematical profile of each face.

TIME Diagram by Joe Lertola



The profile is compared to thousands of others stored in a database of suspects. If the program makes a match, a human looks at the images to confirm the ID.

# The Copycat?

Did Columbine inspire a new plot—or a fantasy?

**H**HEY BASTARDS, READS THE SALUTATION in the June 1998 posting by Flame88610 on an anarchy message board. “First off, I have lost all hope that anyone belonging to the human race, including myself, is worthy of life, liberty or anything worth mentioning, other than extermination.” Flame88610 then goes through a checklist of how to destroy the “United States of Amerikkka,” including forming a terrorist band, acquiring “various weapons of mass destruction,” the poisoning of the water supply, assassinations, bombings and, in an epilogue to apocalypse, turning the terrorists on themselves.

Earlier, Flame88610 had asked about bombing “aqueducts [sic] ... supplying water” to California’s farmers. Would that bring the economy to its knees?

Last week the man allegedly behind the alias was arrested for plotting a smaller conflagration: bombing De Anza College in Cupertino, Calif. De Anza sophomore Al Joseph DeGuzman, 19, had apparently posed with his arms cache (guns as well as 60 explosive devices) and then sent the film off to be developed at a local drugstore. A clerk alerted the cops, who promptly entered the house where DeGuzman lived with his parents. They found an audiotape and time line describing how he would plant the bombs at 4:30 a.m. on Jan. 30 and then attack the cafeteria at 12:30 p.m. His parents said they had respected DeGuzman’s privacy and never checked his room.

DeGuzman apparently idolized Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, calling the Columbine gunmen “the only thing that’s real.” But unlike them, DeGuzman was no outcast. “He worked so well with everybody,” says his yearbook adviser Paul Ender. The weapons, friends say, are simply part of DeGuzman’s fantasy. Attorney Craig T. Wormley says his client “has merely an innocent fascination with some of the items that were seized.” But the charges of weapons possession and intent to injure may send him to prison for 106 years. He has pleaded not guilty.

—Reported by Rachele Kanigel/San Jose and Jeffrey Ressler/Los Angeles



PAUL SAKUMA—AP

**THE ACCUSED:**  
Al DeGuzman



ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT MCINHIN; PILL, PHOTO RESEARCHERS

## Ritalin: Mom's Little Helper

A disorder long linked to sons migrates up the family tree

**W**HEN MOST PEOPLE HEAR THE word Ritalin, they think of little boys: waist-high hellions throwing spitballs and punches, requiring pills to control themselves. Almost nobody thinks of the boys’ mothers. But these days, millions of grownups are getting treated for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder too. And 50% to 60% of them are women, according to recent studies. Since boys outnumber girls roughly seven to one among kids on medication for ADHD, that leaves researchers and physicians wondering where all these women have come from.

The leading theory is that the women now seeking treatment in unprecedented numbers have actually had ADHD since childhood—they just went unnoticed. Now that those girls are women with jobs, children and dinner to worry about, they tell doctors they’re overwhelmed. They can’t finish what they start. They’re incapable of organizing their daily lives. Those are classic ADHD symptoms. They’re also the prototypical laments of the modern-day working mother, which sometimes makes it hard for doctors to distinguish the dysfunction from the lifestyle.

“Girls have really been underdiagnosed for years,” says Timothy Wilens, a

veteran ADHD researcher at Harvard Medical School. That’s because girls are less apt to be disruptive—and thus less likely to get sent to a psychiatrist by adults. “If you have a boy with a big mouth, teachers walk in and nail him,” says Wilens.

As grownups, however, females are generally more likely than men to accept mental-health treatment. Julie Bloch learned she had ADHD the same way many other women do: she took her young son for treatment, and the psychiatrist suggested she consider a twofer. “I had never thought about it before,” says Bloch, 47, a sales executive in the San Francisco area. “I was always different. I didn’t have a lot of focus. But I didn’t really think adults could have ADHD.”

Bloch and her son started Ritalin on the same day. They both reported benefits. She felt newly focused on her job, and he pulled his grades way up. But as the working mother of two, she still has a frantic life: “Somebody else’s needs always come first.” Says Sari Solden, author of *Women with Attention Deficit Disorder*: “Men are encouraged to focus narrowly on their area of interest and are much more likely to have secretaries or wives who do things for them. Women have much more diffuse roles to fill.”

That’s why Lawrence Diller, author of *Running on Ritalin*, says it’s tricky to know if his women patients really need drugs—or just simpler lives: “The biggest problem with the women is that they set the bar too high. Nobody could realistically accomplish all these things without taking a performance enhancer.”

As word about adults with ADHD continues to spread, some researchers fear that doctors may overdiagnose women with ADHD just as they have allegedly done with boys. And that could delegitimize what is, for many, a serious impairment. In college, Peggy Clover couldn’t even finish Cliffs Notes. At age 49, she went on medication for ADHD. In the five years since, she has read more books than she had ever done before. Eventually, Clover told her friends about her disorder. She had kept it a secret, she says, afraid it sounded absurd: a grown woman with an attention-deficit problem. Imagine that. —By Amanda Ripley



# TEACHER IN CHIEF

At once conservative and conciliatory, Rod Paige promises an activist Department of Education

By REBECCA WINTERS

**W**HEN ROD PAIGE FIRST TOOK the helm of the struggling Houston public schools seven years ago, Gayle Fallon, president of the local teachers' union, blasted him as "the most antiteacher superintendent we've had in the past decade." By the end of Paige's tenure last month, however, Fallon was giving a far different testimonial. She gushed that Paige "will leave a better district than he came to" and that "he'll be a very effective Secretary of Education."

Fallon explains that in the early days, she and her union members felt threatened by Paige. One of his plans was to give principals more authority to transfer teachers to different schools, for staffing or disciplinary purposes. But she was won over by his collaborative leadership style and his ability to get results where his predecessors had failed. Paige promised, for instance, that within three years, he would rid the district of what Fallon calls "deadwood principals"—the system's longtime underperformers. "Some of them came with the first brick in the building," Fallon says. "We figured nothing was going to blast them out." Three years later, though, those principals had either retired or been demoted. The skeptics, says Fallon, thought, Well, I'll be damned! He followed through!

Today, less than a month into his

new job as Secretary of Education, Paige is bringing his knack for bridge building and his emphasis on measurable results to Washington, where he will spearhead President Bush's most promising effort at winning bipartisan support. Although Bush has pledged to push more local control of schools, Paige says, "We can use the bully pulpit to make the point that no child being left behind is not just a statement of sentimentality."

Despite Paige's advocacy of controversial conservative education policies—like the use of tax money for vouchers to send students to private schools—lawmakers in both parties are welcoming him. Senator Barbara Mikulski, a liberal Maryland Democrat, described herself as "really impressed" by Paige's legacy in Houston; Senator Judd Gregg, a New Hampshire Republican, called Paige's leadership "visionary."

Paige, 67, is widely credited with turning around the Houston schools through an emphasis on accountability and efficiency and a receptiveness to new ideas. But he got off to a bumpy start.

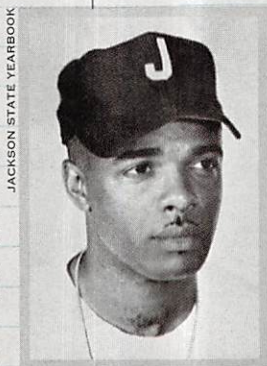
When the school board chose him as superintendent in 1994, during a closed-door session, the reaction of Hispanic activists and parents, whose children constitute a majority of the schools' students, was an angry sense of feeling excluded. They sued the board.

Rosemary Covalt was a plaintiff in the lawsuit and recalls, "I didn't think much of Paige." Early on, though, she adds, Paige pulled her aside and said, "Ms. Covalt, you've been a thorn in my backside. We need to work together, because I can't sit down anymore." He put Covalt to work on a committee to inspect the district's crumbling school buildings—a job she tackled with gusto.

During Paige's tenure, the number of Houston students passing state achievement tests rose from 44% to 64%. Paige placed principals on performance contracts contingent on student achievement and saved the district money by contracting out lunchroom and maintenance services. With the help of Houston business executives, whose conservative politics had historically been at odds with the district leadership, Paige won voter approval for a \$678 million bond issue in 1998—the largest of its kind in Texas—to repair 69 schools and build 10 new ones.

But Paige is not without his critics. Some say the Houston district's gains on statewide tests have been boosted by an abysmal dropout rate, as underperforming students, under constant pressure, simply give up. A report published last month by Johns Hopkins University ranked Houston 28th in school completion out of the nation's 35 largest school systems, with less than half of ninth-graders at most of the district's high schools sticking it out through graduation. Says Guadalupe San Miguel, a parent with three children in the district and an expert on Hispanic education: "The high-stakes testing Paige has built his reputation on has come at a significant cost to the community."

Paige concedes that the dropout rate in Houston is "undesirable" but doesn't blame it on testing. "Most of it had nothing to do with the school-based factors," he says. "We were improving those rapidly." Paige instead faults societal factors such as teen pregnancy and the lure of employment, even for dropouts, in a strong local economy.



JACKSON STATE YEARBOOK

**“My parents told us the solution to the world's problems was education. Nothing rang louder.”**

—ROD PAIGE, shown here in 1967 at Jackson State

Rod Paige has come a long way from where he grew up: the hamlet of Monticello, in the piney woods of south-central Mississippi. His dad was a school principal and a barber, his mother a librarian. Paige was the oldest of five children, all of whom have graduate degrees. "My parents told us the solution to the world's problems was education," says Paige.

