

Challenger



October 1995

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Every semester a new Journalism class begins with one simple goal – to produce the Challenger Newsletter. Some of the newsletters in the past have surprised, shocked and even saddened some of the students.

Every new editor wants to make changes that will reflect their own beliefs and attitudes. The new editors are four women who want to make a difference, but even at our first meeting we are concerned that we will not bring enough diversity to this newsletter.

Will we be able to make a difference?

Will we be able to inform, amuse and entertain our readers?

This is a truly challenging task.

What skills and backgrounds can we offer to the Honor students at Harper to make

the next four issues of the Challenger exciting, informative and timely.

Team work begins with individuals and we want you to get to know each of us as individuals whose backgrounds brings

value, principles and standards

that were instilled in each of us long ago by another team – our families.



Honors Society Meetings

Wednesday 4:00 p.m. – Room L329

A Publication
of the
Harper College
Honors Society



The Fall semester is in full swing, the cob webs of the long, restful summer are clearing and Honors Society Members are primed and ready to get those conversational and persuasive juices flowing. To that end, the weekly discussion groups are about ready to resume. The meetings will be held on Wednesdays at 4:00 pm in L329. We look forward to sharing our many diverse opinions and viewpoints.

Greetings from our president

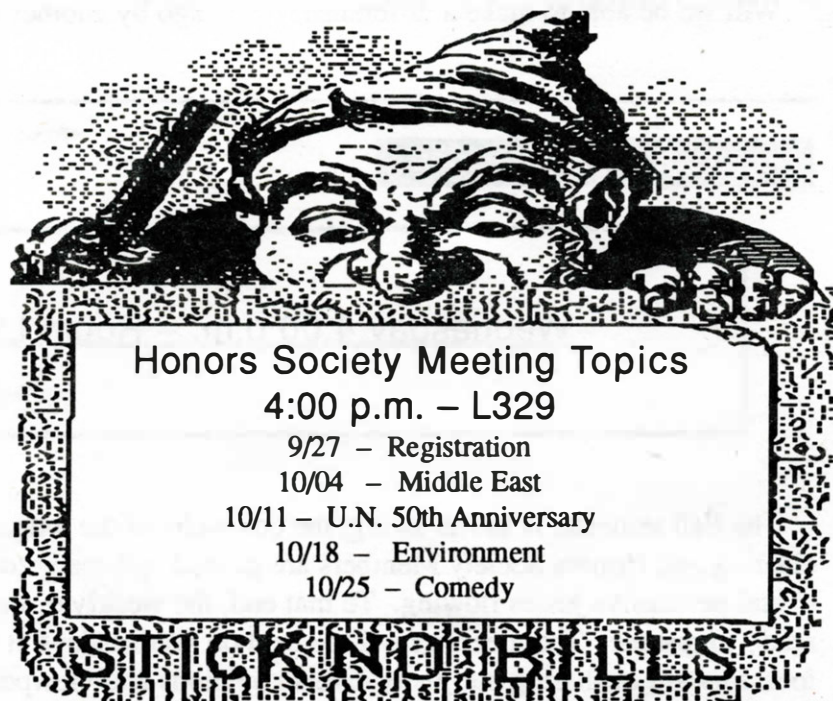
Dear Honors Society Members:

As the new president of the Honors Society, I have the pleasure to share some thoughts and plans with you. First of all, I welcome the new members. To those of you who will be leaving Harper next year *thanks a lot*, I mean for sharing your valuable time and effort with us. We wish you the best of luck where ever you go.

Most of us question what we get from our thought refining meetings. It's not just that. We, the *gifted* ones, not only broaden our ideas; we also seek our hidden potential. Our goal is to cultivate our interpersonal communication skills, not just sit and talk. In the past, we have been involved in exciting academic and social activities. I, too, have some schemes for this fall's activities. They range from dining out at ethnic restaurants to making the Honors Society more visible and inviting at Harper College. Field trips to places of interest, plays, and cultural events are also included. There are some other exhilarating and innovative things going on at Harper this fall, like Clubs and Organizations Day, Festival of Nations Day, and Sensitivity to Diversity Workshops for the Student Leaders. And yes, we will also participate in the Adopt a Highway Program.

