

Editorials

Needs Of Vietnam Veterans Ignored

It seems that one of the haunting realities of contemporary American history is the difficulty to accept the fact that we lost a war in Vietnam. Our national desire to escape from this reality has led the nation to ignore the needs of our Vietnam military veterans; to, in the words of one Congressman, simply leave Southeast Asia and declare ourselves to be victorious; and to alter the facts of history in order to extend the illusion that as a nation we have never lost a war.

Since none of this has eased the consciousness of the nation, we have gone a step further from reality to make rock music videos as if to glorify the horrors of war. Furthermore, we have begun to Ramboize our nation's youth, some veterans of Vietnam and others knowledgeable of the real events of the Vietnam era. Escape from reality has been transferred to the motion picture screen for all to see. There was Sylvester Stallone's "First Blood," then Chuck Norris' "Missing In Action, I & II." Now, blazing across the nation's wide-screen movie theatres are Stallone's "Rambo, First Blood Part 2," Norris' "Invasion U.S.A." and Arnold Schwarzenegger's "Commando."

Stallone's first Rambo picture was an attempt to show how poorly the American public has received the Vietnam veteran because his very presence was a reminder of a lost war, the reality we wanted to forget. Stallone's current Rambo and Norris' "Missing In Action" films were partly political and served the purpose of helping the American people to realize that there were, and may possibly still be, American prisoners of war in Southeast Asia.

However, Charles Clements, a veteran of the Vietnam war has begun launching a nationwide counter-offensive for the minds of young Americans who may think Sylvester Stallone's movie version of America's involvement in Southeast Asia is a

correct portrayal of recent history. Clements calls his counter-offensive tour "Reality vs. Rambo." He argues that the Rambo 2 film glorifies war and tries to justify American involvement in Vietnam.

Clements said he was motivated to begin his anti-Rambo campaign when Stallone, who allegedly avoided military service during the Vietnam war, suggested that he sought to be the voice of anguished Vietnam veterans. Clements said further that it is his belief that today's teenagers are too young to remember the Vietnam war and consequently they do not realize what a painful and humiliating experience the war was for America. "No wonder there's confusion about the reality," Clements said.

Running against the grain of reality too is the macho superman image that all these films portray. Stallone and Schwarzenegger are portrayed as muscular he-men who literally destroy single-handedly whole armies and cities. Likewise, Norris, less the muscles, destroys whole towns and armies. In the real world an individual soldier would never be expected to perform a mission of similar magnitude as in these films alone. Yet, in real-world military action a team victory is far more sweeter than any possible individual Rambo-type conquest.

The only really good thing that might be said about these Rambo-type, macho man films is that the biceps of Stallone and Schwarzenegger are creating a renewed and healthy image of the American male which has led to thousands of men and women joining health and physical fitness clubs throughout the nation. However, even here we must temper body building with reality because many, if not most, men will never have a muscular body similar to that of a Stallone or a Schwarzenegger.

Likewise, in all aspects of life we must accept the realities of the world, not the illusions of success in our attempts to escape from the realities of life.

Punish The Drug Users

Baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth says "a drug testing program will go a long way toward reestablishing the public's confidence in baseball. It will also give baseball a leadership role in the fight against drugs." Gene Orza, the baseball players' union counsel, disagrees, saying "...testing is not a solution."

The simply unadulterated truth is the baseball players or any other people made famous and usually quite wealthy by their professions are role models and image markers whether they want to be or whether they like it or not. Therefore, while a drug testing program might not be practical or even constitutional for the typical or ordinary worker in a low profile job, such testing is necessary for high profile people whose behavior may influence the habits and beliefs of our youth or even other adults.

As a nation we must stop tolerating the misbehavior likewise of musicians because they too are image makers and

influencers of the young.

Any baseball player, football player or other sports personality who opposes such testing on personal or constitutional grounds is placing his selfish interest ahead of that of the public he or she has an obligation to perform for to the best of his or her God-given talents without the influence of drugs.

Likewise, people who work in highly classified government security jobs should be required to take drug tests because the nation's overall welfare and security should not be placed in the hands of people enslaved to drugs.

Sports professionals and similarly high profile people made wealthy by the money the public pays to see you use your talents have a right to expect and believe beyond the shadow of a doubt that your minds and bodies are clean and pure as Almighty God would expect them to be. Be drug-free, be worthy of your gifts to make others happy.

Miller Says:

Small Step For Reincarnating Black Families

By Sherman N. Miller
Special To The Post

The black female unmarried householders increased from 28.3 percent to 41.8 percent (an average annual rate of increase of approximately one percent per year) for the period 1970 to 1983 versus a small rise from nine to 12.2 percent for white females. However, the percentage change of black male householders remained virtually constant (3.7 to 4.7 percent) over this same period. These data suggest that the traditional black American family structure is rapidly approaching the point of imminent collapse.

Many people look for a national movement to emerge before they conclude that meaningful change is underway. Nevertheless, many national endeavors are rooted in some local person or persons becoming hell-bent committed to righting some injustice or ill-fated societal practice. In September, two small state of Delaware black churches decided to combine their talents to start dispelling the unpropitious myth of the "irresponsible black American father."