He was left in charge when his parents were out at the evening meetings their jobs often required. "Rod would make us listen to him read," remembers his youngest sister Raygene Paige, retired from a state agricultural agency. "And if we didn't pay attention to him, we had to write a book report."

Paige became an honor student and quarterback at Jackson State University in Jackson, Miss. His college roommate, Walter Reed, recalls that "if there was a test and somebody had made a 98, we knew it had to be Rod." Paige graduated in 1955 and took a series of college coaching jobs. He got his master's and doctorate in physical education at Indiana University, with a thesis on the response time of football linemen. That might have branded Paige a jock among educators in some places, but it confirmed him as a native speaker when he arrived in football-crazed Texas 30 years ago.

**PEP TALK**  
State test scores rose under Paige in Houston; critics say the pressure drove kids to drop out

**DOUBLE THREAT**  
As head coach at Texas Southern University, Paige, right, also insisted on a faculty position

He went to interview for a job as head coach and athletic director at Texas Southern University in Houston. The position offered a big step up in pay and prestige, but Paige also wanted a faculty assignment. Granville Sawyer, 81, then president of Texas Southern, recalls, "I was convinced by the end of our conversation that this was a great mind and a great educational leader in the making."

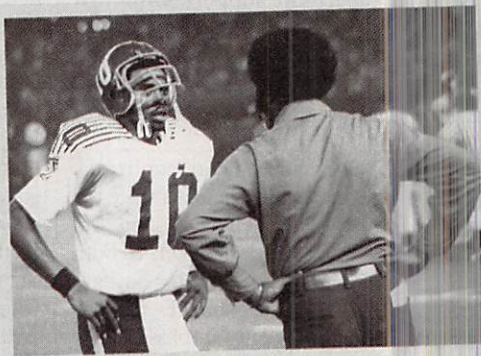
Paige had been reared in a family of die-hard Democrats, in a county with "so few Republicans that the whole group would almost fit into a van," according to the editor of the local paper. But while living in Houston in the 1970s, he became active in the Republican Party. Why? Paige once told the *Dallas Morning News* that in Mississippi, "the guys that were lynching us were Democrats." He campaigned for the elder George Bush when he ran in the 1980 Republican presidential primaries, and Paige describes the Bush family as the "cream of the earth."

Friends emphasize that in setting education policy, Paige's only ideology is what

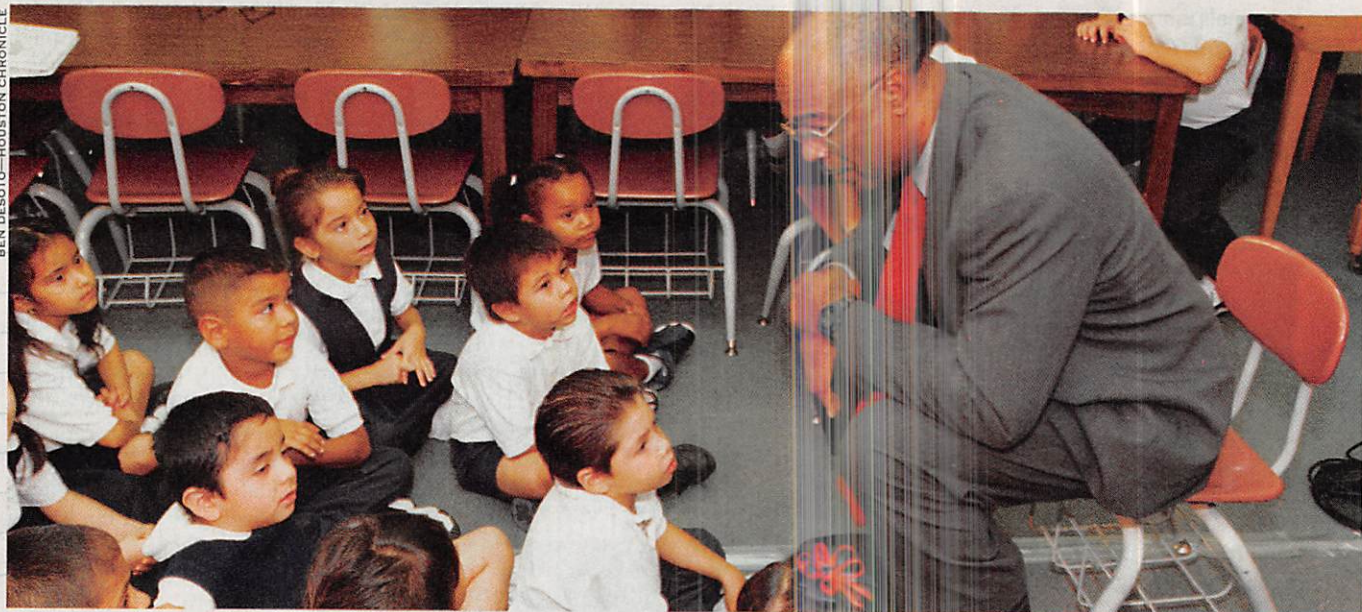
works. When the typically polarizing debate of how to teach reading arose in Houston, Paige heard out proponents of both camps—"whole language" and phonics—and allowed his district to adopt a combination of the two. "He's quite masterfully at bringing all kinds of different perspectives to the table and choosing the best one, no matter where or whom it comes from," says Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of Great City Schools, an urban-schools coalition that recognized Paige in 1999 with a national award for excellence.

Paige's gift for crafting disparate ideas into a coherent and popular agenda will be sorely tested in Washington. And so will his legendary frugality: despite earning the highest salary of any U.S. school superintendent (\$275,000 a year), Paige has lived in the same modest three-bedroom home for the past 30 years. He is divorced and has a son, Rod Jr., 41. Paige's biggest indulgence may be his wardrobe—Italian suits and ostrich-skin cowboy boots.

As the first local school superintendent ever to hold the nation's top education position, "Paige brings to the capital a sense of how schools really operate—of their capacities and constraints," says Casserly. That means a dose of reality for policymakers, and, it is hoped, a source of advocacy for kids. —With reporting by Alice Jackson Baughn/Ocean Springs, Miss., and Michelle McCalope/Houston



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY



BEN DESOTO—HOUSTON CHRONICLE



For more about this education story and others, please visit [time.com/education](http://time.com/education)



**ENDLESS ERRORS** Mel and Norma Gabler have spent 40 years on a personal crusade to document the mistakes in textbooks

**wrong narrative**  
Sophocles' Antigone was not put to death. She hanged herself.

**wrong narrative**  
Khrushchev did not resign. He was removed. *Provision BPL*

**wrong city**  
Ecbatana, not Sardis, was the Persian king's summer residence and the Persian empire's fourth capital.

year and could not recommend a single one as satisfactory. "Although the textbooks are filled with pages of vocabulary and unnecessary detail, they provide only fragmentary treatment of some fundamentally important concepts" such as natural selection and cell construction, said Dr. George Nelson, the former astronaut who heads Project 2061.

A new study by Philip Sadler, director of science education at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, shows that students who had taken high school physics classes that used textbooks did substantially worse in college physics than those whose high school classes used no textbooks at all. Baltimore's nonprofit Abell Foundation, searching for a top-flight math book for gifted students, couldn't find one in the U.S., and turned instead to an English-language book from Singapore.

Peter Jovanovich, CEO of Pearson Education, concedes that "today's textbooks are too big, both physically and in terms of coverage." Why? Because most of the publishers' customers—especially the states that adopt textbooks for all their school districts—want them that way. Ultimate power is in the hands of these states' textbook-selection committees (especially the ones in Texas, California and Florida). The stakes are huge: the \$3.5 billion in annual textbook sales is greater than the sales of all hardcover books to adults. Textbooks are superficial in part because they must conform to state standards, which are often encyclopedic in scope. But "the weakest link in the chain," according to education researcher Harriet Tyson, is "textbook evaluation." Most committee members have little time to examine texts thoroughly, frequently making decisions based on splashy graphics and frills like CD-ROMs.

Online publishing and electronic textbooks will most likely transform the industry. The Web gives content producers the tools to align their materials with state standards and assessments, and smaller, more research-based publishers should face fewer barriers to entry. But quality content will always be expensive to produce, and states will still have to decide what to buy. Says Pearson's Jovanovich: "Technology is just an enabler. It's what we do with it that will matter." —*With reporting by Deborah Fowler/Longview*

# Amending the Texts

New technology promises to make them more accurate, up-to-date, interactive—and lightweight

By **ANDREW GOLDSTEIN**

**G**OING BY THE BOOK MAY BE A DUBIOUS practice when it comes to textbooks. A recent study by North Carolina State University documented thousands of errors in 12 of the most widely used middle school science texts: the Statue of Liberty is a lefty? Volume equals length times depth—and never mind height? It was merely the latest illumination of textbook bungling. In 1999 the mathematicians enlisted to review math books submitted for use in California said they were "shocked" by the frequency of mistakes—as many as one on every four pages. Mel and Norma Gabler, the self-anointed textbook watchdogs of Longview, Texas, have been compiling detailed lists of textbook errors since 1961; their most recent scroll of shame is 54 ft. long.

That's the bad news; the good news is that the days of teachers' having to navigate through error-strewn, out-of-date texts—and of kids' having to lug 30-lb. book bags—are almost over. The major publishers, fearful of yet another report slamming their product, have hired more fact checkers and instituted extra layers of review. More significant, this month McGraw-Hill

plans to launch its first e-textbooks—online versions of its printed texts, featuring videos, interactive lab exercises and personalized assessment tools. Factual errors, once discovered, will be corrected immediately. Five years from now the visual resolution of handheld text devices should be clear enough—and the prices low enough—that one portable e-textbook containing downloads for every subject could replace a backpack full of books.

