

The

STAGNATION

of America

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## **A WARNING ABOUT THIS BOOK**

This book is not representative of any one core ideal, some ideas may seem conservative, while most are deemed “liberal”. The purpose of this book is completely based solely on opinions. Opinions are based on personal experiences, life in general and perceptions based on personal non-religious beliefs. You may think these words to be harsh sometimes, or maybe you will find yourself angry. That's OK. I'm here to speak my voice, my mind, my life.

Some parts of this book exposes the darker sides of our modern lives. Issues such as child porn and piracy are talked about within this tome.

Human sexuality is also discussed here as a means of communicating one aspect of human diversity. No sexual behavior between consenting adults is insulted here.

This book also covers issues of politics, religion, STD's, teen pregnancy, abstinence, evolution, intelligent design, creationism and science.

Though you may have a different opinion concerning any subject, it is my intention to tell you mine.

**Chapter One**  
**The Beginning of Understanding**

I am thirty six years old and, as I have been my entire life, distraught by the actions of my fellow Americans. I have never lived a day of my conscious life without feeling violated or oppressed by our government system. Since the first day that I was taught about the civil rights movement of the 1960's, I have recognized the lies behind what was supposed to be a great nation, devoted to freedom and equality. This ever described "American dream" is just that, a dream, and it has yet to come into reality.

I was just a child when I first heard racial slurs and mean words to describe those who were not white or Christian or just stood outside of the circle of the Majority. These words, which I later learned the true meanings of, were used so commonly by my so called peers, that even I thought them to be acceptable. I simply believed that they were descriptive. As far as I can remember in my younger years, such words were never heard on radio or television, and I didn't even bother to question "why", since I heard a lot of things from my parents that were not used on tv or radio.

It wasn't until I was 11, that I began to understand how horrible the American mindset was in dealing with diversity. Once I was away from the influences of my paternal family and in the presence of my Mother's third husband, whom I affectionately call "Dad", I was being

introduced to a broader world and mind. I realized that words like “nigger”, “faggot”, “kike” and “spic” were wrong and, feeling guilty that I had used such words before, knew that I had been a victim of learned prejudice. Today, I rarely use these words except in confessing my guilt in actually believing that they were acceptable terms in the English language.

I had never even considered the possibility that I myself, would become a person to be described by any one slang term. When I was twelve, I began to have certain feelings that I didn't quite understand, feelings in a more sexual manner, not the previous innocent childhood way of just “liking someone”. I had always known, since early childhood that I was different, I felt it everyday. While other boys were looking at girls and asking them to dance at the DYA (dependent youth activities) dances, I was watching other boys dance, watching how their hair swayed and how they moved. I was fascinated by the shape of their arms, legs, torsos, necks, faces. I knew I wanted to see them naked. I kept these feelings hidden, and in the process, danced poorly with members of the opposite sex.

When I was thirteen, my dad was given orders to be stationed in Augsburg, Germany. A nice little city, a new climate, a different culture and away from the general American attitude. I felt more ready than ever to just get away and try something new. I had already been told how the German people were more open minded, and I youthfully got my hopes up that they

accepted Gay people like me. I was not disappointed.

Not long after arriving there, maybe a week or so, I had my first sexual experience. He was fifteen years old and despite my nervousness, I lost my virginity to him in a public restroom stall. There was no turning back then, I had absolute confirmation that I was what I had been guilty of calling others. I was and still am, a faggot. YAY!

Around that time, in a young boy's life, the ages between thirteen and fifteen is when one grows into their sense of common morals. Though I continued to date the same boy who took my virginity for two years, and kept my gay life completely secret from the American military dependent school I attended, I was still fearful that my secret life would be exposed. Around Americans, I was some geeky little loner sitting in the corner reading a book. Around my German boyfriend and his friends, I was a wild dancing American piece of fresh meat that was never ashamed to grope or be groped. One might say that I had no shame or I had episodes in which I just went wild, while others would describe me as "expressive of his individuality". Still, nobody bothered to really complain, since I was always ready to strip off my clothes at the slightest hint of an orgy. It was the open mindedness of Europe that aided in my development. I have, and always shall remain, a liberal. Liberals are people who are not limited to views or religion, favor reform and progress and are without bigotry, for the

most part. Yes, it is human to deal with inner prejudices, but it's also human to overcome them.

Suddenly, it was all over. The very day that I got off the plane and landed right back in my home town of San Antonio, my closet door was slammed shut. It was the 80's, and people still had that weird narrow view that "all gays have AIDS and everybody with AIDS is gay", at least that was the majority consensus that I was drowned in everyday . I still recall the early parts of the decade when President Reagan wouldn't even talk about it until his second term, and how religious leaders spoke on television about locking away AIDS victims to keep them away from society. Every time I heard things like that, I kept picturing old black and white films of Nazi SS soldiers marching down the streets. Suddenly, after experiencing another culture that was sexually and socially mature, the country of my birth felt like a cold and dangerous place.

I remember giving a report on AIDS in a health class one year. I had to take summer school to make up a half credit because they still had not received all my information from my old school. Anyway, I gave this report, and I must have been totally obvious as a homosexual because I had no problems whatsoever about saying words like "penis" or "anal". Even worse, I talked about the "glans penis" which is the head of a man's member. All the boys in the class were turning red and looking around like they were telepathically

saying to me “dude, why are you telling all the girls in class about our dicks?”. To which I verbally responded, after showing an artist representation, “don't be embarrassed about this guys, if you sleep with her, she's gonna know that you have one similar to this”. The girls giggled and the boys didn't even bother to lift their eyes.

Of course, I was only sixteen then and I was still not socially or politically active as most would have thought. I just ended up being one of those youths who didn't pay much attention to how my government was screwing me. I should have though, perhaps I could have helped make a difference early on.

