

opinion

Playboy anniversary lauded

by Maxwell Glen
and Cody Shearer

WASHINGTON — If an institution ever deserved to celebrate its 30th birthday without pang of guilt or self-doubt, it's Playboy magazine.

We state this claim as the Chicago-based entertainment empire prepares to throw itself a party-to-remember next January. All Americans should mark this historic moment with the respect due a company that has kept its bearing despite three decades of change.

Such cheerleading might startle Americans who've long regarded Playboy as generic pornography, made more dangerous than its harder-core competitors by a seductively soft focus. As angry students at the University of Maryland insisted last month, when photographer David Chan arrived to shoot the latest campus pictorial, 30 volumes of bare chests and dumb jokes aren't summarily excused.

Yet who, in their heart of hearts, can deny the magazine's numerous accomplishments, particularly in the service of feminism? After Gloria Steinem, few can match Hugh Hefner's record for statements and actions in the tradition of Susan B. Anthony.

Take, for example, Playboy's decidedly progressive hiring practices. They're illustrated by Hefner's nationwide hunt for a "30th Anniversary Playmate." A recent ad in the Los Angeles Times said, "\$30,000 And A Year You'll Never Forget." "Search headquarters" are

slated to open soon in 30 U.S. cities. Now that's affirmative action.

Or consider Hefner's up-to-date reading of womankind. The pajama-clad mastermind has kept pace over the years, boldly abandoning his infantile crush on the girl next door for a woman who sometimes thinks for herself. Today's model, we all know, frequently takes the initiative in love, is "turned off" by the arms race and red meat, and holds a high-powered, globe-trotting job. That she disrobes at the drop of a hat is immaterial: She is a role model for modern times, right?

Being clairvoyant, however, Hefner has long realized that women alone can't move the mountains of change. That's why his magazine has actively coached its male readers to cultivate more mature views on dressing, drinking, thinking and behaving. So avant-garde is Playboy's perspective that a recent column on men denounced several unspeakably mindless, women-hating societies, complete with quotes from Virginia Woolf, a novelist forever in vogue with Playboy readers.

Wrote Playboy's columnist: "It may not always come through clearly, but this column loves and honors women. Its author could not have survived without them." Bravo, brave magazine!

Not surprisingly, such editorial courage extends to new frontiers, including the Playboy Channel, Hefner's crusading video project. As its half-million subscribers can attest, the adult entertainment

system features the same kind of feminists for which the magazine is famous. A shining example, according to the Chicago Tribune, is the channel's "4PLAY" series, in which a middle-aged husband falls for a 19-year-old free spirit whose "feminism" comes straight from the pages of Cosmopolitan.

But lest anyone dismiss these efforts as token gestures, Hefner puts his money where his mouth is. Over the years, his Playboy Foundation has donated thousands of dollars to supplicant women's groups, including the National Organization for Women and the National Women's Political Caucus. Foundation Director Rebecca Sive-Tomashefsky told our reporter Michael Duffy that grants and aid to women's groups last year exceeded one-quarter of the foundation's half-million-dollar budget. That the financially-strapped groups have taken the money is surely Hefner's most prized endorsement.

Skeptics might question Hefner's motives for supporting groups which ought to be his natural enemies. Some may even harbor private doubts about his championship of women's rights, given his penchant for flesh. But such sandbagging is the price of leadership: Reconciling porn and feminism takes genius (and don't forget, they laughed at Edison).

So, as the birthday boy looks down the road to 40, we salute him. He has cast off the fantasies of a child for those of an adolescent. And, he has aged well: After three decades, his magazine reads more like 13 than 30.

Slouch By Jim Earle

CONGRATULATION AGGIE GIRLS 1983 NATIONAL SOFTBALL CHAMPIONS



Drunk acronyms more than FADD

by Dick West

WASHINGTON — Just about everyone I know is against drunken driving. The trick is to vent your opposition in such a way that it doesn't form an acronym. Which is not easy thing to do.

Irate female parents were the first group to take up the cudgels. Their organization is called, predictably, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD).

From there the movement spread to high schools, whose organizations, equally predictably, are chapters of Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD).

Male parents, logically, would be the next family members to recruit. But I wouldn't recommend organizing Fathers Against Drunk Driving (FADD). That acronym sounds too capricious.

However, fathers who party at home, rather than on the road, could provide the nucleus of Drunks Against Drunk Driving (DADD).