Our new meeting time is 4:00 p.m., every Wednesday, in L-329. Most likely we'll introduce light snacks in our meetings, so that we don't starve in our quest for excellence. I invite you all to join us this fall. Come up with ideas and participate in our activities. Looking forward to seeing you on Wednesdays.

Imran Mujtaba Lakhwera
President, Honors Society



GOD, MOM & APPLE PIE!

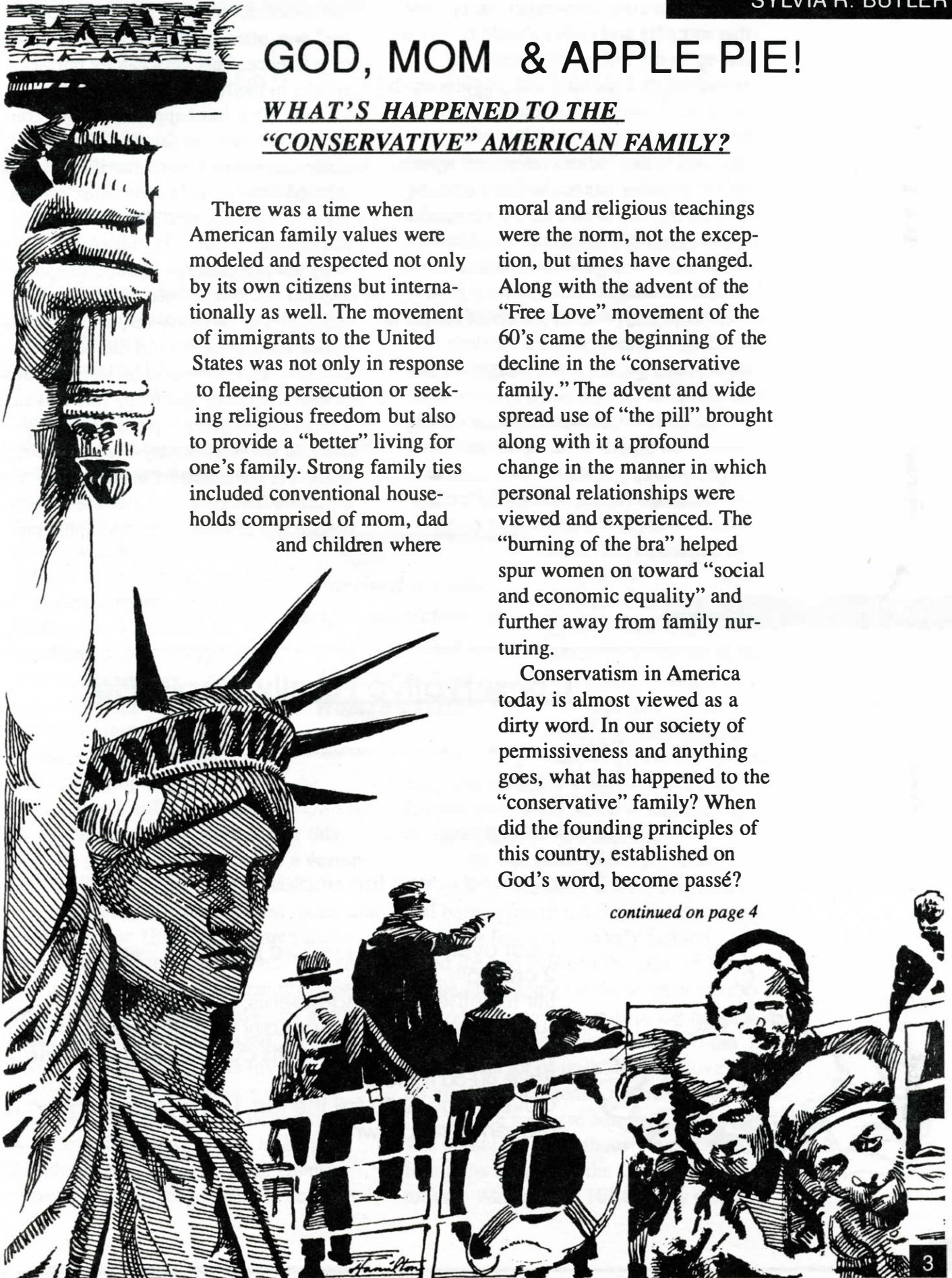
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE "CONSERVATIVE" AMERICAN FAMILY?