When I had finally turned 18, and was considered legally an adult, I was thrown right smack dab in the middle of an issue. My dad had told me that since I was now 18, I would be able to partake on one of the great American freedoms, the right to vote. In 1988, I admit, there wasn't much of a choice. It was Dukakis Vs. Bush. What could be said about them back then. One, I had never heard of and the other was the Vice President serving under Reagan. All I knew at that point is that I didn't like Bush. I didn't have enough fuel to fire off a ballot with absolute conviction. So I voted that year for the first time, and we all know who won and how long he lasted.

When I was 20, I officially came out to my parents and then at age 21, I met my first true love. Billy was a dancer, actor and singer in

community theater. With him at my side, I discovered the core of the San Antonio Gay Community and the complexities that would forever change me into a person who doesn't just care for humanity, equality and diversity, but would be an active voice to champion those causes.

## **Chapter Two** **Dealing with AIDS**

I remember where I was and what I was doing when I first heard of the then mysterious disease simply known as AIDS. I didn't quite understand it at that point, seeing as I was unaware of the multiple causes of disease and never even heard of anything called "sexually transmitted". What do you expect a 12 year old in 1982 to know, especially when parents were a little old fashioned and thought it wasn't appropriate to talk about? Back then, sex education was just confusing. Seriously, wouldn't it be better to show young boys the film about the boy's changing bodies so that we would be better prepared? Why did they show us the one of the female body, and why would boys need to know about a 28 day cycle?

All I knew was that girls began to grow pubic hair at the ages of 11 or 12 and so did boys, but the whole spontaneous erection thing was a mystery. Thanks guys, we were better educated by being ridiculed and later being given "the talk" by our parents. What exactly did you receive tax money for?

Thankfully, sex ed was a little more informative later on. a young boy would probably think he's sick or something if he didn't know about wet dreams. However, through all my years in school and even health class, the terms "condom" and "masturbation" never came up. Masturbation is something boys develop a skill for on their own, or learn

from watching other boys in secret game scenarios.

Had education been a lot better, AIDS probably wouldn't have been so frightening to young gay boys who were afraid of being outcasts. It was the 80's, the Reagan era, and the common belief was "if your gay, you have AIDS, if you have AIDS, then you're gay". It was just something so automatic somehow. All gays were infected, even if you were still a virgin. I remember once being told that just having gay fantasies while Masturbating would give you the disease. Boy what a screwed up time that was. I didn't even know you could get it from sex, since that wasn't part of sexual education back then. So I didn't even think of it when I lost my virginity at the age of 13. Nor did I think of it the other hundred or so times the rest of that year.

Even today, as I always have to remember to take my morning cocktail of pills, I think back on those younger years. The times when I could be carefree because AIDS was not all that well known among the mainstream discussions. Even Reagan himself never talked about it until his second term.

Then Rock Hudson died and everything went belly up. It was everywhere, on everybody's lips. Even after his death, they spoke more about him, the celebrity, than they did Ryan White, the hemophiliac. People only knew of Ryan because of him being infected by medication, but a celebrity was somehow more

powerful than an innocent child to attract a large chunk of the nation. Sad.

Why do so many people put movie stars up on a pedestal when it's the innocent children that should be more of a wake up call?

I still remember all the hate and bull from televangelists saying that AIDS was god's way of punishing the wicked. I have asked many times, but nobody is willing to answer my question. I ask "what kind of a god do you worship that allows innocent children to die from it, when their mothers did nothing wrong except get hit by a drunk driver and needed a blood transfusion"? Ninety percent of the time, they turn and walk away. The other ten percent yell at me, call me a godless faggot, start preaching Levitical laws or slap me. Actually, I've only been slapped once.

It's truly not easy living with a disease like AIDS, but I prefer to live with it than to die from it. That's an attitude shared by most PWAs (people with AIDS). However, that attitude took many years to develop. I had seen so many give up because every new medication that came out before the multiple med cocktails, didn't work at all or made the problems worse. I saw this first hand with my first love, Billy. He went downhill fast because of some the medications and when I lost him, I unwillingly joined that group of gay men that had also lost lovers to AIDS. Still, I felt alone and tired of life in general.

Not long after my first suicide attempt, they came out with the cocktails and I've been healthier ever since. Of course it's a two way street with me. In order for the meds to work, you have to take them, and I promised Billy that I would go on with my life. It's been hard, sometimes it feels impossible, but I'm keeping my promise and I'm happily attached to a wonderful man named David. Our sixth anniversary was in May of 2006. I can't believe I've kept one this long, I'm not exactly cream of the crop you know.

### **Chapter Three**

## **The Dark Soul of the Internet**

As a normally sexually active human being, I am just as intrigued as others with adult entertainment. The word “pornography” is usually the first thing that most people think of when they hear the term “adult entertainment”. Simply put, we have to segregate the genres if we are to know what is and is not family friendly.

The Internet has been a virtual cornucopia of information, communication and yes, porn. There is, in my opinion, nothing wrong with adults looking at images of legal age models and actors engaged in sexual behavior. It's fun and we all enjoy the acts, and many also like to watch, it's just a human thing. That's why it's such a big money maker on line, because it's available in the privacy of one's own home.

However, it's no big secret that the Internet has a dark side, a very disturbing and sickening dark side. Child porn is so easily found on line that you don't even have to look. If you go to many adult galleries, or end up at one of those top list directories that lead to other directories over and over again, you see links for pages with words like “Lolita” and “lolo boys”. Sometimes it can't be helped unless you get smart and install a pop up blocker on your browser, like I had to do with mine. I like images of sexually attractive young naked men, but I don't need to know what they looked like before puberty. I was prepubescent once

myself, that's all I need to know.

