

The Decree

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Editors — Dhana Chesson and John Pernell

Staff — Jamie Stump, James Oakley,
Alan Felton, Trey Davis

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Cynical companies prey on patriotism

Our world of Ninja turtles, plastic rain forests, and Evian Water has just been sent to the edge of insanity with the highly commercial events of Desert Storm. In the past several months, the American consumer has been bombarded with patriotic items that could be found on the shelves between the pecan logs and the toy tomahawks in a Stuckey's on I-95.

We have seen Desert Storm tee-shirts, cigarette lighters, baseball caps, mugs, buttons, beer huggers,

war maps, bumper stickers, and, rudely enough, boxer shorts.

Luckily the war has come to a quick end to stop this abuse of patriotism. We are now ready for the introduction of such products as the Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf Designer Jeans, Bush Binoculars, Saddam Condoms, Dick Cheney Burgers, Peter Arnett Candy Bars, Desert Storm action figures, Scud Light Beer, and, of course, the Patriot Missile Nintendo Game.

Only in America.

More debate on 'phallogocentrism'

Dear Editor:

The latest essay on the importance of antiphallocentrization by Margee Morrison (who naturally rejects the "Dr." to which she is phallogocentrically entitled) certainly suggests a possible meaning of her first work (insofar as the two works may be said to have a common text and insofar as she, merely the writer of the works, may claim to interpret it).

I am, however, concerned that there is an apparent inconsistency in her text (insofar as I, a mere (mis)reader of these essays, may discern it).

Her argument is couched in that most phallogocentric of terminology, academic deconstructionese. Ironically, the very language of her attack on phallogocentrism is itself a power play *par excellence* of the very type it would marginalize; by my

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sketchy count, many Wesleyan faculty don't have any idea of the meaning of the term "phallogocentric" (roughly, "centered on the linguistic imperialism of patriarchal domination") and thus are excluded from her discourse. As for the people whose language she is defending, they wouldn't have a clue.

This irony instantiates one fundamental inconsistency of theoretical talk about linguistic imperialism: it is invariably in the imperialist tongue. This is inevitable, in that theoretical manipulation is the explicit forte of this language and those who speak it



He would see war's irony

Morrison understood excess

By DR. STEVE FEREBEE

Oliver Stone, a Vietnam veteran who brought us *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*, has now reinvented Jim Morrison in the current movie, *The Doors*.

Morrison would have recognized the obsequiousness to our military that many Americans are indulging in. President Bush says that we have found common purpose and de-

Dr. Steve Muses

defined ourselves. We are having a super bowl of celebration to prove it. Morrison understood excess.

Morrison the writer and concert performer was a less palatable

figure than the band's radio hits suggested. As Stone shows, Morrison had evidently read — and understood — Antonin Artaud's theory about drama known as Theater of Cruelty. Artaud demanded that theater upset the audience with intense confrontation. Though Stone concentrates on Morrison's Dionysian tactics — drawing the audience into a purging, orgiastic celebration of the body — I think he might have created a movie which makes us intellectually angrier than this one does. Angry at our own complacency.

Morrison believed that American youth wanted to explore experience on a different level than that offered by "She loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah" or TV sitcoms. In fact, the San Francisco acid rock scene, led by The Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane, as well as the Beatles in their reincarnation as pop gurus, also spoke to this desire.

But Morrison had a theory about the rock concert as a theater of confrontation, as a place and time to "break through to the other side," to move from the desire for exploration to exploration itself. He took the name of his band from William Blake and Aldous Huxley, two other rebels against self-satisfaction.

I guess he was wrong about

to power.

I would not want to deny the essential point that there are many forms of discourse, and that each has a different use. One main goal of education has always been to give access to the current language of power, which also has its uses. Finally, as Margee's essays so aptly illustrate, only those with supreme control of the current phallogocentric language of power will be able to understand that power and shape its evolution.

That is why the teaching of "Standard English" continues to be essential, and also why those very minoritarians who are improperly marginalized by the dichotomies of "Standard English" are precisely the people with the greatest need to learn it as well as to maintain their roots.

Charles Creegan

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