There was a time when American family values were modeled and respected not only by its own citizens but internationally as well. The movement of immigrants to the United States was not only in response to fleeing persecution or seeking religious freedom but also to provide a "better" living for one's family. Strong family ties included conventional households comprised of mom, dad and children where

moral and religious teachings were the norm, not the exception, but times have changed. Along with the advent of the "Free Love" movement of the 60's came the beginning of the decline in the "conservative family." The advent and wide spread use of "the pill" brought along with it a profound change in the manner in which personal relationships were viewed and experienced. The "burning of the bra" helped spur women on toward "social and economic equality" and further away from family nurturing.

Conservatism in America today is almost viewed as a dirty word. In our society of permissiveness and anything goes, what has happened to the "conservative" family? When did the founding principles of this country, established on God's word, become passé?

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Liberal thinking encourages the opinion that morality and ethics should be strictly left up to the individuals involved.

However, that decision making process is dictated by what is considered socially acceptable behavior which is often opposed to the “conservative” viewpoint. While morality cannot be legislated, as liberals love to point out, the viewpoint “of the people” can and does influence the passage of legislation. There is something irrational about a system which vehemently opposes any form of religious teaching in public schools yet does not blink when passing out condoms to our children.

The “conservative” viewpoint is still one which supports the sanctity of marriage, the importance of family life and the teaching and upholding of strong moral ethics. When describing good,

wholesome values in the past the phrase “as American as God, mom and apple pie” was often bandied about as a point of reference. This very catchy phrase speaks to the real definition of conservatism. What has happened to the “conservative American family?” Has family unity and strength been sacrificed for the sake of “doing one’s own thing”? What about family responsibility? Who’s responsible for training our children? Why are our children looking to sports and entertainment celebrities as role models? The formerly respected “conservative family” could and did boast of children who wanted to be just like mom or dad when they grew up. Was that such a terrible time? If it’s possible for anything to put this country back on the right track it is the return en masse of the “conservative American family,” the fervent embracing of God, mom and apple pie.

RECIPE

Conservative Family Apple Pie

Filling

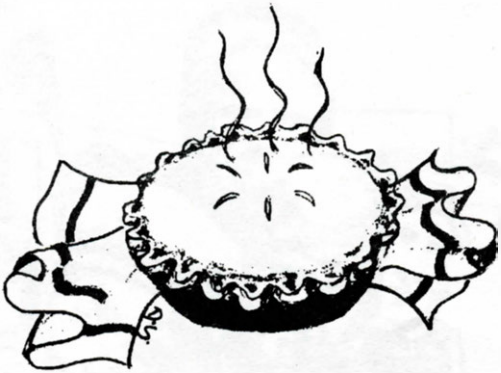
3/4 C sugar

1/4 C flour

1/2 tsp cinnamon

dash salt

6 C thinly sliced pared tart apples



Heat oven to 425°. Prepare pastry for 9-inch, 2 crust pie.

Stir together filling ingredients. Mix with apples

Turn into pastry-lined pan; dot with 2T butter. Cover with top crust which has slits cut in it; seal and flute. Bake 40-50 minutes at 425°.