I wasn't sure if anybody ever read my blog about child porn on the Internet or if cyberspace has changed any since I started using pop up blockers. So in order to keep up with current times, I turned off my blocker for a while. I wasn't surprised at all to find that nothing had changed as far as pop ups. If you go to a regular site, that you normally trust with a blocker, you find yourself dealing with maybe one or two or more extra browser windows opening up. Now close one, and two or more pop up in it's place. This can go on for a while. Even harder to deal with is when pop ups are automatically set to go off as soon as your browser caches the site. From one site, you can end up with up fifteen browser windows opened.

Perversion is human. What is perversion depends on the individual and usually the accepted moral values of a species in whole. While some may think homosexuality is wrong, others do not. However the species itself recognizes pedophilia as an automatic wrong. It's something that I believe to be deep seeded into our race as we like to view children as pure innocence, a time that we, ourselves, appreciated before being shoved into the dark cold world of stagnating adulthood. We feel sickened by the acts of child molesters and child pornographers, because they have stolen that innocence.

There are many layers to sexuality, and

humans are just one sexual creature on this planet. Many of us can remember feeling good when we touched ourselves in those special places for the first time. Our sexual behaviors were purely innocent and nothing really abnormal. It's been understood to be a development of self awareness, exploring one's own body and understanding our inner feelings about the sanctity of our private areas. It is up to ourselves to determine when we are ready to go to the next level of sexual awareness and experience. Most of the time, it's very private, while some children play the "I'll show you mine if you show me yours" game. That itself is normal sexual development.

When children are forced into sexual acts with each other or with an adult, for the purpose of an adult's sick fetish, this goes beyond their bodies understanding. It's like teaching a child how to drive before they're tall enough to reach the pedals and see over the dashboard. Although, teaching a munchkin how to drive is a lot better thing to do than to rape them.

Again, back to the Internet where I have seen, much to my shock, images of innocent children being violated by adult men. Boys and girls, from the ages of 2 to 12, victimized on film for the purpose of making money.

After all the things I had run across, I began to question as to why they are still accessible on the Internet? If something is illegal in an area that it can be controlled, why does it still

exist? Every site on the net is indexed, linked, back linked, deep linked and on a server somewhere. Every server has an IP address and every domain has an IP address on a server.

The solution is simple. The Internet Service Providers (ISPs), should filter out these sites, which in no way would violate free speech, free expression, free press or art. If they filter illegal sites at the ISP end, then their customers would never be able to look at them, either accidentally or purposely. Now let me set down some points on free press and art. Pornography is legally defined as depicting the act of sex. Touching the genital areas of the human body is a sex act itself. However, posing nude, without being touched in sexual areas can be considered art, regardless of the age or gender of the subject.

classic paintings have depicted nude children over and over again, because they do reflect some aspects of the times in which the original work was done. In centuries past, many paintings of nude boys on beaches were done because most boys didn't have bathing suits. It was normal behavior for boys to swim naked. In many cultures, children still go to the beaches nude. It was also an accepted fact that boys had no insecurities about their nude bodies, they were not inhibited nor were they considered "heathens". So long as they kept it in areas where it was expected, such as in areas where they would swim.

Today, artistic representation in many mediums still depict the nude bodies of preteen boys and girls. In my opinion, the subcultures that look down upon such works and label them as child porn, are obviously jaded and lacking proper understanding of the diversity of humanity's cultures. Even if the depiction is of an underage individual or group, if there is no sexual contact, it's not porn. Nude children on the beach is just that and nothing more. If people see sexuality in such an image, then that's their sickness.

Now, back to how to stop child porn on the Internet and then attempt to cover some basic concerns that we should consider carefully.

ISPs are fully aware that there is numerous software available that allows the average home user to block access to sites, advertisements and content. Internet Providers include this software in many of their packages. That is a great idea if the end user, the customer of the ISP is wanting to make sure their child is not running across some material. However, not every customer is the parent of a child and most of the time, a single adult will not install any program on their computer that is made to act as a family friendly filter.

It is understood that every good comes with a little evil, but evil is defeated all the time. Good people just want what is legal. Every time I see something on the news about child porn or some porn ring being shut down, I'm thinking to myself "good", but the truth is, I see

it as only a setback for illegal sites. They are not doing enough quickly enough to get rid of the situation completely. According to some on line research and information obtained from advocacy blogs, many of these pedophile websites hold domains in foreign countries, or at least that is what would be indicated by the domain name. They are obviously targeted at English speaking people, since none of the domains or titles are in any other language. So I'm led to believe that either the domain owner is in the United States or another American friendly country.

I have, in the past, sent in cyber tips to the national centers for missing and exploited children at their website [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com). Even they note that it is not unusual for adults and children to run across illegal images while surfing legitimate and harmless websites. This is an organization dedicated to studying and stopping the exploitation of children, and even they can't do it all themselves. I will admit, it's sometimes difficult to make a report. Sometimes, I think that if I had reported everything I saw on line, I wouldn't be doing anything else, except reporting. It is an increasingly larger problem. According to annual reports from the cyber tip line, the number of reports have increased dramatically. Their 1998 grand totals show to be 4,560 and increased every year. In 2004, they showed a grand total of reports to be 112,017.

OK, so basically running across child porn on line and seeing it on the Internet is not a crime

itself, otherwise, practically the entire cyber population would be in prison. The possession, distribution and production of images and videos depicting children in sexual situations is illegal under title 18, chapter 110, section 2256 of the U.S Code. So, all we have to do is get ISPs to filter out the illegal sites without wide sweeping filters that block legal sites. Then we won't ever have to worry about seeing them again.