Still, fact checkers and computers can do only so much. It remains difficult to find a textbook, online or in print, that isn't shallow and tedious. Project 2061, the education-improvement initiative of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, examined 10 of the most widely used high school biology texts last

**THE DIGITAL FUTURE?**  
McGraw-Hill's online e-textbooks are a first step toward portable, interactive education publishing



ANDRE LAMBERTSON FOR TIME

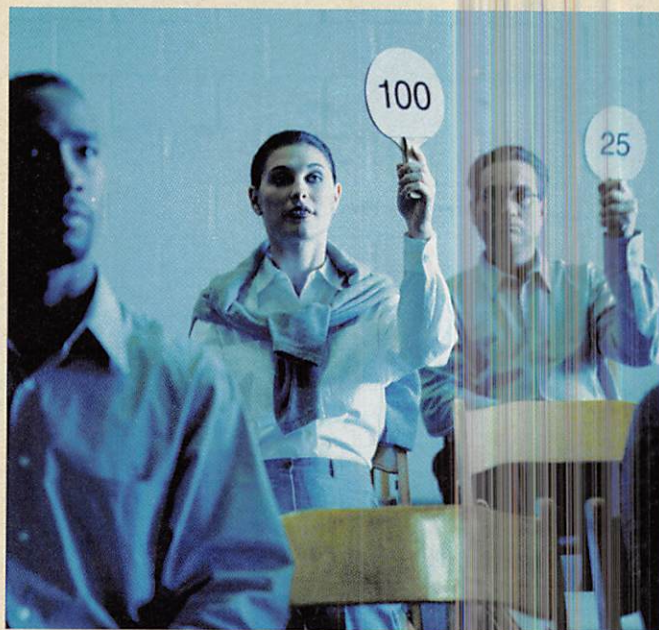


■ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
**SOMEONE TO CALL "SIR"**

Fewer than 1% of elementary-school teachers are black men. And principals want more of them as role models for inner-city schoolchildren. So schools of education are ratcheting up their efforts to fill the need. At three historically black colleges in South Carolina—Clafin, Benedict and Morris—male freshmen who commit to teaching for four years in the state receive full scholarships. The model was developed by researchers at Clemson University and will be expanded to other historically black schools.

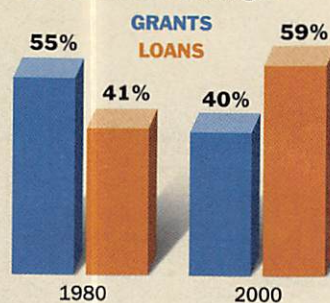
■ GRADUATE SCHOOL  
**STUDENTS BID FOR CLASSES**

Remember when getting into the one class you really needed was a nightmare? Well, Penn State now asks, "What's it worth to ya?" Each second-year student at the Smeal College of Business Administration is given 500 tokens (think Monopoly money) to bid on the classes he wants. It's an online process, and students can bid high for a seat in a must-have class—or for one they think they could barter later. Unpopular professors may feel as if they are on *The Gong Show*.



BRUCE T. BROWN-STONE

Percentage share of grants vs. loans at American colleges



Source: The College Board

■ COLLEGE  
**PRINCETON RAISES THE ANTE ON AID**

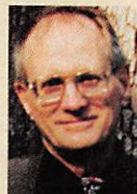
In the competition to attract the nation's best students, Ivy League universities are usually quick to match one another's recruiting inducements. But when Princeton recently announced it would replace loans with outright grants in the financial-aid packages it offers to undergraduates, its competitors fell silent. Why? Princeton's new aid plan will cost the university at least an extra \$5 million a year. Princeton can afford that cost, thanks to investment returns on its \$8 billion endowment. And its move is sure to spur more criticism of other Ivys that have even larger endowments (Harvard: \$19 billion; Yale: \$10 billion) but have been reluctant to use them for more student aid.

COURTESY PETER BEIDLER (2)



■ COLLEGE  
**THE JOY OF TEACHING**

A few weeks ago Lehigh University professor Peter Beidler received a surprising e-mail from a teacher at Nanjing University in China. She told Beidler that "Why I Teach," an essay he wrote in 1985, is mandatory reading for 2 million students each year at 1,900 colleges in China. Beidler thinks the Chinese like the piece because it extols the benefits of public service, but he is realistic about what it means to be a best-selling author there. "The Chinese," he says, "aren't big on copyrights."



# XFL'S FAST-MOUTH

By JOEL STEIN LAS VEGAS

IT IS JANUARY, TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE first XFL game will be played, and the New York/New Jersey Hitmen already have fans. Rabid fans. Fans who scream "those wusses!" in a bar in Seacaucus, N.J., when general manager Drew Pearson announces that the Hitmen beat the Chicago Enforcers in a scrimmage. Pearson, the former Dallas Cowboys great, is at Bazooka's—which is like a Hooters without all the pretension—surrounded by

the X, stick up middle fingers for the F and give the international "loser" signal, thumb and index finger smacked onto forehead, for the L.

These are just the kind of fans the National Football League wants, and the kind that the World Wrestling Federation has been able to drag blindly into its new enterprise, the first major pro league to be launched since the three-season flop of the United States Football League (USFL) in the mid-'80s. The XFL is a joint venture by the World Wrestling Federation and NBC

## THE TEAMS

■ **BIRMINGHAM THUNDERBOLTS**  
Aged ex-Florida State QB Casey Weldon will be handing off to aged RB James Bostic. Not much here.

■ **MEMPHIS MANIAX** Strong defense and 1994 Heisman-winning RB Rashaan Salaam make them contenders.

■ **LOS ANGELES XTREME** Maybe the best team, with the offense led by UCLA star Tommy Maddox.

cheerleaders in black leather pantsuits with cutouts just below their belly buttons. "We will be violent out there," he yells to the crowd. "If a quarterback slides, God bless him, because we're going to hit him anyway. That's Hitmen football."

At the other end of the bar, Jonathan Travers, 26, the fan who publicly questioned the masculinity of Midwesterners, and Pete Bonavita, 22, perform their own cheer for XFL cameras in an attempt to add two opening-game tickets to the seven season tickets they have already purchased. They signal hands-over-crotch for

that debuted last Saturday night. It is trying to sell itself as a more violent version of the NFL (no fair catches, taunting encouraged) with more sex (cheerleaders in revealing outfits), but that's not really the product it has. After all, the only way to make football more violent than the NFL is to find MVP linebackers who were actually convicted of murder. As far as sex is concerned, those hot, skanky-looking cheerleaders in the XFL television ads were in fact pricey Los Angeles models who can't dance, while the actual XFL cheerleaders are former

■ **HURRY UP** 35 sec. between plays, not the NFL's 45; just 25 sec. after the clock is stopped

■ **BUMP AND RUN** Cornerbacks can make contact with receivers anywhere on the field.

■ **NO TOUCHBACKS** Returning teams must run kickoffs back from the end zone.

■ **OVERTIME** Each team has four downs from the 20-yd. line. If the first team scores in fewer than four downs, the second wins by scoring in even fewer downs.

# 1 FOOTBALL

At last: the new league plays. Our call: brash, bold and extremely boring

## THE RULES

### ■ PUNTS: NO FAIR CATCHES

The returning player gets a 5-yd. halo until he touches the ball; either team can grab any punt that goes more than 25 yds.

### ■ NO EXTRA-POINT KICKS

After a touchdown, the scoring team gets one play to score from the two-yard line for one point.

### ■ RECEIVERS: ONE FOOT IN

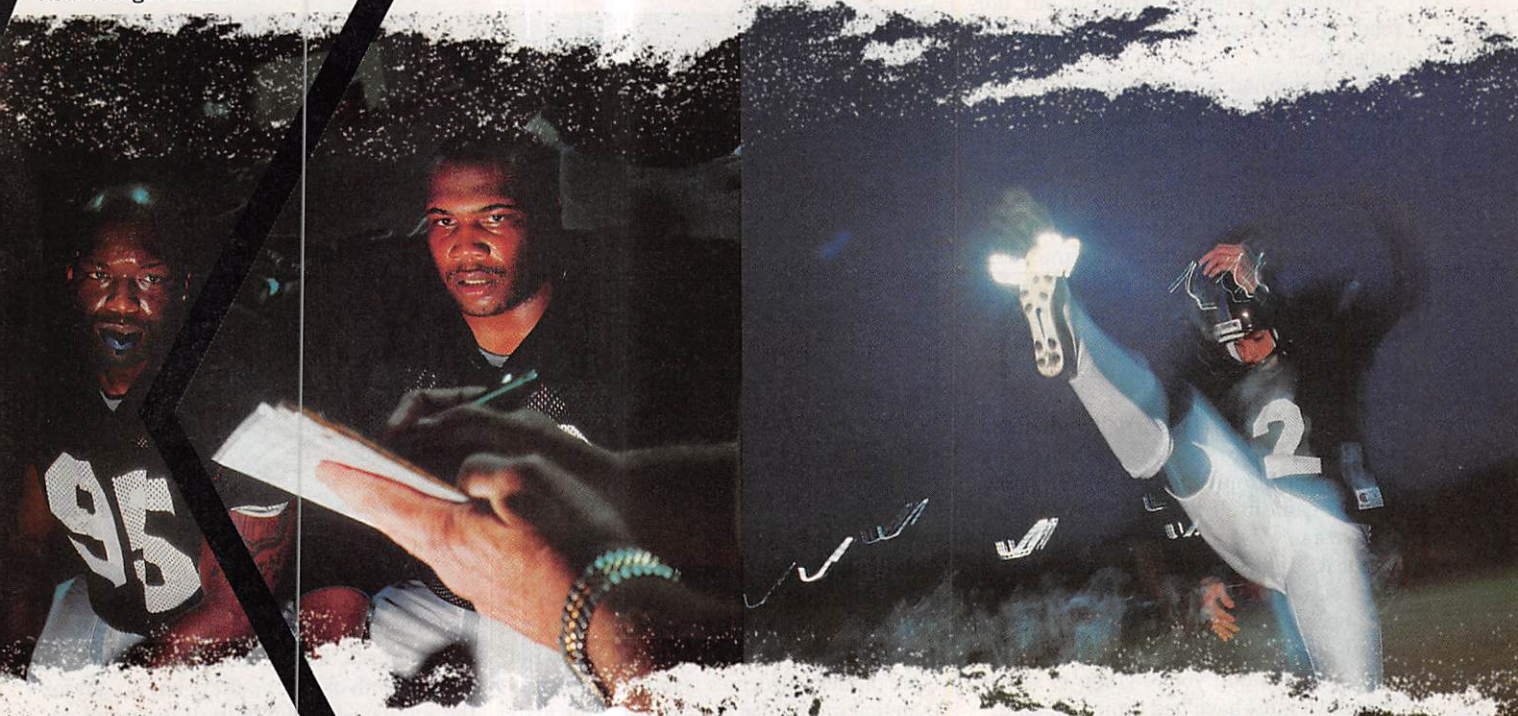
As in college football.