Cover edges with foil the last 15 minutes of baking to prevent over browning.

Give 'Em Hell, Harry (and Hillary)!

It was touch and go right up to the last minutes—Hillary was on the schedule printed in advance for the NGO Forum on Women, held in Huairou, China, in conjunction with the United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women (4WCW) in Beijing. But whether she should and would show up was still being debated when I left the US.

I arrived a week early to participate in the Joint US/China Conference on Women's Issues, sponsored by the People to People Citizen Ambassador Program. The next morning we heard the news:

another planeload of our people was delayed because of security at San Francisco airport—the Chinese-born naturalized American citizen Harry Wu had been released and returned by the People's Republic after they had sentenced him to fifteen

years for being a spy. Although the Chinese were still angry over the US visit by the president of Taiwan earlier this year, they were willing to make a gesture of conciliation. They wanted Hillary.

I wanted Hillary also. I soon found that getting around Huairou was strenuous going, even for the able-bodied. For anyone in a wheelchair, it was simply hopeless; people on crutches gave real meaning to the euphemism "challenged." For the invisibly handicapped, like myself (heart patients, ambulatory arthritis sufferers, etc.), each day at the NGO Forum had to be followed by a day of rest in Beijing. So I decided to take a room in Huairou overnight the evening before in order to

be on hand early in the morning to get a good seat in the outdoor arena or, in case of rain, to obtain one of the tickets to the auditorium, capacity 1,500 (there were an estimated 26,000 delegates to the NGO Forum, plus 4,500 delegates and official observers to the 4WCW, and 5,000 press).

I was pleasantly surprised to find that I had no real trouble booking a room, perhaps because some women took one look at their accommodations at Huairou and moved to Beijing, facing the hour and half commute in each direction every day rather than their originally assigned

rooms. My "two star" hotel (stars awarded by the Chinese government) gave me a fifth floor single for about US\$75.00, which I was happy to pay till I discovered it was a walk-up, no elevator! Still, it meant I wouldn't have to get on the special

early bus from my hotel, which I later learned had in fact filled to capacity and disappointed many delegates.

As fate would have it, it poured on Wednesday morning, and no provisions had been made to hand out tickets to seat the lucky few in an orderly fashion. So I stood for two hours in the rain, with my umbrella dripping on the woman next to me and someone else's dripping on me. As far as I know, no one was hurt, but there was a lot of pushing and shoving. So much for the gentle nature of women. By the time we were admitted, everyone was drenched. Two thousand crammed in, filling the aisles and the sides of the auditorium. Meanwhile, Hillary was delayed

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somewhere en route from Beijing to Huairou.

The director of the Cultural program, Shirley Mae Springer Staten, a black woman from Alaska, took it upon herself to lead us in singing for an hour to pass the time till Hillary's entourage arrived. Shirley said she would turn us from an angry mob of wet hornets to sweet honey bees, and she did. She joked about loving the power to be in control of the stage and said she was thinking of running for mayor of Huairou—at that moment we would have elected her president of each of our countries.

When Hillary finally arrived, she was radiant. TV cameras do not do her justice. She wore a modest beige floor-length gown with full skirt, long sleeves, and bodice buttoned to the throat. Only nations which keep women's faces and hair completely hidden behind the veil could have been offended. The news reports we saw on CNN gave only sound bites, but I can tell you that Hillary's entire speech was pure political genius.

She was forceful on the subjects that virtually all moderates in every country would agree to: literacy and education for girls and women; eradication of domestic violence against women and children; democratic political freedom; food and economic opportunity for the hungry and poor, 80% of whom around the world are women and their children; protection against unsafe working condi-

tions; rape prevention, both in war and civilian life; peace and freedom from the threat of war; medical care for the young and the old, in the US. as well as in developing countries; and above all, enforcement rather than lip service to equal rights in countries where humane

policies and laws on gender already exist. What she omitted was any mention of really controversial issues, such as female genital mutilation, or legal access to abortion services, or lesbians. In short, she managed not to offend her American constituency, nor to attack African and Middle Eastern countries on their most sensitive issues, but she made the Chinese realize that she was not simply a figurehead as first lady of the US.