Now, I use a piece of software called "adblock" on my system that automatically blocks any site or content from a site, as set in my filter list. It's not difficult at all to run across a site I don't ever want to see again and add it to my filter list. With this easy and free software at my fingertips, I have to ask why ISPs aren't using similar technology to block it at their end. Why are they leaving end users the full responsibility and concerns about running into such junk.

You're probably thinking that it's easy to avoid child porn sites. Well, it can be if you use a pop up blocker, only go to trusted sites and don't click any links that go off site. One example that I can definitely point out is a place on the Internet that has pictures and videos of men, definitely over the age of 18, with nice built bodies. The stereotypical hunk types. However, on that same page, there is a link to a directory that the site is listed on, and below that is a non-descriptive link that goes to a top list directory that I know has links to child porn. Thanks to my adblock being on all the

time, I haven't seen that site since I added the URL.

It works out simply like this. If the ISPs block access to the child porn site, then the website doesn't make any money. No money, no operation funds. No funds, the site closes. Site closes and the Internet is a bit cleaner.

OK, that's covered and now I have to analyze the concerns that you may have after reading my ISP filter idea. The concern is obviously possible violations of American Civil Liberties. If an ISP is blocking access to child porn sites, many people are afraid that eventually, they will be pressures to block others. We've seen and heard of such things before. The fear that Radical Religious groups will demand the blocking of all Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans gendered sites, even the educational, informative and suicide prevention sites, because they are aimed at helping gay youths. It could even be scarier if groups fight to block all adult entertainment, block websites that belong to non-Christian religions or even attempt to silence any body's opinions that do not match their own.

I know that it's a very frightening idea, but if we stay strong on our civil liberties and individual rights, we can have ISPs block access to child porn sites and nothing else. After all, its an idea that blocks access to materials depicting real children being molested. Anything artistic, or depicting legal aged individuals, speech, thoughts, ideas, religions,

the press and opinions are automatically protected by the first amendment. We just have to make sure nobody is going to try to get around the constitution to strip us of that.

My next door neighbor, Goddess I love her to death, doesn't have a computer and probably wouldn't know the first thing about going on line. She simply asked me one question... "wouldn't that violate people's rights to view stuff on the Internet"? Her one question is the reason I had to analyze the concerns and address them in this chapter. One simple question and my brain goes into focus mode on all the pro's and con's.

I'm not wanting to give up freedoms or liberties for securities, I'm just wanting to put an end to child pornographer's and pedophiles' sacrificing a child's innocence for money.

**Afterthought:**  
**Can Pedophiles be cured?**

I had been thinking that question for a while, and of course, I'm not alone in pondering this. Internet searching brings a lot of information to the surface, mostly about the psychological aspects of child molesters. But, I had found one website discussing aversion therapy and how it's only showing temporary results and thus, ineffective.

I had found even more information of

juvenile sexual deviance, indicating that pedophilia starts at a rather young age, some as young as 12 or 13 years of age begin to molest children as young as 2 to 4 years old. They are not classified as pedophiles until they are sixteen. Until then, they are simply known as juvenile sexual offenders.

Of this issue, I feel sure that I can say this with great confidence, even if I'm not an expert on the subject. Pedophilia is a mental disease that inflicts more people than we may realize. These are people, both men and women, who have strong desires for control and power, and, according to Brown University, a primitive conscience. The difference between the ones that commit the horrible crime and those that don't is only a matter of time, at least in my opinion. Now I could be wrong on that last part. For all I know, there are many out there who have the temptations and desires and never act upon them except in their minds.

There could be multiple causes to the condition that I have found to make a great amount of sense, and one that is totally ridiculous. The first idea is that when teen aged boys begin to masturbate to fantasies of young, underdeveloped bodies, instead of other teenaged bodies, they become conditioned to sexually respond to younger children. The second is a reaction to a person being sexually molested themselves. As they grow older, their mind can sometimes switch places and events and put themselves in the position of the aggressor, instead of the victim. They can,

over time, become conditioned to sexually respond to children.

The third idea, which is the one I found the hardest to swallow, is that adolescent sexual activity with a partner that is the same age could result in conditioning the person to be sexually aroused by adolescents in the same age range. This is just too far fetched for me. A lot of people in this day and age have had their first sexual experience between the ages of 13 and 16. To me, this would sound like a situation that would condition men and women to have sexual responses to people within a few years of their own age, being that they stand on equal ground of experience.

However, learned behavior can not be disputed in my mind. Children who are abused, grow up to abuse children. We know this, because we've seen it ourselves many times. So it is acceptable beyond doubt that children who are sexually abused, grow up to believe that such behavior is "normal" and thus grow up to be sexual abusers themselves.

Signs of pedophilia are common for the most part, but the actual conditions themselves do not necessarily mean that the person is a pedophile. Having low social skills and low self esteem are common place among society. I remember one of my friends in my home town, a nice guy and all, who couldn't get through one sentence without stammering. However, he was great around children and was in complete control. Many people like him are

thought to be the type to make great teachers, because they can speak so well to a younger crowd. However, research into the social skills of sexual offenders shows social incompetence and child molesters were less skilled at predicting and evaluating their own abilities in sexual situations involving people within their age range. Not saying that my friend was a child molester, he's not. He's just better in some situations than in others.

There is no cure for pedophilia, but there is life long treatment and some have claimed to have it completely under control. I'm not sure if I can trust such a person myself, but I can't pass judgment of a person who has not committed the crime, has sought out help and is taking therapy sessions. If I were to turn my back on such a person and call them names, I would only be creating a situation that could stress them out and result in them seeking out a child for sexual satisfaction. It's such a delicate game with some people. I would actually prefer to just not know.