Younger family members probably are better left unorganized, lest we have Children Against Drunk Driving (CADD). I can't see any campaign being helped by that acronym, even if it stood for Cousins Against Drunk Driving.

A better plan, I submit, is to go outside the home to enroll pre-schoolers, who could be called Tots Against Drunk Driving (TADD).

Derelicts also occasionally are met by intoxicated motorists, but as yet has been no effort to organize Against Drunk Driving (BADD).

The acronym outbreak probably has its origins in the New Deal's "soup," a melange of governmental agencies usually identified by their initials dreamed up, of course, by FDR.

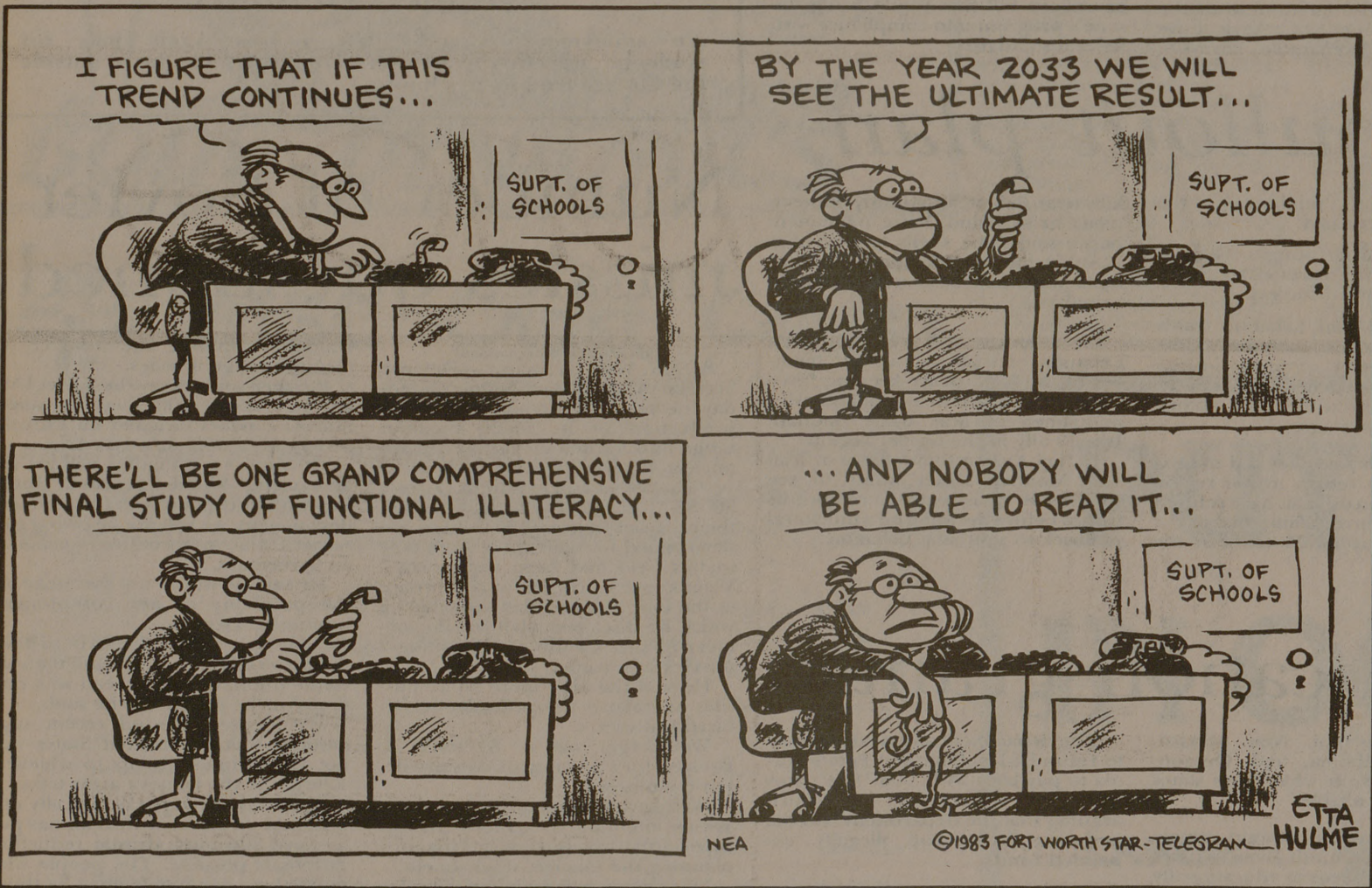
In their wartime flowering, acronyms sprang from such military innovation as the Women's Army Corps (WAC); today, the Pentagon remains a hotbed of acronyms.