cheerleaders who can't dance.

WWF CEO Vince McMahon's business plan is to turn sports into reality TV: miked players, coverage of the coach's halftime talks, a "bubba cam" operator in protective padding behind the linemen, reporters interrupting players between downs and, for some reason, fireworks. "There's no reason to do scripting," McMahon says of the difference between the XFL and the WWF. "This is a reality show—live. It's real. It's not someone who is alleged to eat a rat when it was real-

record than the Cincinnati Bengals; the day that investors found out McMahon was launching a league, the WWF's stock dropped 25%. (The company had sales of \$379 million and operating earnings of \$59 million last year.)

The XFL's business plan isn't as stupid as its product, however. By splitting the anticipated \$100 million in start-up costs over the first two years with NBC, McMahon isn't risking nearly as much as the USFL did. By owning all the teams and offering all the players the same \$45,000 one-year contract with a



### ■ LAS VEGAS OUTLAWS

Ex-NFLers make the Outlaws as real as it gets in this league.

■ N.Y./N.J. HITMEN A solid, well-run team; will hurt someone.

### ■ SAN FRANCISCO DEMONS

A weak squad; no real standouts.

■ ORLANDO RAGE They plan to run; given the QBs, a good idea.

### ■ CHICAGO ENFORCERS

The weakest team. Enforcement was never big in the Windy City anyway.

ly chicken. We're going to find out who these players are as human beings."

The XFL is gambling that access will substitute for talent on the teams, which are made up of NFL has-beens and college players who never made it. Why would anyone want to know so much about people they don't care about? TV execs stopped asking that question around the second episode of *Survivor*.

Before its first game, the XFL sold more than 500,000 tickets and a staggering number of red-and-black footballs. Still, new leagues have a worse

one-year option (quarterbacks get \$50,000; kickers, \$35,000), he can control his costs; the entire XFL payroll is less than half that of a single NFL team. And the league needs only to deliver a mediocre 4.5 Nielsen rating to make its 10-week 8 p.m. Saturday time slot on NBC a success, as long as it attracts the overvalued young male demographic. Networks are increasingly willing to play cable station with their off-peak hours.

And even if NBC is just doing this because it is still bitter about losing the NFL to Fox, it is still a cheap drunk. "If we had signed the deal to stay with the AFC, we

# Brain Food and Soul Food

*Hannibal* offers plenty of culinary gross-outs, but this superior sequel has romance in its dark heart

would have lost \$150 million to \$160 million a year," says NBC Sports chairman Dick Ebersol, who made McMahon an offer just hours after the WWF announced the league's launch. "So worst-case scenario to us would be a third of what we would have lost."

McMahon has a carny's flair for attracting attention, but it was guys like Ryan Clement, a former University of Miami quarterback who got in trouble for, as he puts it, "having too much personality," who took the field for Saturday's opener for the Vegas Outlaws. He considers this second chance a gift—one that he plans to exploit to the fullest. "Every [night]club here has been letting us in for free," Clement says. "And as soon as we're on NBC Saturday night, the groupies will be here."

"Don't tell the magazine that," interjects kicker Paul McCallum.

Replies Clement: "None of our fans read TIME. They read *Harley-Davidson* magazine."

Clement had a good game, as the Outlaws creamed N.Y./N.J. 19-0 in Saturday's opener. But it wasn't pretty. The players needed stickum, and the TV production was clumsy. Worst of all, the XFL didn't have any off-field story to tell. As for miking the players, it quickly became clear why no one has ever tried this before. Listening to running back Rod Smart try to explain why the name on the back of his jersey read HE HATE ME made one long for a Bush campaign speech.

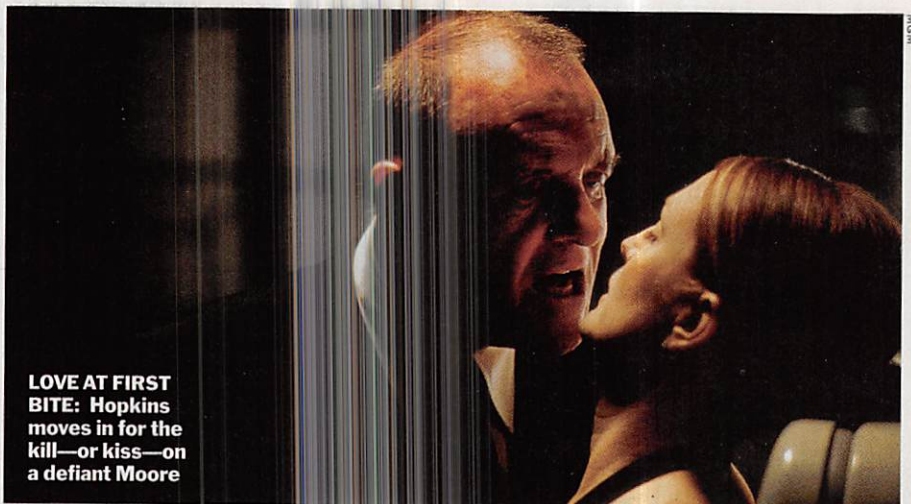
Even if the XFL fails, it will undoubtedly do a favor for pro sports. Given that the Super Bowl halftime show got better ratings than the game itself, the NFL will be thrilled to have a new league do some experimenting for it. "If they're smart, they'll steal a lot of it," says Linda McMahon, Vince's wife and business partner. "We're putting a brand-new product out. If a guy gets his tooth knocked out, you're going to see it." Those two must have had some first date.

The XFL was so concerned about the mediocrity on the field that all scrimmages were held under secret conditions—no fans, no press. The only ones invited were the Las Vegas odds makers, lured by the prospect that on-air commentator and sometime Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura would discuss betting lines to goose the action. Still, says John Avello, director of race and sports book for Bally's and Paris hotels: "The amount of money we'll make on this is minimal. Probably like a hockey game. Nah, better than hockey. Like a good, solid baseball game. After all, it is football." ■

**F**BI AGENT CLARICE STARLING (Julianne Moore) has tracked Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins) into Washington's Union Station. Now she's lost his trail. She scans the crowd, her back to a whirling carousel. She doesn't notice a hand ruffling her hair—hardly more than a breeze—of someone riding the carousel. Lecter.

A banquet of creepy, gory or grotesque incidents is on display in *Hannibal*, the corrosive and haunting film version of Thomas Harris' sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs*. One man is disemboweled and hanged in

novel's ending. Director Ridley Scott is nicely attuned to Harris' depiction of evil, of the strength and seduction in depravity. Each gargyle gets his due: greedy detective Pazzi (Giancarlo Giannini), the venal official Krendler (Ray Liotta). Even Mason Verger, the pedophile with the skinless face (Gary Oldman, under a layer of Toussaud wax), brings wit to his lurid vengefulness. All the actors do expert turns. And Moore makes a fine, severe Clarice. As Lecter consumes his victims, so Clarice assumes their pain until her face becomes a steel mask, her quest a curse. Clarice's empathy



**LOVE AT FIRST BITE:** Hopkins moves in for the kill—or kiss—on a defiant Moore

public, his entrails dangling like a watch fob. Another is thrown to ravenous wild boars as a Lucullan snack. A third malefactor is condemned to dine on a little brain food (his own); it's Lecter's idea of just desserts. But none of these atrocities is more disquieting than that moment at the carousel—the first-ever physical contact between a cannibal of genius and his righteous pursuer. For a second we fear that crime literature's favorite mad doctor will yank Clarice aboard the carousel. Perhaps scalp her. But not here, not now. This is the briefest caress, a boyish flirtation, a threat of things to come.

The film *Silence of the Lambs*, for all its Oscars, only skimmed the lower depths in which Harris' novel swam with a spooky understanding of every bottom-dwelling creature. *Hannibal*, adapted by David Mamet and Steven Zaillian, fiddles more with its source and reworks—improves upon—that

is that of the dead grieving for the dead.