Union AME Zion sponsored a "Father and Son



Sherman

Banquet." Mr. J. Leroy Evans, banquet chairman, pointed out that the banquet's sole goal was to bring families together. He also revealed that the banquet was the reincarnation of a dream of the late Delaware State Representative Raymond Evans. The banquet's theme, "A Father's Dream Comes True," typified Mr. Raymond Evans' wish that some day black fathers would become their sons' role models.

The banquet was catered by parishioners of the First Baptist Church of Cheswall, DE, located approximately 45 miles away. The menu consisted of foods flavored in the Southern tradition. Most satisfying was the fact that the function came complete with dinner with seconds, dessert, and a program for

the mere cost of \$10.

I was asked to be a guest panelist and address the topic, "In The Home." I decided to share some of our family secrets on what are the essential characteristics necessary for a happy home. These characteristics were entered in our family archive by my aunt, the late Susie Love Adams in 1935. She wrote:

"Characteristics of a good home are security, love, sincerity, contentment, frankness, self expression, unity and harmony, privacy, spiritual values, freedom of all, cheerfulness, tolerance, and cleanliness."

At first glance some people might view my Aunt Love's comments as guidance befitting a good homily that should be digested slowly. However, her writing suggests that she liked to make one see the big picture before she homed in on the practical issue at hand. Aunt Love was obsessed with creating a happy home so she postulated some key factors that greatly influence its day to day operation. She postulated:

"Influences in the home are honesty, morals, manners, self control, self reliance, and courtesy."



A Challenge To Black Leadership

The Term "Porn Rock" Is Ridiculous

In the fifties, it was Elvis, the Beatles in the sixties, and no one is sure about the seventies - but every "rock" star of the eighties is being jaded as a "porn rockers" - a term adopted by rock haters.

The term "porn-rock" is ridiculous. Less than one out of a thousand records sold today uses four-letter words (of the "bad sort"). In fact, popular books and soap operas have more violence and sex than songs of today.

By pressuring record companies into rating songs, wives of politicians are trying to impose their personal interpretations on every artist and everyone in the United States. These witch-hunters try to compare this to film ratings, but there are no similarities. Film ratings are based on solid facts and evidence: is there nudity or not? Or how explicit is the language? Song ratings would have to be based on OPINION.

Critics of rock music seek out a few weird and obscure songs and lump them into the same category with the free world's greatest singers!

Some years ago John Denver, who is as wholesome as milk, found his hit single, "Rocky Mountain High," being criticized. It seems



Sabrina

that some extremists said his tribute to nature was about drugs! Denver recently told Senators he is strongly opposed to a rating system.

The mayor of Los Angeles, Thomas Bradley, recently stated that pressure for record ratings has "the acrid odor of censorship." A statement with which the musical majority agrees.

Who are or is the musical majority? Some of its representatives include Don Johnson, Tina Turner, Lionel Richie, Bruce Springsteen, Dolly Parton, Olivia Newton-John, and Farm Aid organizer, John Cougar Mellenkamp.

Of course, there are many who dislike certain weird and

violent songs. But who is deemed best at interpreting every song and putting a rating on it? No one. The possibility of a rating system would glamorize the disagreeable artist and unfairly subject all other artists to X-committee judgements of their work.

As long as the subject of rating records is in the air, why not add books and magazines? Books like saucy romance novels that can be purchased in the supermarket right next to children's books. Why stop there? Surely "National Geographic" has questionable material within its covers. If this mood continues, every creative person in America might have some Salem judge and committee to rate the material favorable to have access to the public. The fact remains that every person in the United States has a different opinion about music, books, and magazines. Americans do not need a committee to tell them what to buy. If so, two major steps have been taken back - two major steps back two centuries.

Publicity, song titles, and album covers give a good idea what type of music is on the album. To continue, most artists have no objection to making their lyrics available to stores for consumers interested in reading them prior to purchase.

Every generation has a love affair with music its parents hate. Songs like "We Are The World" and events like Live Aid and anti-drug and voter registration campaigns sharply outweigh that almost non-existent "porn-rock" with which so many are concerned. These positive efforts are only possible in a free atmosphere.

For those who do want to live in a place where committees tell them what to read, listen to or view such as place does exist. It's called the Soviet Union. Bear in mind if the witch-hunters lived in the USSR they would not have the opportunity to voice their opinions on anything without risking imprisonment or exile. This country, the United States of America, has made its own rules for over 200 years - why not keep it that way?

A few key points to ponder. Parents do not buy the albums for their children, the kids are given the money to purchase what they choose. Most kids cannot even understand the words because they are hidden behind primary sounds - the music. They listen to and enjoy the music.

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Published Every Thursday by The Charlotte Post Publishing Company, Inc.	
Main Office: 1531 S. Camden Road Charlotte, N.C. 28203	
Second Class Postage Paid at Charlotte	
Member, National Newspaper Publishers' Association North Carolina Black Publishers Association	
National Advertising Representative: Amalgamated Publishers, Inc.	
One Year Subscription Rate One Year - \$17.75 Payable In Advance	
USPS No. 955500 POSTMASTER Send Change of address to: Charlotte Post 1531 S. Camden Rd. Charlotte, N.C. 28203	