For a day or two it seemed the Chinese press would simply ignore her remarks (as we might try to pretend we didn't notice a loud belch in polite company), but such tactics are

doomed to failure in the world today, with the access to communication through radio, television, email, and fax that the Chinese enjoy now. So before she left the Grasslands of Inner Mongolia a few days later, Hillary was being officially criticized.

I read today that Harry Wu says he will eventually return to China to expose human rights abuses, despite all the official warnings and threats. Harry and Hillary both make me proud of the courage of Americans to speak out.

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The 90's... When Does the Fun Begin?

How come nothing in the 90's is fun?

How come houses and cars are so expensive that it takes at least two adults per household working full time to afford them? And weekends. Remember all that free time we are supposed to have? Don't count on it. Weekends are a haze of lawn care, home repair, power shopping, and sitting in the rain at soccer games.

How come every kid over the age of six has to be entertained around the clock with videos, friends, or sporting events? And, if we don't rush to get the most current action figure, dolls, hand-held games, or computer software, the child will most likely turn into an alien who only knows one phrase, "I'm bored."

How come shopping for kid's athletic shoes is practically a career choice? Not only is there a different, correct shoe for every sport, but each shoe has more tread, pumped-up air, and flashing light features than my car!

How come if you want to relax for an hour or so in a very romantic restaurant it will probably cost as much as those lighter-than-air athletic shoes? And, don't be surprised if the food hasn't been cleverly arranged to look like a shoe. Quit complaining! Art ain't cheap these days, you know.

How come half of us are a perspiring mass of social correctness, mentally rehearsing everything we are about to say to somebody who might be sensitive about something while the other half does not care? They, instead, choose to wear t-shirts with offensive messages,

poke holes all over their multi-tattooed bodies, smoke endlessly, and use gutter language.

How come 'their' right to say it and show it seems to have cancelled our rights to not hear it or see it?

How come nothing in the 90's is fun?
I'd rather not say, I might get sued.



THE EXTENDED FAMILY

I was Rose's kid. That's how everyone knew me while growing up in a Chicago Neighborhood in the '50's.

Mr. Berg, the local grocer, knew me. Mr. Kanter, the pharmacist at the Rexall, knew me. Jo Jo at the Pizzeria knew me. All the neighbors knew me, and they knew Rose, my mother.

Rose was divorced and raising two kids with the help of her mother, my grandmother. It was not the "normal" family that most of my friends had, but it was *my* family. Growing up without a dad wasn't easy, but I had other dads – like my Uncle John. He was the man who knew everything and could fix anything.

There were other father-figures in my life – some by choice and some by happenstance!

Mr. Broms, the owner of the local moving company happened upon me by chance one day while walking home from work. I was laying on the ground, crying. My two-tone chrome and maroon, white-walled Columbia had fallen on top of me. My slacks (probably those indestructible corduroys) got caught in the chain. Mr. Broms calmed me down, and patiently worked on the chain until I was free.

There was also Mr. Halper, Joanie's father. Joanie was my inseparable playmate. Mr. Halper would do father-like things, like walking me home from Joanie's house when it was dark. But he also provided, not only for me, but for all of the neighborhood kids, memories of his unbelievable patience and kindness.

In the summer Mr. Halper would take us to a park. We would pile into his car and he would release us to the monkey bars, swings, and the biggest, bumpiest

slide you ever saw!

Our winter outing was a trip to Riis Park. Mr. Halper's sole responsibility was to stand at the top of an icy hill and give Joanie and I, or her brother and his friends a push to propel us down the hill in our sleds and toboggans. We obeyed Mr. Halper, just like we would obey our parents. When he told us after our umpteenth time climbing up the hill and dragging our sled behind us that it was to be our last run, we didn't complain – we just waited to see who's sled he would hop on to get to the bottom of the hill.