*Hannibal* gets deeper under Lecter's skin, and Hopkins feels more at ease inside it; he revels in this sociopath's freedom from scruple. Lecter's deadliest weapon is not his teeth or other cutlery but his gift for the jugular—his ability to discern and exploit human weakness. Hopkins plays him, suavely, as the antic conscience, the voice of mischief inside anyone with ambition and a grudge. The Devil works in whispers.

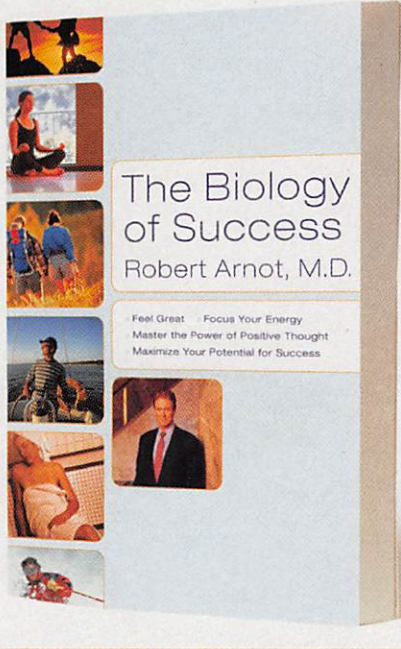
The movie, handsomely photographed by John Mathieson, lives in the shadows and in subtle shades of temptation. Lecter, for instance, is tempted by Clarice's purity; he needs to devour it, if only to see if he has the will to spit it out. Caressing her hair is not enough. Can the vampire kiss the virgin? Can she resist? These, not the grotty little murders, are the crucial, thrilling issues at *Hannibal's* dark heart. —By Richard Corliss

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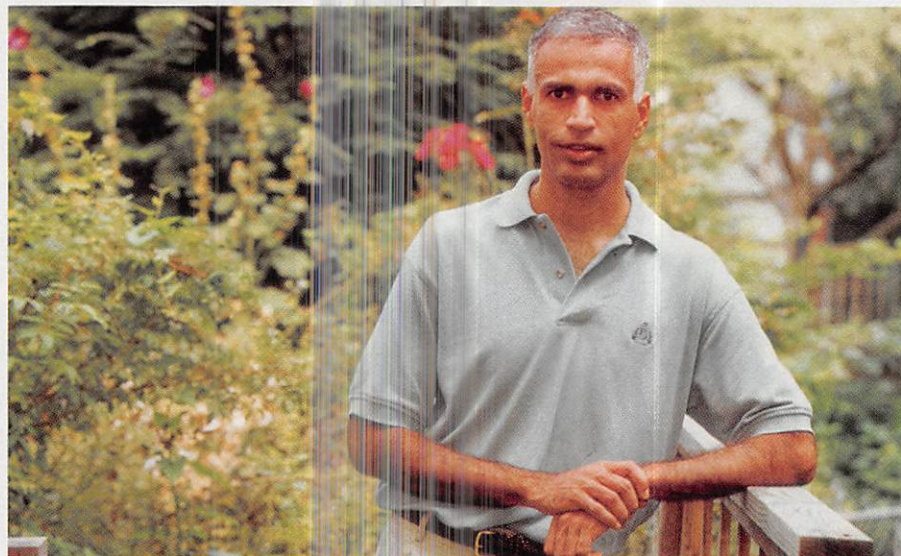
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JOCELYN AUGUSTINO FOR TIME

**SURI: An enchantingly transcendent novel about contemporary life in his native Bombay**

## CHRONICLE OF A SOUL IN LIMBO

### The Death of Vishnu

VIRTUALLY ALL OF THIS ENCHANTING NOVEL takes place in or around a Bombay apartment house where Vishnu, the tenants' drunken factotum, lies in his appointed sleeping place on a stair landing either dying or perhaps already dead. The two

Hindu families on the first floor, the Asranis and the Pathaks, squabble over who will pay for the ambulance to cart poor, unsightly Vishnu away.

Meanwhile, the Muslim Jalals on the second floor are in turmoil because husband Ahmed, after years of proclaiming himself a religious freethinker, has been behaving like a mystic, leading his wife Arifa to worry that he is the victim of an evil eye. And unknown to all the adults in the building is the Asrani daughter Kavita's movie-besotted plan to elope with the Jalals' son Salim.

Its clever structure allows *The Death of Vishnu* (Norton; 295 pages; \$24.95) to display a manageable cross-section of contemporary urban Indian life, including class and religious frictions. But

Manil Suri, who grew up in Bombay and now teaches mathematics at the University of Maryland, has more to offer here than gentle social comedy. During the course of the novel, Vishnu's soul disentangles itself from his earthly remains and begins ascending the apartment house stairs. As this spirit looks back on the life just ending, on the mother who named him after a Hindu god, on the prostitute whom he truly loved, Suri's novel achieves an eerie and memorable transcendence.

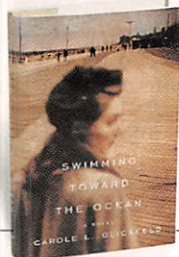
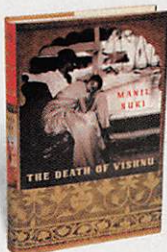
—By Paul Gray

## VISIONS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

### Swimming Toward The Ocean

A CHILD WHO REIMAGINES THE LIVES OF her parents clearly is also bound to paint her own self-portrait using the reflections in their eyes. And so it happens for Devorah Arnow as she memorializes her mother

Chenia, a Russian Jewish émigré who settled in Brooklyn in the middle of the 20th century, raised a family, grew old, but never really got







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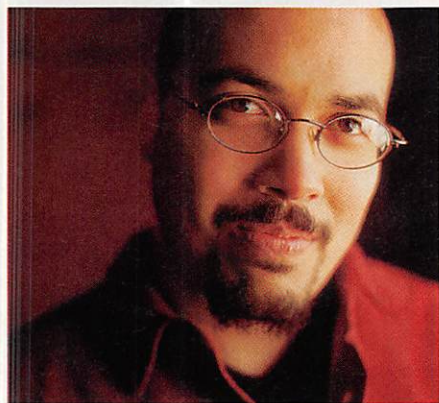
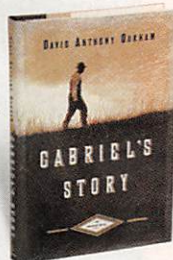
off the boat from Europe. Chenia, as Devorah reconstructs her in Carole Glickfeld *Swimming Toward the Ocean* (Knopf; 38 pages; \$24), lingers on a sort of moral gang plank with a view of the dazzling rides a Coney Island but with fear in her heart for the great American whirl. It's Chenia's husband who's having the good time, romping with his mistress and trying to sue himself into a fortune with harebrained legal actions. Devorah remembers it all from a remove, after having grown up to suffer insults as her mother did and make some of her mother's mistakes. It's a small story the novel tells—but with sweetness and wisdom and affection—of how each generation sets sail anew for its own America, because landing and arriving aren't quite the same. **—By Walter Kirn**

#### TALES OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN WEST

### Gabriel's Story

DAVID ANTHONY DURHAM DRAWS AN IMPRESSIVE moral fable from the history and legends of the American West. Gabriel, 15, has been taken by his mother, a former slave, to Kansas, where his new stepfather is establishing a homestead. The boy is appalled by the chores he sees stretching endlessly ahead of him and eventually manages to run off with a pair of Texas horse dealers who promise to train him in the glamorous cowboy profession. What Gabriel learns quickly enough is that his new mentors are psychopaths embarked on a trail of revenge, rape and murder across the Southwest. When he escapes from their rampage, Gabriel must find his way not only back to Kansas but to a reckoning with his conscience.

*Gabriel's Story* (Doubleday; 294 pages;



RICHARD SCHULTZ FOR TIME

**DURHAM: An impressive moral fable**

(\$3.95) sometimes seems a little too derivative of William Faulkner as filtered through Cormac McCarthy: "The bull seemed to stand there for no particular purpose that it and the boys could make out, except as a spectacle reminiscent of some pagan culture." Never mind. Durham finds his own voice and rhythm, and the story gallops. —P.G.

**COMING OF AGE IN MISSISSIPPI**

**Rides of the Midway**

NOEL WEATHERSPOON'S MISSISSIPPI ADOLESCENCE during the late 1970s is a troubled one, even by the standards of most coming-of-age novels. Not only did his father board a ride called the Black Dragon at a state fair and disappear from the lives of his wife and two sons, but while trying to stretch a Little League triple into a home run, Noel collides with the opposing catcher and sends him into an irreversible coma. Figuring he will face a murder rap fairly soon, Noel resolves to enjoy himself while he can.

His hedonistic odyssey in *Rides of the Midway* (Norton; 316 pages; \$25.95) involves eye-popping quantities of liquor and drugs. Those pursuits leave Noel increasingly at odds with the God-fearing Southerners around him, particularly his stepfather, who looks remarkably like Billy Graham. Mississippi-raised author Lee Durkee portrays his hero's feckless dissolution with considerable comic flair and a sharp eye for regional manners, good and bad. There isn't much profundity on display here, but readers will finish the book feeling they've been treated to quite a ride. —P.G.

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## BOOKS



JOHN FICANA FOR TIME

### LOWY: A snappy mixture of fact and fiction

Max Sharpe, an Ehrlichman understudy whose assignment is to persuade folks in TV land to turn off Vietnam and watch some other show. It's grim out there on this December weekend in 1970; all sex and drugs and riots and M-16s. Nixon's team will have to work overtime to make sure the country has a Merry Christmas.