Low self esteem can affect anybody. It is because of the low self esteem, that pedophiles seek out children for a feeling of power and control. The possibilities are endless here. Some may feel that they are unable to satisfy someone their own age, or don't feel sexy enough to attract an adult partner. Mind you, most of these people are blind to the fact that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Even an overweight person can find an adult sexual partner. There are no real reasons for one's

own body to not attract a mate. Some like ultra skinny, some are chubby chasers. Some like perfectly smooth skin, others like the "bear" types. Some like younger, within legal range to teach them a few new tricks, while others like the older, wanting to be teached.

As long as a person is legal age, 18 in the United States, and are recognized as adults, the law has no problems with the relationships. Look at Anna Nicole Smith, who married someone old enough to be her great grand father. Society, on the other hand might look down on those relationships though. Some are thought to be gold diggers, others are "dirty old men", and maybe they are, but they are within the range of the laws, and I'm forced to keep my objections in the realm of social conversation and opinion.

I do strongly believe that children should not know what pain is until they at least fall out of a tree and break a bone, or have to have their tonsils or appendix removed. I mean, those things are just kids being kids.

At this point, and much thanks to my personal research on line, I find it impossible to suggest that we can just completely get rid of pedophiles. I can only justify the thought of preventing pedophilia so that it doesn't breed another generation by learned behavior. However, that's just one cause and with so many causes to take into consideration, how can we completely solve the problem?

Perhaps, and I know this is going to raise a lot of eyebrows, if not a lot of blood pressure, but perhaps we should stop tip toeing over the issue and be more open about prevention. I know it's a disgusting subject, and emotionally painful, but why can't we talk about it on television, in prime time, when the majority of viewers are watching? I don't mean those news specials on catching predators. I mean real facts and access to help. Why can't we educate our population on the truth about pedophilia and prevention? Is this country so stagnant and frigid that we can't sit down with our own children and tell them what to watch out for, acceptable behavior and how to respond?

I feel that it is not in the best interest of modern society, to hold back on this issue. I am familiar with people who want to shelter their children from images and ideas that do not correlate with their religious beliefs or social ideals. This over sheltering and adamant refusal to allow their children to be aware of the true horrors of reality is just making it possible for predators to get what they want from children.

Conservative behavior is killing this nation's youth, not in a physical sense mind you, but there is very little left of youth if the innocence is destroyed by rape and molestation in any form. Too many conservative families don't want to talk to their children about sex or masturbation. They only talk about those subject as being wrong and sinful, and end up creating children who feel powerless against

their own natural body's physical development. This again creates a low self esteem in later years.

It is my experience to see young men and women who spend their entire lives so sexually suppressed by conservative parents, that they rebel, get pregnant at the age of 15, leave home, go wild or become sexually violent.

Think on the Liberal side for a change. Don't be embarrassed to speak to your family about children who are raped and tortured. Tell them what to watch out for, how to behave in a situation and how to avoid ending up in that trap. Don't let them on the Internet without adult supervision, that includes instant messaging and emails. Let them ask those difficult questions and don't try to talk around it, they are more intelligent than you give them credit for. Listen to them when they have a problem and help them build a positive self esteem. Let them know that the changes in their bodies are natural and nothing to be afraid of or embarrassed about. Don't suppress their natural needs to feel good about their own bodies, and make sure they know the facts.

I'm not saying that you should let them go wild, but raise them to be physically and sexually responsible. Just don't make them feel that something is wrong when a boy has his first erection or a wet dream. Don't make them feel like they've sinned in they look at the opposite sex for too long or looked at another of the same gender for a length of time. Curiosity

is as natural as rebellion. If you hold them back too hard, they rebel. If you open and honest with them, curiosity remains just that until they know that they are ready.

### **Updates and information**

Researching this subject has been rather unappealing to me. It is such a problem in our society that a simple Google search has come up with more results than I could ever use for this chapter. Is this our evolved society? Are we to feel that technology, while benefiting research and education, encouraging literacy and developing more intricate thought process abilities, is also degrading our world and turning it into a haven for criminals?

Why do I feel like such a traitor for thinking that the Internet should be filtered? Mainly because I can't draw that line in the sand as to where. While I download foreign television shows, read the news, email, IM, Chat and blog my way around cyber space, I am constantly made aware that if we were to regulate or control or even filter so much of it to protect anyone, somebody's freedoms will eventually be stepped on. Can I really see myself standing behind such a situation? No, I can't. I believe in the words of Benjamin Franklin, who once said that anybody who is willing to give up liberties for security, deserve neither.

So here I sit, with a bunch of ideas, reality slapping me in the face and my adblock software filter list getting longer and longer.

I'm now even blocking legal sites because of links to illegal material. How sad is that?

In the second week of August, 2006, I decided to check up on some of those adult sites that had misleading links. I was not surprised with the results. One site had been shut down, but there were still several others that were not and the links, which I dared not click where still available. It's possible that they have either not been reported yet or the sites are owned outside of the United States and just moved to a different server. Either way, I keep wondering if cleaning up the Internet is a losing battle. There seems to be more links to blatantly titled Child Porn sites than ever before. So here I am, wondering if we are truly a species deserving of some of our technologies. I am also pondering the effects that this has on our world. Is the Internet so tainted that it may become synonymous with criminal activity?

In the end, I practically emptied an entire bookmark folder and will never go to those sites ever again. I suggest that people follow my lead and do the same thing.

## **Chapter Four** **The Second Class Citizens**

I live in Texas... don't laugh, and throughout my life, knowing that I was different, I was not aware of all the legal repercussions. I honestly once believed that being gay was just another reason for people to be prejudice. As a child, I read history about slavery and the civil rights movement, but just the same, I heard racial slurs and put downs. So I thought that being called "faggot" and "queer" was just something I was going to have to deal with. I had not even conceived of the possibilities that homosexuality would place me under second class citizenship.

