

Slowly but surely

staff photo by Peter Rocha

The students who had to register for classes on Monday may have thought time was standing still, but this photo taken with a one second exposure

shows otherwise. At least these people are inside G. Rollie White Coliseum. The line for registration wound back around the swimming pool.

Extensive use of pill may cause cancer

United Press International
A new study suggests a possible link between prolonged use of the birth control pill and a type of melanoma, the University of California, San Francisco, recently reported.

The study, supported by funds from the National Cancer Institute, presents users of oral contraceptives with a new dilemma when it comes to weighing risks of the pill against benefits.

The report on research by Dr. Elizabeth Holly and associates has been accepted for publication in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

In view of the possible implications for users of the pill, the epidemiologist was asked what she would recommend to a daughter who wanted to use the birth control pill?

"I would say weigh the risks against the benefits," she said.

"If you must use the pill, don't use it for long, no more than five years. Generally, I would recommend that a younger woman try to use another form of birth control," she said.

Different advice was given by Dr. John A.H. Lee, who was asked the same question. Lee, a skin cancer expert, is professor of epidemiology at the University of Washington School of Public Health in Seattle. He led a symposium on melanoma at the recent First World Conference Cancers of the Skin.

"I don't know that I would advise against use of the birth control pill," he said. "There is the matter of risks and benefits, of trade-offs."

"I would be most concerned that she be sensitized to the early signs of melanoma so she could spot it at an early stage. And that she had a doctor who knew that, too," he said.

Lee said when melanoma is caught at the early stage no one should die from it. He said a mole that enlarges or changes color often marks the early stage of melanoma.

He suggested people on the birth control pill should be on the lookout for such changes. When one is noted, the next step is to see a doctor who is able to interpret the meaning of the alterations, Lee said.

A bleeding mole is a third sign, but Lee said it is foolish to wait for that.

In the United States 2 percent of cancers are accounted for by melanoma. The kind Holly found possibly associated with prolonged use of birth control pills is known as a superficial spreading type. It stays in the outermost layers of the skin for a long time.

That is a characteristic that makes it easily treated by surgery when spotted in the very early stages, according to Lee.

Holly's study involved 87 Washington state women, ranging in age from 37 to 74. The

women were diagnosed as suffering from malignant melanoma between 1976 and 1979.

The epidemiologist and associates, Noel S. Weiss, Jonathan Lift, also from University of California, San Francisco Department of Epidemiology and Internal Health, interviewed the women, asking about pill and reproductive history.

The women's histories compared with those of women, a random sample, the same area.

Holly said she found women who had taken birth control pills for five years or longer had superficial spreading melanoma than women who not take the pills.

Her report said the increase in cancer rates were even more pronounced among women who had used the pill for 10 years or longer. No effect was found among women who had used the pill for less than five years.

The scientists also found a higher incidence of melanoma among women who had a first child after age 30, a common observation among epidemiologists probing for factors in the background of cancer patients.

"This finding, together with the link to birth control pills, suggests that hormone imbalances might play a role in the spread of melanoma," Holly said.

Car wrecks church, fire damage results

United Press International
HOUSTON — Police were seeking the driver of a car that slammed into a church Sunday and caused a pre-dawn fire that destroyed the church's auditorium.

Investigators said the driver of the car apparently was unhurt because he or she fled the scene of the Airline Assembly of God Church fire.

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Senators compromise on polling booth bill

United Press International
AUSTIN — Senators on opposite sides of a bill to allow voters to take written aids in the polling booth reached a delicate compromise on the measure Saturday, averting a filibuster that could have hopelessly mired remaining Senate business.

The dispute developed over Senate approval of a bill to repeal a state law which prohibits voters from taking written guides into the voting booth with them.

The bill, authored by Rep. Debra Danburg, D-Houston, and already approved by the House, appeared on its way to

final approval when Sen. "Buster" Brown, R-Lake, raised the threat of a filibuster against the measure.

The bill was given tentative approval on a voice vote, the Senate rejected two amendments which would have made the bill applicable only to state's most populous counties.

Tower

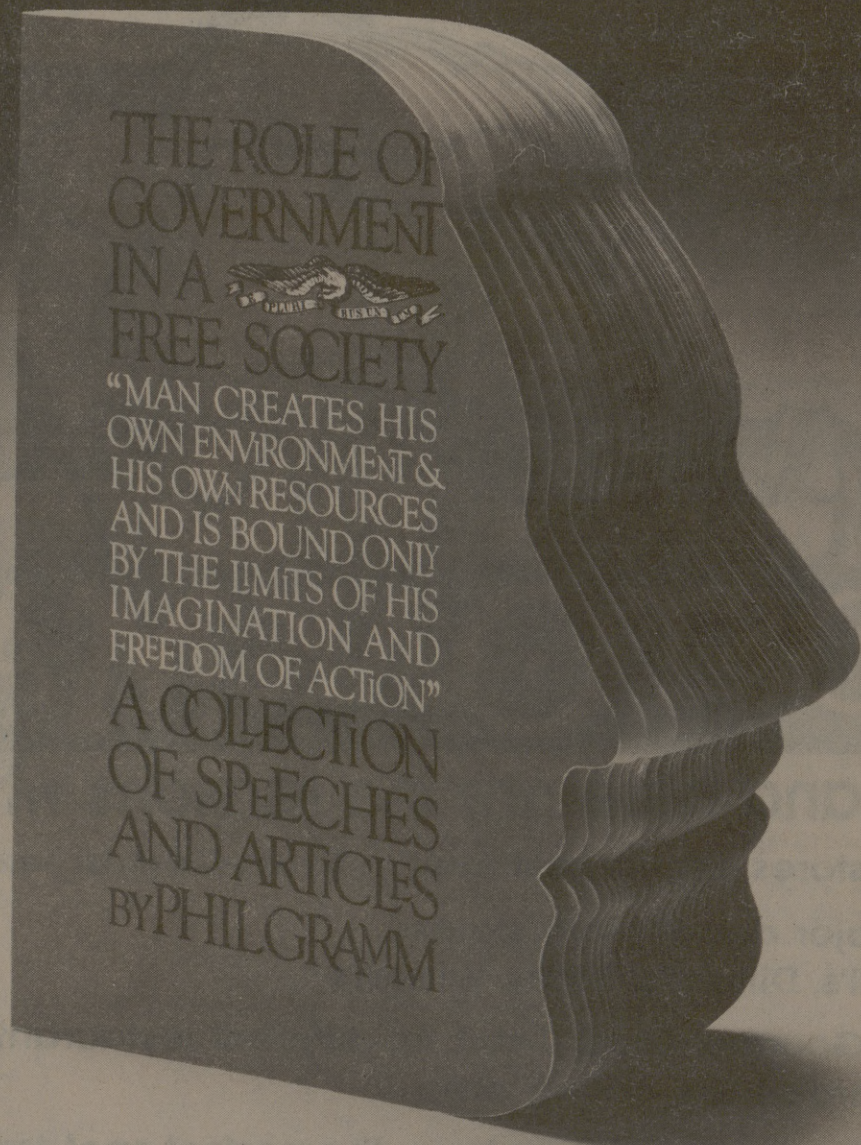
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<p style="font-weight: bold;">THURSDAY EVENING SPECIAL</p> <p>Italian Candle Light Spaghetti Dinner SERVED WITH SPICED MEAT BALLS AND SAUCE Parmesan Cheese - Tossed Green Salad Choice of Salad Dressing — Hot Garlic Bread Tea or Coffee</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">FOR YOUR PROTECTION OUR PERSONNEL HAVE HEALTH CARDS.</p>		
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