Lowy has chosen broad targets to hurl pies at, and he splatters them. He's messy sometimes, and his words and thoughts go everywhere—stylish, original prose this isn't—but it's a good mess, mostly. And a weird one.

—W.K.

### A SAGA OF UNREQUITED LOVE

## A Student of Weather

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A COMPETENT formulaic romance earns an added luster in *A Student of Weather* (Counterpoint; 368 pages; \$24) thanks to Canadian author Elizabeth Hays' deft variations on and additions to familiar themes. Two sisters, Lucinda, 17, and Norma Joyce Hardy, 8, fall in love with the older man who visits their father's farm in Saskatchewan during the 1930s to study local plants and Dust Bowl weather patterns. Maurice Dove ought to fall for the beautiful and virtuous Lucinda, who runs the household in place of her deceased mother, but it is Norma Joyce, plain and engagingly clever, who snares his attention over succeeding decades, never as husband but eventually as father of her child.

This saga of unrequited love is distinguished especially by Hays' fine descriptive flourishes: "By the middle of March, it

was bright at seven in the morning, the light warmer, less metallic than in February, almost petalled, the way it softened the branches of the apple trees rather than striking against them." —P.C.

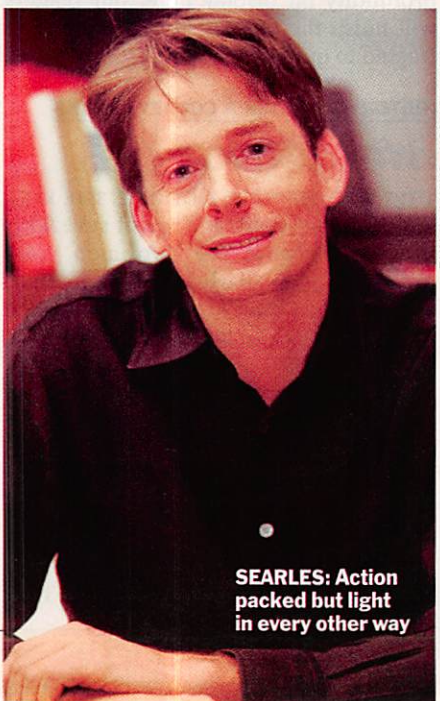
### HEAVY-BREATHING FAMILY MELODRAMA

## Boy Still Missing

BEWARE OF NOVELS THAT ALLOW THE reader to open at random to sentences such as this: "Without any signs to steer me, I could only keep plodding along into the uncertainty of my future." The plodder here is one Dominick Pindle, a Massachusetts teen who makes the big, cinematic oopsy of falling for his father's other woman. Imagine the consequences, the confrontations! Sadly, you would probably do a better job than John Searles has in *Boy Still Missing* (Morrow; 292 pages; \$25), a back-to-the-early-'70s drama of family misery and social devolution.

It's an action-packed tale but light in every other way, although its tone can be very, very heavy. Abortion figures in, and much is made of changing mores in the era just preceding *Roe v. Wade*, but the quest for relevance founders in a swamp of hyperspecific, unnecessary stage directions and commercial-fiction panting about uncertain futures and what have you. So wait for the movie (the rights have already been bought). Then don't go see it.

—W.K.



ANDRE LAMBERTSON—SABA FOR TIME

SEARLES: Action packed but light in every other way

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AMY DICKINSON

# A New "Time Out"

**Parents who want to discipline their misbehaving kids should apply the hiatus to themselves**

WHEN I WAS A KID, MY SISTERS AND I ALMOST SET THE house on fire. We all quickly knew that we had done a very bad and dangerous thing. Consciences sprouted. There were tears and apologies. Our mother sent her fledgling pyromaniacs to bed without supper, which, she later said, was the worst thing she could think of doing to us. That night, after she sneaked food to us in our rooms, she told us she knew our self-reproach was punishment enough. She had made us miss supper just because she was mad and didn't know what else to do.

Some parents cling to the idea of punishment; they like the simple physics of it. A quick spank or a minute of time-out for every year of a child's age, for instance, seems like a just response to a transgression. But punishments that grow out of a parent's anger don't work because kids learn mainly that they can really make their parents mad. What kids really need to learn is good judgment: they need to behave well, not because they're afraid of being punished but because of how good it feels to do the right thing.

People often confuse discipline with punishment, but punishment can be one consequence of a lack of discipline in a family. A child who lives a disciplined life—with firm routines and loving parents who are in charge—will better learn to control her actions because she will know what is expected of her.

Anthony Wolf, a Boston psychologist and author of *The Secret of Parenting*, says parents often fall into a trap: their children behave badly, and they resort to punishing out of anger, frustration or the lack of an alternative idea. Wolf recommends that parents be clear about their expectations, quickly deal with their children's mistakes and misdeeds, make the consequence fit the action and disengage. If a child knowingly rides her bike beyond the boundaries, for instance, parents should explain what she did wrong

and then take the bike away until they feel she's ready to be responsible. A child can see this as a direct consequence of what she has done. Don't take away an unrelated privilege, like having a friend over.

Disengaging is often the hardest part. "Don't get sucked into your kid's explanations," Wolf says. "Just be calm and silent. Make sure that the final thing your child hears from you is what you want them to hear." Later on, at a neutral time, explain yourself, if necessary, and then move on.

Wolf turns the idea of the time-out around, so it is the parents who take one. Once you have dealt with your kid's actions in a non-nonsense way, it is time to move on, but often children don't realize it. They will sometimes attempt to provoke their parents, just to keep their attention. A parent should not rise to the bait. "My wife and I had this thing we did with our kids when they were trying to provoke us," he says. "We'd just look at them calmly and say, 'Goodbye,' and then go about our business."

When parents take a temporary time-out, a child will do just about anything—including being good—to get them back. And when a child reaps the rewards of being in her parents' good graces, she will work harder to stay there. ■

For more information, check out *"The Secret of Parenting"* by Anthony Wolf. You can e-mail Amy at [timefamily@aol.com](mailto:timefamily@aol.com)



ILLUSTRATION FOR TIME BY JEREMY TANKARD

## IN BRIEF

**SPARE THE ROD** Preschool kids who receive harsh physical punishments from parents tend to display excessive aggression as schoolchildren, says a study at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania. Researchers find that these youngsters end up feeling humiliated, frustrated by their unmet needs and unworthy of care. Later they mimic their parents' model of violence to cope with social situations.



ZIGY KALUZY—STONE

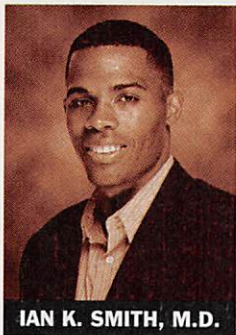
**TUNING OUT** Aggressive behavior can actually be "unlearned," a Stanford University study finds, if children limit their use of TV, videos and electronic games. After a six-month experiment, researchers report that children who reduced their TV time to seven hours a week and stuck to less-violent videos and games were half as likely as their peers to engage in bellicose playground behavior like taunting and teasing. The most combative kids at the start of the study showed the most behavioral improvement by the end.



HERMAN AGOPIAN—STONE

**FRIENDLY ADVICE** The top factor in teens' decisions to drink or smoke is whether they have friends who do, a National Institutes of Health study suggests. Researchers find that teens tend to behave like their five closest friends do, and girls are more likely than boys to give in to pressure to drink. However, parental involvement counts: kids whose moms and dads talk and listen to them regularly are less likely to smoke or drink. —By Sora Song





IAN K. SMITH, M.D.

# Sticks and Stones

**Osteoporosis can break your bones, even if you are a man. This disease is not for women only**

MENTION THE WORD OSTEOPOROSIS IN THE MANLY world of testosterone, pro basketball and the XFL, and you're likely to get a wave of the hand and a dismissive "That's a woman's disease." Not so. More

than 2 million American men have been found to have the thinning bones and skeletal weakness of osteoporosis, and an additional 3 million are at an increased risk of developing them.

It's true that osteoporosis strikes women with much greater frequency than men—in some studies as much as four to six times as often. But that's no reason to brush it off as "their" disease. It's a mere stroke of gender luck that men's bones tend to grow larger, stronger and denser. Also paying dividends are those sports that boys (and, increasingly, girls) play as children—running up and down basketball courts, soccer fields and baseball diamonds. As it happens, physical activity is one of the more important ways to increase bone density and protect bone health.

But even the most active men cannot ignore certain facts of life. All of us build up our bones during the first three decades of life, typically reaching peak bone mass in the early 30s. Around the age of 35, we begin gradually to lose some of this bone mass. Women ultimately give up between 30% to 50%, while men lose only 20% to 30%. Though mass loss in men is lower, it still makes us vulnerable to back pains and bone fractures. In fact, this year alone American men will suffer as many as half a million osteoporosis-related breaks, mostly in the spine, hip and wrist. These are not only painful and debilitating; thousands die each year from fracture-related complications.

For many of us, however, there's still time. Of all the side effects of aging, osteoporosis is one of the more preventable, through diet, exercise and changes in lifestyle. The two key nutrients for bone health are calcium, which makes bones stronger, and vitamin D, which helps the body absorb the calcium. Men between the

ages of 25 and 65 should consume a minimum of 1 gram of calcium a day; after age 65, that dose should be increased to 1.5 grams a day.