I spent my entire school years being taught about America's promise of equality and justice, only to later realize that I had been lied to. I was taught the bill of rights, the first amendment's promise to me and my peers that religion was not a foundation of law in this country. Yet it's religion that is dictating who is and who is not an equal citizen.

Let's look back on a bit of history here. As I had pointed out in an article that I published on my blog that I have heard the term "traditional marriage" so much, that it has become the biggest historical joke. For thousands of years, the tradition of marriage has evolved to fit the society in which it is practiced. Centuries ago, Women were the "properties" of men. A man chose a woman to gain land and livestock in the form of a dowry. Men chose women based on

their skills to either work the land or make yarn from wool and other farm type skills. In other "classes", marriages were arranged to seal treaties or gain land. Children were a commodity and expected to breed so that the family would continue. Most of the time, it was never about love at all. When two people were married because they actually loved one another, the common social structures of the time looked down on such acts unless it was fortunate that the youngsters were financially or socially compatible. If they were not compatible, they may suffer in poverty.

The industrial revolution pretty much changed all that. Suddenly, Marriage was all about love and two people consented to be together for life because more jobs were available to a national and later, world economy. Tradition was set in the ideas of "courting" where a young couple would spend a nice evening sitting on the front porch.

Then came the advancements of technology and the amazing moving pictures. Though many felt that traditional marriage would be destroyed forever, the young couples moved from the front porch and into the movie houses and night clubs. Courting became dating and women had gained equal voice and vote.

Moving into the 1960's, we enter the realm of tradition being challenged once again in the case of "Loving vs. Virginia". Here, a white man and a black woman married, and were arrested in their home state because they were in

violation of the obscenely bigoted “racial integrity” laws of the state which did not allow blacks and whites to marry. They were put on trial for a crime and had to leave Virginia. Christian religion was used to justify this concept. The judge stated that God had separated the races and did not intend for them to mix. Luckily, they won their case in the supreme court and history was made with another step up in social evolution.

I should point out that “racial integrity” laws were solely aimed at the union between blacks and whites, mostly to discriminate against the black population. These integrity laws were never enforced on couples comprised of Asians and Whites, Hispanics and Whites, or Native Americans and Whites.

In that same decade, the civil rights movement gained equality for people of all colors and in 1969, stonewall became the “pin drop” heard around the world.

We stand looking at the time of My life, the 1970's. The seventies removed homosexuality from it's list of psychological disorders, but the arrogance was still among us. The 1980's gave us Reagan, AIDS, Jerry Falwell and Anita Bryant. By the way Anita, if you read this, Anti-gay comments while being a spokesperson for a fruit juice, really made you the gayest joke on the planet. Jerry Falwell proclaimed AIDS to be the “wrath of God”, ignoring the innocent children that died of it. We were being victimized by our own countrymen.

Through the nineties and today, it was the Religious activists who have screamed about “sanctity of marriage” while Fred Phelps desecrated graves and protested funerals of gay people. Today, Freddie is still active in his public indecency, but has added protesting military funerals and involving the children of his congregation members, thus creating a whole new generation of prejudice.

Sanctity of marriage is still being heard today, but I feel that anybody who has at least one divorce in their past, has no real credibility to argue on that subject. Seriously, if we are to use laws to protect the “sanctity” of marriage, then you will have to support illegalizing divorce and making adultery an offense punishable with a prison sentence. That just might get rid of half of congress and senate.

Gay marriage isn't about special rights as the conservatives claim. It's about equal rights, equal protection under the law and showing the world that, yes, the American dream is alive and well. The conservatives in this nation need to stop using it as an issue for political gain. We are your sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles, mothers, fathers and best friends. You, a parent, look at your child. That little piece of immortality, your miracle baby, the light of your life... your flesh and blood. What if your child grows up to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or trans gendered? Would you want your nation to persecute your own child? Would you want to explain to him or her that you voted against their equality? Do you really

want to sentence your own to being a second class citizen. If it is the bible that you are listening to, then how do you feel betraying your fellow man and cursing your own blood to inhumane treatment under the law of this nation?

It isn't about what the bible says. It isn't about what someone preaches as being right or wrong. It's about love, hope, charity, freedom, equality and the fantastic diversity that build this nation. Deny one part of our population the equality of others and you begin to strip down the foundation of America into nothing more than rubble and dirt. This nation, if allowed to stagnate under conservative ideals and afraid to change, will become obsolete while the rest of the world progresses around us. Our constitution says that we are equal.

That may seem a little harsh, but think about it. How often do you read the bible and take it's laws, and obey each and every single one of them, by the letter? It is often the argument of religious radicals to point out Leviticus. In chapter 18, verse 22, it says "*thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind; it is abomination*". However, I must dare to challenge people who use that as a reason to dictate their religious reason for denying us equal citizenship and equal protections under the law.

In that same book, Levitical laws state that adultery is to be punished with death, pork is not to be eaten, nor any creature of the water

that doesn't have scales (crab, lobster, shrimp, oysters, etc...). It also dictates a law that does not allow a man to shave his head, shave off the corners of their beard nor make any cuttings in the flesh. That basically illegalizes shaving and surgery. The radical religious activists are surely picking and choosing which Levitical laws they *want* to obey in order to justify their bigotry.

When the constitution says that "*congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of a religion*", why is religion used as a reason to deny me and millions of others of the equal protections we were supposed to have been guaranteed by the fourteenth amendment? Amendments to restrict equal recognition and protections of even a single citizen is a criminal act it itself, but they've stood at their podiums, pounding the living daylights out of an old book of philosophy and folk tales and got their way in dictating religious views as law.

