

An anti-intellectual Pit stop with the raving evangelists

isms abound to try us in these days of sun and fun. They surround us on all sides: evangelism in the Pit and plastic patriotism in the Pit Stop (check out those funky "The First Moon Walk" soft drink cups or, even better, visit the Circus Room for "I Love America" cups). Finns to the left, Finns to the right and you're the only non-Scandinavian in town.

Evangelism is not all bad, really, except for ranters and ravers like Brother Jed, a wild-eyed maniac who plagued us a few seasons back. He was the one who married Cindy the Disco Queen to save her from the twin sins of wearing hot pants and premarital French kissing.

Sounds incredible I know, but even more unbelievable is the Forerunner, the sorriest excuse for journalism ever to darken a campus newsstand. Somehow every Forerunner article relates its subject to creationism or fundamentalism. Last year an article that was supposedly about safe sex on campus offered three guidelines, namely wait 'til you're married, wait 'til you're married, and wait 'til you're married. Following the article's implications all the way to

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their logical ends is dangerous; it leads you to believe that by marrying someone, you can cure him/her of AIDS. Will miracles never cease?

Marriage obviously worked no miracles for U.S. figure skater Debi Thomas in the World Championships last weekend. She got married in Colorado on March 15, but kept it quiet until she announced it from Budapest the day after she bombed in the competition. What would possess a world class athlete to get married between the two biggest events of her last amateur competitive season, the Olympics and the World? And on the Ides of March, no less. Sounds a bit suspicious.

Also suspicious is the current state of network news. The day after Ron "Rambo" Reagan sent the 82nd Airborne to Honduras, NBC gave John Chancellor valuable air time to inform us that we are uptight about the situation because we don't want another fiasco like Vietnam. Talk about

stating the obvious. Even Vanna White could have told us that, assuming she can spell Honduras. I expect a bit more insight from John.

We should also expect more intellectual stimulation from religious chats in the Pit. Starting up a real debate is a fine objective, but merely spewing narrow-minded dogmas or playing Wheel of Fortune is worthless. Most of these Pit "sermons" are far less spiritually satisfying than belly-dancing in the Arboretum or playing Beethoven string quartets. (My quartet coach calls certain sections of Opus 18 No. 5 in A Major "conspiratorial yet kinky.")

It isn't that religion is something to dismiss or keep quiet about, but in the final analysis, it is a deeply personal experience. Religion should be thought about, felt about, explored using the powers of faith and inquiry. What is dangerous is when anybody tells us absolutes and denies us the freedom to define and examine. When Pit preachers try to dam (or damn) your stream of consciousness, that's the time to lose interest and wander off.



By **KAREN ENTRIKEN**
Staff Writer

Spring has sprung, as the saying goes. And the disease that comes with the advent of spring, common as the cold, is spreading across campus as rapidly as the plague. It's the dreaded spring fever, of course. It's highly contagious and researchers have yet to find a cure. If you have been exposed to someone who may be a carrier of the disease or think you may have it yourself, watch out for these symptoms:

- The only counting you've done in math class for the past three weeks is the number of days left until summer vacation.

- Your weekend begins on Wednesday afternoon and doesn't end until 2 p.m. Monday afternoon when you wake up for class late — again.

- Sunglasses become a permanent part of your wardrobe.

- Planning for a career takes a backseat to planning for your next beach weekend.

- You're more interested in dealing with the dilemmas that come with buying suntan lotion (oil or cream? SPF 4 or 2? And

what about zinc oxide?) than with understanding your chemistry lab.

- Your stack of textbooks begins to take on the form of a piece of furniture — an end-table, perhaps, perfect for supporting drinks, lamps, and what not.

- You join up with the ranks of men and women alike who squeeze into bathing suits made of nearly nothing and flock to the nearest grassy area (a.k.a. beach) to catch some rays.

- Your study breaks begin to last as long as Spring Break.

- Improving your tan is more important to you than improving your GPA.

- If you're single — even if you used to like being single — you find yourself making a renewed effort to find a better half.

- Your wardrobe consists solely of T-shirts and shorts — even when a 50-degree day sneaks into the forecast.

If you display any combination of these characteristics, you probably have spring fever. And there's nothing you can do about it except wait it out, although certain symptoms can be relieved with heavy dosages of vitamin D (available through exposure to sunlight) and/or a few light beers (but be sure that you know when to say when). Your antidote is coming up in a few more weeks — summer vacation, of course.

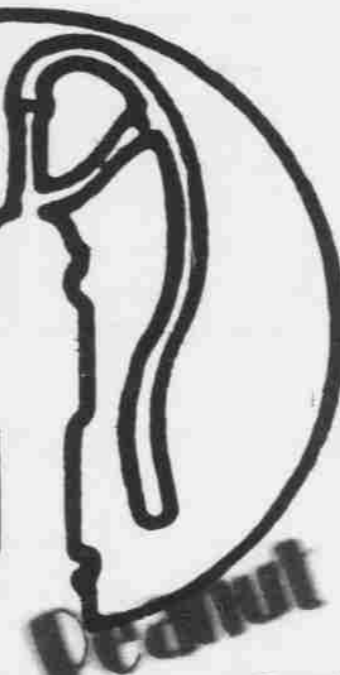
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