Exercising is also important, with emphasis on weight-bearing activities (walking, jogging, racquet sports) in which bones and muscles work against gravity. Lifting weights and working out on resistance machines can help preserve bone density.

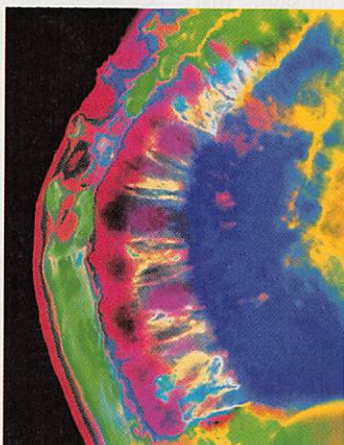
Be careful about what's in your medicine cabinet. Prolonged use of some medications, such as steroids (prescribed for asthma, arthritis and kidney disease), anticonvulsants (for seizure disorders) or aluminum-based antacids, can weaken your bones. Smoking and drinking are both bad for bones, as is prolonged weightlessness, for anybody who plans to work

on the space station.

There is no cure for osteoporosis, but it can be effectively treated by a powerful class of medications called bisphosphonates; Fosamax and Actonel are the only two that have been approved for men. Some physicians also prescribe testosterone supplements for patients with low testosterone levels, and calcitonin, a drug that slows bone loss.

The best time to fight osteoporosis, in any case, is early in life, when you can be most effective in heading it off. ■

*Dr. Ian is a correspondent for NBC's Today Show. E-mail: [ianmedical@aol.com](mailto:ianmedical@aol.com). For more on osteoporosis, see [www.nof.org](http://www.nof.org)*



**SPINAL TAP:** The long-term effects of bone loss can be debilitating

MEHAI KULY/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY—PHOTO RESEARCHERS

## GOOD NEWS



**DECLARED SAFE** Vaccines may work medical miracles, but fears of side effects persist. A popular misconception is that they trigger the onset or relapse of multiple sclerosis—a worry that led to the 1998 suspension of a hepatitis-B vaccination program in France. Two new studies conclude there is no link, and urge that public-health campaigns not be derailed because of unfounded concerns. Hepatitis B infects 350 million and kills 1 million every year.



**ROBO HEART** Only 2,000 human hearts are available each year to the 100,000 Americans who need one. When doctors tried 20 years ago to

substitute an artificial heart, the experiment was a heroic failure attended by great public anguish. Now the FDA has approved—but only for testing—a new artificial heart: a grapefruit-size, battery-powered device called AbioCor. The robo heart will give patients limited mobility and is intended to be a permanent organ replacement, not a stopgap remedy.

## BAD NEWS



**TIES THAT BIND** You don't smoke, you're not overweight and your blood pressure and cholesterol check out O.K. And yet, if a family member has cardiovascular disease, the odds are fifty-fifty that your arteries are silently clogging up too. Researchers found abnormal blood flow in 16 of 32 individuals with a parent or sibling who had the disease. The best way to rewrite this family history is aggressive prevention: exercise, diet and, in some cases, medication.

**FOOD FIX** Addicted to cheeseburgers? That may not be as farfetched as it sounds. Scientists suspect that people who are obese may eat more in an effort to stimulate the dopamine "pleasure" circuits in their brain, just as addicts do by drinking or taking drugs. New studies show that the obese have fewer dopamine receptors than their normal-weight counterparts. It isn't clear, however, whether the neural difference is a consequence or a cause of obesity.



—By David Bjerklie

Sources: Good News—FDA; *New England Journal of Medicine* (2/1/01); Bad News—*Circulation* (1/30/01); *the Lancet* (2/3/01)

CHRIS EVERARD—STONE



ANITA HAMILTON

# Valentines Online

**I love flowers. So why was every bouquet I rush-ordered on the Web such a disappointment?**

A ROOMFUL OF FLOWERS SHOULD NOT MAKE YOU sad. Yet when I looked around my office the other day, I couldn't help feeling depressed. You see, I had blown more than \$250 on second-rate bouquets, none of which I loved. After months of testing the latest hardware and software for this column, I thought ordering flowers online—just in time for Valentine's Day—would be a breeze. But while the ordering part was easy, picking a site I could happily recommend was nearly impossible.

The slickest websites, Justflowers.com, 1-800-Flowers.com and FTD.com, lured me in with crystal-clear photos and great selections. When it came time to think of a clever note, I clicked on a link for suggestions, ranging from "Love is the beauty of the soul" to "If it weren't for women, men would still be wearing last week's socks." In less than 30 minutes per site, I picked my favorite flowers and placed my order.

Next I sought out more homegrown sites. Flowerbud.com specializes in unusual varieties like freesias, hyacinths, orchids and tuberoses—seemingly ideal for flower lovers looking for quality blossoms straight from the grower. Another site, Freshroses.com, was the most affordable of all. This direct-from-the-grower site charged \$30 for a dozen roses (plus \$10 for tax and shipping), half the price of the swankier destinations.

By noon the day my flowers arrived, my room was awash in color. Unfortunately, the color of a \$49 bouquet of tiger lilies

from Flowerbud.com, which had arrived by FedEx early that morning, was predominantly green because the lilies hadn't begun to open. "It doesn't feel like getting flowers," remarked a co-worker. "It's more like getting grass." The \$62 multicolored tulips hand-delivered from 1-800-Flowers.com were brighter but a little ragged and carelessly arranged. I immediately tossed one droopy stem, and by the next day there were more brown petals.

When ordering from FTD.com, I took the site's suggestion and spent \$10 more to upgrade a small arrangement with more flowers. But my mixed bouquet of roses, snapdragons and carnations, also hand-

delivered, was squished into a tiny lit bowl. Upgradable bouquets are a great way to accommodate a range of budgets, but you would think FTD.com would also upgrade the vase. Still, the flowers were reasonably fresh, and it was the only site that let me select a full-size card to accompany the arrangement. Total damage: \$55.

When it came time to order that V-Day staple, roses, I tried two extremes. The elegant Justflowers.com looked promising, but the \$70 hand-delivered roses I settled on were only just O.K. "They look a little dry," a friend pointed out. Although they were twice as big as the coral-colored roses I received from Freshroses.com, I preferred the latter. After all, it's easier to forgive a \$40 bouquet for its imperfections—tiny buds already in full bloom—than a \$70 one.

And that's what bugged me about this whole exercise. I paid a premium for bouquets that would sell for \$20 or less at a grocery store. By Valentine's Day, the prices will be even more outrageous. Of the five sites I tried, Flowerbud.com is the only one that will not raise prices this month.

Frankly, none of these sites meets my standards. But if you must, start with Freshroses.com for roses and FTD.com for everything else. Or just send chocolate. ■



**BLOOM AND BUST:** Scraggly tulips from 1-800-Flowers.com cost a whopping \$62

*Questions for Anita? You can e-mail her at [hamilton@time.com](mailto:hamilton@time.com). For past technology columns, visit [time.com/personal](http://time.com/personal)*

## IN BRIEF

### Voter Information



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**THUMBS UP** Entrepreneurs have wasted no time in seizing the business opportunity created by the Florida chad debacle. On Capitol Hill last week, Identix and EDS demonstrated a voting system that works only after you've verified your identity with a fingerprint scan. Since most voters haven't been fingerprinted, the first users are likely to be the roughly 2.5 million military personnel whose prints are on file.

**PAY FOR NAPSTER?** When Bertelsmann boss Thomas Middelhoff announced that the free music service would start charging a subscription fee by summer, a lot of people were surprised—including Napster CEO Hank Barry. "We haven't decided on a time schedule at all," Barry told Reuters. So what's holding it up? Before Napster can charge for downloads, it has to cut licensing-fee deals with most of the record companies (not just sugar daddy Bertelsmann), many of which are still suing Napster for "pirating" their music. As long as the labels prefer punitive damages to a piece of the MP3 pie, the free-music party will rage on.

**PRETTY SHARP** The Sharper Image, that glitzy mail-order purveyor of talking chessboards and ionic hair dryers, has a new item that may actually be of some use, especially in counties that prohibit dialing while driving. The cleverly named Car Cell Phone System (\$130) is a plug-and-play speaker-phone for Nokia and Motorola models that doubles as a handset recharger. Not sharp enough? It comes with a built-in digital recorder that, when activated, grabs the previous 20 seconds of your conversation or message.