I grew up in a neighborhood where everyone knew me. Some neighbors watched me grow up, just as they watched my mom grow up.

Eleanor watched two generations growing up from her house next door. When I was older I overheard her tell someone: "I've been like a second mom to Jannie!"

I was shocked! How could she possibly be like a second mom? But then I began to think about all the wonderful things she did for me and my family. She was kind and caring; she doted on me and my sister. I always admired a cloth doll that she had made. It had blue-embroidered eyes and brown-yarn hair. One day it magically appeared on my back porch as a present!

I finally realized that Eleanor was a part of my family even though a gravel driveway separated our houses. Just how far does a family extend?

In the September, 1995 issue of *Discover Magazine*, James Shreeve, author of the article "The Neanderthal Peace" states that "Based on a compari-

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COMPADRE PRODIGY? NOT!

To be a compadre is to be a co-parent. It is (usually) a solemn agreement between two couples and is sanctified by a formal religious ceremony. The purpose of this compact is to give a child another set of parents who will look after their spiritual and physical well-being.

So what does the on-line service, Prodigy, have to do with co-parenting. Absolutely NOTHING.

Jon O'Brien ("Just who does this kid belong to, anyway?" Harbinger, 08/17/95), while writing an exquisitely relevant piece, refused to vent his opinion of a family who is suing Prodigy "because one of their children found some sexually offensive content on the World Wide Web." Well, I will do the venting for both of us.

Those parents are lazy, greedy, or stupid -- maybe all of the above. Lazy because they want Prodigy to do their parenting for them; greedy, if they are suing for money -- morality and money are rarely bedfellows; and stupid because they can easily (and cheaply) prevent access to the computer by using a password or some such preventive method. Yes, there are several of these on the market.

No, I do not have children of my own. But I have extensively cared for babies and kids. I also have common sense and, unlike those lawyer-happy parents, am willing and able to use it. Parents who point accusing fingers belittle their own authority. To relinquish responsibility to Prodigy, or anyone else, for a child's upbringing is to willingly lose control. Besides, Prodigy did not agree to a co-

parenting relationship and, hopefully, the courts will not force them to.

It is the responsibility of parents to outline rules of conduct and to enforce those rules. Communicating those rules unequivocally is just as important as enforcing the rules -- which brings me to parental discipline.

The term "parental discipline" sounds archaic, though it should not. As long as there are children, parental discipline is a necessity. One way or another kids must distinguish between right and wrong, as well as, dangerous and safe behavior. If the behavior is dangerous, the lesson needs to be memorable even if painful. My baby sister, for instance, never again attempted to touch the stove flame after I allowed her to touch it. (Burning, bright objects fascinated her; I lived with the daily fear that she would sneak into the kitchen, and dump the contents of a boiling pot on herself). I held her while, glancing furtively at my face (she knew better), she put her hand to the stove flame. Cruel and painful? A little and not at all. It was long enough to satisfy her burning curiosity and short enough that she did not get burned.

I approve of corporal punishment -- in the home. The primary disciplinary measure ought to be something other than physical punishment; however, spanking provides memorable results when used sparingly. A modern, softer version of "spare the rod, spoil the child" is my philosophy.

My advice to all parents is: hold on to the reins, do not lend the reins to anyone else, and have a good ride.

son of DNA found in the mitochondria of modern human cells, a team of biochemists in Berkeley, California had concluded that all humans on Earth could trace their ancestry back to a woman who lived in Africa 200,000 years earlier." Shreeve goes on to point out that "the

entire human population is just one grand brother-and-sisterhood, despite the confounding embellishments of culture and race."

But then, I guess I always knew that while growing up in a Chicago neighborhood in the '50's.

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