Why are gay people hated so much? What did we do that earned us that hate? Nothing! Your reasons for hating us are the same reasons the Nazi's hated the Jewish people. Ignorance. Try as they may, you cannot just suddenly make us heterosexuals by denying us equal rights. Legal or not, we are still not going to walk down the aisle with the opposite sex. Gay parents don't make gay kids, that's just another episode of the same oddball propaganda. Since there is no guarantee that heterosexual parents make heterosexual kids, why would anybody think that children become the orientation of

their parents?

I suggest to the American people, that any amendment or law in general that restricts equal marriage rights from any part of the population is in direct violation of the fourteenth amendment's first section which reads *"All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."*

I have already heard some conservatives in conversation argue with me that gay marriage is not an issue of rights. If not an issue of rights, then why hasn't there been any legal protections or recognitions for protections to gay couples? If not an issue of rights, then why would there need to be any amendment to define marriage to one religion's definition? The idea of defining marriage as that between a man and a woman *only* is a blatant and clear voice denying equality to a part of the population and relegating that part to second class citizenship.

### **The Breakdown**

I am gay, and so is my lover... duh. We have

been together for six years and our relationship is extremely stable. I know that I will never leave him, I take commitment very seriously. I also know that he's the same with me, and that we'll be together for the rest of our lives. I didn't have any credit to qualify for a home loan, so I'm living with my lover, David and his younger brother, Gary, a hardcore conservative that adamantly stands against the equal rights of his own brother. David and Gary pay the mortgage, I pay all the utilities and extras like Direct TV, telephone and Internet.

Now, since both David and myself are HIV positive, the concern about possible death has come up. If anything were to happen to David, the house's mortgage insurance would not pay the remainder of the note, because of David's pre-existing condition and Gary and I would be unable to live here without problems. Of course, then I would have no legal obligations to this house and he would have no legal obligations to allow me to stay. If he wanted, he could evict me and there would be nothing I could do about it... except call his mother, which wouldn't do any good anyway.

If I were to die, being not on the note and not covered under the mortgage insurance, David and Gary would be up a creek without a paddle, boat or even wading boots. Without my income, they could not pay the mortgage along with the water, electricity or phone. They would have to eliminate the extras, but that wouldn't save them enough to prevent defaulting on the mortgage and losing

everything, including their built credit ratings.

If David and I were to be treated like equal American citizens, and could be legally recognized as domestic partners, civil unified or even "married", then we are protected under the laws of this nation and he could get survivor benefits. At least enough to help.

However, we are not given that American right. We are treated like dirt and given the boot as far as citizenship is practically concerned. I mean, they force us to pay the same taxes as everybody else, but we're just not good enough to be equal?

My next door neighbor, who has a disabled child and is a diabetic, recently lost her social security and Medicaid because she has lived with the same man for two years. They are planning to get married, just not yet. Suddenly, she was recognized as common law married, when she didn't want to be. As a matter of fact, it's put her in a financial bind. She actually got, what I've wanted for myself, but can't get because I'm gay. Isn't it ironic that a legal recognition is forced on people who don't want it or are not ready for it, and still denied to those who do?

In the end, it comes down to the simple fact that without legal recognition, there is no equal protection, the survivor of the gay/ lesbian relationship is left out in the cold, even if the couple has lived together longer than most heterosexual couples. The survivor of an

unrecognized relationship, without survivor benefits, may not be able to handle the remainder of a shared mortgage, or even be forced to leave the home if not on the note. Even worse is how unprotected some gay and lesbians are when the death of a partner results in the family of the deceased forcing the survivor out of the home owned by the family.

In a heterosexual relationship, the survivor is automatically protected from such attacks because the law recognizes the relationship and in-laws can't do anything about it. They also cover automatic protection in last wills and testaments. But, if the couple is not legally recognized, the will of the deceased can be considered null and void if the family disputes it. This means that even if a man were to leave his own house to his gay partner, then a sister, mother, father, aunt, even estranged cousin with any biological heritage to the deceased can dispute the will and leave the surviving partner with nothing. I am privileged enough to say that I have not seen this first hand, my knowledge of such comes from the first hand accounts of survivors.

Along with these very basic rights and protections that are exclusively given to legally recognized couples, there are over 1,000 more. There are exemptions from both estate and gift taxes for all properties you leave your spouse. Veteran and military benefits, life estate trusts, insurance benefits from employers, family leave if spouse is ill, bereavement leave if spouse passes away, hospital visitations in

intensive care, medical decisions and burial arrangements.

There are even laws that cover marital privileges, crime victim's recovery benefits and suing a third person for the wrongful death of your spouse.

all of these mentioned and many others are exclusively given only to married couples, even if the couple is together only a few days, while same sex couples who have been together for 20 or more years get none of these rights or privileges.

It's obvious as to where the wall of separation is here, Church and State. Religion again, getting in the way of the rights of the American people.

### **Civil Vs. Religious**

I'm going to continue with another breakdown of modern marriage, the difference between civil marriage and religious marriage. Civil marriages don't normally address issues such as religious beliefs, nor do they mention sexual relations, living arrangements, children or religious observance. Think about it, would an atheist really need the church's blessing to get married? Pagans don't marry in a church, but usually in a temple or outdoors, depending on what's available and when and personal preferences.

Yet, in this stagnating nation, it is one religious belief system that is dictating the recognition of marriages. We're not asking the church to recognize us, we are asking our government, who's members are sworn in to defend the constitution of the United States of America, to fulfill their duties and allow us to be equal citizens.

Different religions have different definitions of marriage, whether it's expression of love, raising children, or religious instruction. Whether you are willing to accept that or not is of no real concern here, religious freedom is written into the constitution. Some religions believe that the genders of the couple is totally irrelevant. So, isn't defining marriage, based on a Christian ideal a violation of the first amendments freedom of religion by overwriting what others accept?