—By Wilson Rothman





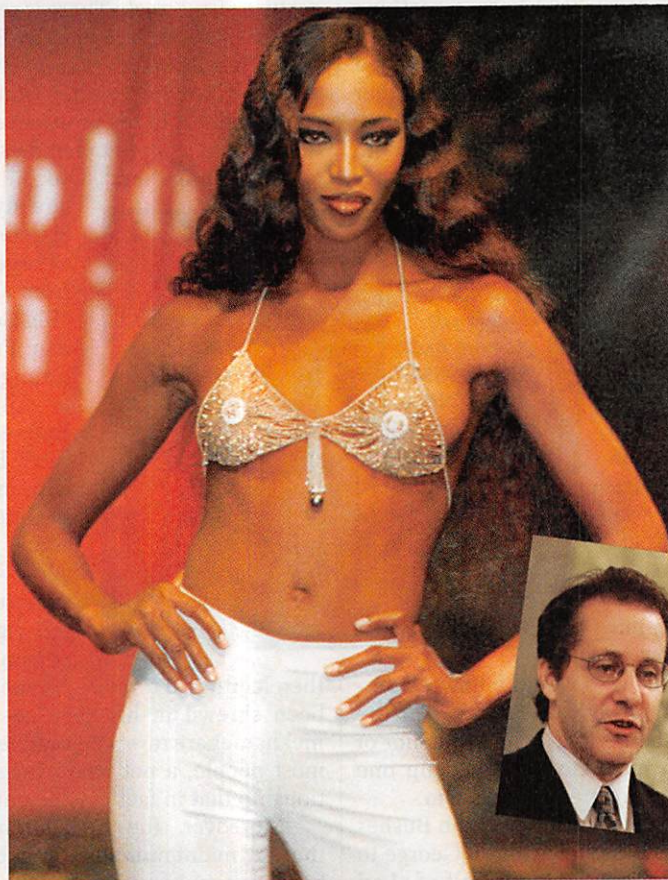


## AND I WILL ALWAYS ... UH, HOW'S THAT GO?

**WHITNEY HOUSTON** may not have a drug problem, but she definitely has some serious short-term-memory issues. Last November, Houston and Hawaiian prosecutors reached a plea agreement to set aside drug-possession charges stemming from an incident in which Houston was found with marijuana in her handbag by Keahole-Kona International Airport police. All Houston had to do was pay a \$1,000 fine, donate \$3,000 to an organization suspiciously named Big Island Wave Riders Against Drugs and submit to a substance-abuse assessment within three months. For some reason, Houston never did get that assessment. Now prosecutors have asked a judge to reopen the charges against her. If convicted, Houston could be singing the jailhouse blues for up to 30 days. On the brighter side, if she has to serve, there's a likelihood that she'll forget the whole experience a few days later.

## At Wounded Knee

Pete Sampras played a U.S. Open tennis match while vomiting. Willis Reed limped to an NBA championship on a withered ankle. By comparison, **TIGER WOODS**, whose sport requires leisurely walking and the occasional poke at an inanimate ball, just had a little knee ouchy. But with a horde of cameras following him, Woods' triumph over minor injury was quickly elevated to the stuff of Olympic tearjerkers. Leaving the 18th green at Pebble Beach, Calif., after practice last Wednesday, Woods accidentally stepped on the ankle of a voracious autograph seeker, spraining his left knee. With the eager fan screaming at him for not signing, Woods retreated to the trainer's room, gloomily setting his odds of playing in the Pebble Beach Pro-Am as slim. But when tee time came the next day, Tiger was there, bravely playing through the pain on his way to a six under par 66. "It felt sore, yes," said Woods. "But when it's time to play, it's time to play." Spoken like a true golfer.



JAMAL SAID—REUTERS; INSET: WILLIAM PHILPOT—REUTERS

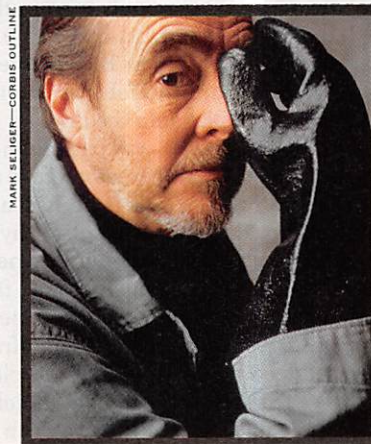
## GREENSPAN IS TOTALLY JEALOUS

Ric Ocasek, David Copperfield and Donald Trump are all first-ballot Hall of Famers in the "Weird-Looking Guy with Gorgeous Model" celebrity-romance competition, but a rumored new matchup could top them all. The hot gossip out of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last week was that **GENE SPERLING**, former director of the National Economic Council, is something of an item with supermodel **NAOMI CAMPBELL**. The duo attended the forum's gala soirée arm in arm, and Sperling, 40, even issued the standard non-denial denial:

"We're just friends." To be fair, Sperling is not all aggregate demand and no play. A few years ago, *W* magazine named him "one of the hottest catches on the Washington social scene" and "an unusually likable policy wonk." Campbell, 30, has been linked to Joseph Fiennes, Robert De Niro and U2's Adam Clayton, among others. She is also known to cause rapid GDP growth and demand-pull inflation.



BOB GALBRAITH—AP



MARK SELIGER—CORBIS OUTLINE

## IT REALLY BEGS FOR ROGER CORMAN

With all his concerns about legacy, you'd think Bill Clinton might choose a noted patriot and mythologizer like Steven Spielberg to direct his biopic. Instead he tapped **WES CRAVEN**, the man behind *Scream* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. Craven was enlisted to direct a hastily arranged White House shoot on Jan. 13 in which Clinton conducted a three-hour tour of the Oval Office, Cabinet room and residence. The finished product will be screened at Clinton's yet to be constructed presidential library. "Here I am, I've made some of the most horrific films, and now I'm in the White House," said a stunned Craven, whose self-deprecation presumably referred to his horror oeuvre and not his recent *Music of the Heart*, a Clinton favorite. In addition to the tour, Craven got Clinton to recall meetings with world leaders and share some favorite personal memories. Good luck with the ratings board.

Garry Trudeau

# On Being Dubbed by Dubya

Just try refusing a nickname from the Leader of the Free World

*"Of all eloquence a nickname is the most concise; of all arguments the most unanswerable."* —WILLIAM HAZLITT

**G**EORGE ("GEORGIE," "LITTLE GEORGE," "BUSHTAIL," "Tweeds," "Lip," "Temporary," "Bombastic Bushkin," "Dubya") Bush knows from nicknames. As in Little Italy or Compton, there must have been something about the tightly knit Wasp community of Midland, Texas, some unique social condition that encouraged the cultivation of nicknames, because everyone had one. From his father George ("Poppy") Bush, the war hero with one of those curiously effeminate preppie nicknames (like "Bunny" and "Pinkie"), to Barbara ("Bar") Bush (no one dared stray farther from the source name), to brother John Ellis ("Jeb") Bush's acronym of a name, to family friends "Spider" and "Wemus" and countless others, in Bushworld everyone had to have a nickname, and if you didn't, they'd give you one.

The one nickname that young George didn't attract, at least within his family, was "Junior," and therein lies a bullet dodged, early evidence of Bush's famous good luck. It was the absence of a "Herbert" that permitted Bush to escape the curse of juniorhood, that terrible first act of hostility that certain men commit against their own sons, that row of hoops set up in the nursery for he who would follow. (Attention, newborn: Be me, or fall short—it's up to you.) For the congenitally modest elder Bush, naming a child in honor of himself may have proved too much, so he pulled up one name shy, an early act of compassionate conservatism.

Since Bush was not technically a Junior (and the Bushes policed this distinction), he was designated Little George to distinguish him from "Big George," the taller half of "Lad and Dad," who instead of the burden of an identical name merely bequeathed his son the door-opening, legacy-honoring, line-cutting, fund-raising functionality of a prominent surname. And perhaps it was because of Dubya's early recognition of the power of names (he would later brag that "Bush" was his most valuable asset) that in the dusty backyards of Midland tract houses, he honed his skill at coining them for others.

It was a black art that carried him far. When he was packed off to Phillips Academy, where sarcasm (irony's nasty little sibling) was the only language spoken, Dubya crafted derogatory nicknames for classmates; but defying custom, he would use them to their face. Such was his cool-guy swagger that he was apparently able to pull this off, if for no other reason than nicknames imply recognition, not nothing in the adolescent struggle for selfhood. And as he attracted new

descriptors for himself, like Lip and Tweeds, it was surely during this period that Bush gave nicknaming a permanent place in his social tool kit. It perfectly complemented his aptitude for remembering names and faces, and it was simply too useful a talent to outgrow.

Ever since, Bush has made the nickname his signature gesture of outreach. There is scarcely a legislator left in Texas who hasn't been renamed by Bush. His staff members, from the "High Prophet" (Karen Hughes) to "Big Country" (Joe Allbaugh) to "Boy Genius" (Karl Rove), were all tagged years ago. Members of the press covering Bush now answer like so many fighter pilots to handles as varied as "Stretch," "Pancho," "Grandpa" and "Dulce." And in Washington, Bush has already started spraying nicknames at delegations of visiting lawmakers. George Miller, the hulking Democrat from California, is now known as "Big George." Republican Congressman Fred Upton has earned the belittling moniker "Freddy Boy."

All of this is about control, of course. While nicknames can just as easily be dispensed with affection as with malice, either way the practice is as stone alpha male as social interaction gets. Giving someone a name—any name—is a highly presumptuous act, assuming as it does the right to boil down someone's persona to a sole characteristic—and

then legitimize it through repeated use. Of course, Bush has been shrewd in his choices—while sometimes bawdy, his nicknames are rarely pejorative—and he understands that for most people, a pet name suggests intimacy, a special relationship that in fact may be entirely phony.

Moreover, the nicknaming transaction is unilateral, thereby maintaining hierarchical order. Despite the ubiquity of his own countrified nickname in the media, Dubya has never been commonly used in Bush's presence. Even calling the President by his first name seems an unlikely response from Freddy Boy or Big George, who have no choice but to either endure the folksy nomenclature or, putting the best face on it, play into the implied closeness, as if the President and they go way, way back to the sandlots of Midland.

No, you can't exactly refuse a nickname from the Leader of the Free World. If he had a shred of self-respect, what Freddy Boy should want to say is, "Mr. President, I am an elected representative of the people, and I prefer to be addressed with dignity, not faux familiarity, just as you would have me address you." But he cannot. He is either held hostage by good manners, or afraid of being seen as stuffy, or seduced by the signifier that tells the world he's in the club.

That's the thing about a nickname: like it or not, there's really not a damn thing you can do about it. ■