Recent Defense Department initiatives greatly contribute to a complex MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction). Which is not to be confused with MAD.

Other good providers include Political Action Committees (PAC); channel campaign contributions serving candidates and lobby for various legislation that otherwise might be ignored.

Now making its way through Congress is a measure that would overhaul the nation's immigration system.

Does this mean there is such a thing as a Serbian In Exile Political Action Committee (SIX PAC)? If not, there soon will be.



Chem professor's critic challenged

Editor:

Just a note to react to the letter of Mr. Carlson W. Yost. He acknowledges that Dr. Rod O'Connor is an excellent lecturer. However, he objects to Dr. O'Connor's exams on the grounds that he spends too much time preparing students to take them. Mr. Yost feels that this overemphasis carries the message to students "that chemistry itself is not worth learning unless you get a high

grade" and that "...chemistry ought to be easy or it is not worth learning." I would suggest that Dr. O'Connor, a distinguished member of our faculty, is the person best qualified to judge the appropriateness and effectiveness of his exams in terms of the organization and design of his course. Exams measure an indeterminate proportion of the total amount of learning done by students. Much learning is never captured in exams. Nevertheless, Dr. O'Connor is doing what most professors do to help students learn, and to try to test them in ways which will allow the students to express what they know on a given subject. The greatest challenge and satisfaction in teaching is to present a difficult topic in such a way that it will be 'easy' for the student to understand, for it requires the maturity to know the essentials of a problem and the intellectual integrity of simplicity.

The central question in this unfortunate incident should be — has Dr. O'Connor's chemistry program produced well-trained students? Do they do well in more advanced classes? Do they know what they are supposed to know? Can they manage in the private sector? And if the answers to these questions are affirmative, then common sense suggests a very careful and well-thought-out answer to the question of what changes will improve the quality of the program. It is unfortunate that Dr. O'Connor resigned before these questions could be settled.

by Art Buchwald

It used to be if you went into a bar you could always find an argument over the merits of a pro football team. But now, thanks to Ronald Reagan's constant drumbeat concerning defense weapons, he's got the whole country talking about whether we can win a nuclear war or not.

I dropped by "Dumbarton's Bar & Grill" the other afternoon for a beer. The man on the next stool said, "How do you think we'll do against the Russians this year?"

I couldn't tell which side he was on so I played it cool.

"It's too early to tell. It depends if we can harden our Minuteman silos in time to put our MX missiles in place."

"Exactly what I was thinking," he said. "Of course the commies could still crawl through our window of vulnerability."

"Yeh, but if we get the B-1 bomber built, set up our Pershing and cruise missiles in Europe, and develop a tricky 'Star Wars' defense, we can zap their land-based air attack before it gets off the ground," I said.

"You know where I think we're making our big mistake?" he said. "We're trying to match the Soviets missile for missile. What we should do is go ahead with single-warhead Midgetmen that the Russians couldn't hit because we'd spread them all over the country. There's something to be said for not putting all your MXs in one dense pack."

Dumbarton, who was washing glasses said, "A guy was in here yesterday, and

he heard from a friend at the Pentagon that the Soviets were violating the II treaty when it came to underground testing."

"I wouldn't put it past them, while ordering another beer."

"You know what we have to do, guy on the next stool said. "We've rethink MAD, the Mutual Assured Destruction strategy we've been using past 20 years. It's not working and I say we sit down with the Soviets and offer them a zero option, and don't take it, tell them to buzz off."

I said, "What really gets me about Congress is dragging its feet when it comes to spending money for a good defense. Reagan knows what the country's better than anybody."

The guy on the next stool said, "Better believe it. I saw him in 'Hell on the Navy' the other night on TV. He really has the guts to stand up to the Russians."

Dumbarton refilled our glasses. "I think Reagan has what it takes. I'm not too sure about 'Cap' Weinberger."

"Why not?"

"He's too light. He could be blown over by one SS 19 intermediate range missile. You want a big guy in the position who can take a lot of punishment when he gets hit by an ICBM."

A guy at the end of the bar said, "I'll hear the Baltimore Orioles." Dumbarton said to him, "Watch your language, buddy. The ladies in this bar, and if you want to get dirty you can go drink somewhere else."

The Battalion

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