I still feel disappointed in the people of Texas for voting for proposition 2, which read ***"The constitutional amendment providing that marriage in this state consists only of the union of one man and one woman and prohibiting this state or a political subdivision of this state from creating or recognizing any legal status identical or similar to marriage."***

I feel that this betrayal against fellow Texans is not only heartless, but a step backwards to an age when intolerance was the normal and accepted behavior. It's like being lynch mobbed on your way home from school

because you didn't fit in with the rest of the "boy likes girl" students while the local sheriff, a member of the KKK puts the rope around your neck. I guess I feel this way because it was the KKK themselves that stood in support of prop 2 and I wonder if it makes those, who voted against our equality, proud to know that they have joined in the ideals of a racist organization.

So while I sit here, designated a second class citizen by the church and their cold grip on society, I become angry. I see a radical, like Fred Phelps, holding signs saying "God hates fags" and "God hates America", knowing that he is using the same rights to send out his message. Then I realize that, because the evangelical communities voted in record numbers against my equal citizenship, that his followers extend far past his own congregation.

They tell me "America, love it or leave it". However, they don't realize how much I do love it. I just don't like the theocracy that it's becoming. I will, as an American, fight for what I believe in and hope that someday, when my time comes, I will leave this physical realm as an equal part of my nation.

With all the real problems in this world, the starvation of children, the disgraceful treatment of disabled veterans, education and crime, it would be better for the government to bring that to the front of their goals. Instead, they attack a part of the constitution to deny an abiding population based on the fact that we're

not heterosexual.

Is it possible that the conservative agenda is so fueled by hate that they have no solutions to the real problems and can only maintain power by kissing up to bigotry? How can the United States be the most civilized, most powerful, and best model for the rest of the world, when you spit in your own children's faces and vote against them? How well you thank those who have died to preserve the constitutional rights of their children and grandchildren. For generations, men have fallen to make this a great land for you and me. Why did you piss on their graves? Why did you forget what they died for? You probably think like others, you think "they didn't mean those kind". You're wrong, because the founding fathers meant "everybody" and they made no exceptions.

To continue to deny same sex couples civil unions or marriages is sending a message to the rest of the world. The message is that the American government doesn't value caring and committed relationships and that America is a nation that is afraid of change, afraid to grow, and will continue to discriminate based on religion, gender and sexual orientation.

### ***updates on the issue***

So I'm reading the news on line and run across information about the return of the federal marriage amendment, as it is a mid-term election year, the fear mongers of the conservative party are trying to work up their

base to get people to the polls. Basically, they want the nation to believe that if you vote against them, you vote for gay marriage. Luckily, the proposal didn't get enough votes, yet again, and will not be on mid term ballots. Not that it matters anyway, in today's society.

While we hear terms such as “activist judges” and “homosexual agenda”, I am reminded of interracial marriages and their impact on the nation. Since at one time, they were illegal in many states, and a majority of Americans were against such unions, it was the courts that had to step in and secure marriage rights for those couples without the interference of the majority to deny equal treatment to a minority of people who saw love, not color. Today, as America is stagnating under neo-conservative rule, those who are the majority don't want the courts to again interfere and the majority wants to put it up to a vote because they know that they will get their way on the subject. Basically, and again, this is the majority putting a minority under it's thumb. It's mob rule.

On the issue of gay marriage and it's impact on society, we look overseas and how it has effected their society. In four countries, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands, Gay marriage has resulted in the total opposite of what the fear mongers claim would be the results. For starters, opposite sex marriages have not be ruined, nor have they declined. In these countries, and according to research and their own census, heterosexual

marriages have increased, heterosexual divorce had decreased and out of wedlock pregnancies have decreased. Now this does not sound like gay marriage has ruined any institution. As a matter of fact it looks a lot like opposites sex couples are taking their marriages more seriously as to not send the message or show that gay couples are more stable in relationships than straights.

The institution of marriage is a serious commitment of love and should never be taken lightly. Maybe that's what conservatives are afraid of here in the United States. That if same sex couples were given equal rights to marry and equal protections under the law, the statistics would not be pretty for them. If the percentages were run based on sexual orientation, and same sex couples had a lower percentage rate of divorce based on population, while heterosexual couples had a higher rate, it would make them feel less capable of fulfilling their vows "til death do us part". It is well known that almost half of all American marriages end in divorce. Are they afraid of the possibility that gay marriages might be longer lasting, and show that only a small percent, maybe a single number percent, end in divorce?

The majority of young Americans are in favor of gay equality and same sex marriage, and even Benton County, Oregon stopped issuing marriage licenses because they didn't want to take part in an institution of discrimination. Straight couples are boycotting

marriage to protest, and the words “uncool” and “marriage” are becoming synonymous amongst younger people under the age of 30. That's a big effect if rates decline because the youth of the nation do not want to enter into an elitist institution.

If they are so afraid that gay marriage will lead to polygamy, and interspecies marriages, then why haven't those things happened in other countries? It's basic bigot propaganda to scare people into enacting discrimination on a federal level. If they want to protect marriage, how about providing equal marriage rights to same sex couples and enlisting the language that “Marriage shall consist of a union between two consenting human beings”.

Alas, such a thought is too simple a solution, they would not be able to argue it as “leading to people being able to marry a duck”. They play the moral card all the time, but is it moral to hate? No, it isn't. It is also unamerican to create an amendment that basically puts one religion's ideology in charge of civil matters and ignores another amendment. How can gays getting married ruin an institution that straights are already ruining? The United States has the highest divorce rate in the world.

As far as playing the moral card is concerned... are any of them actually holding that card in their hand? The Mark Foley Scandal, Abramoff and Ted Haggart are just three examples that the conservatives are just bluffing the rest of the table and deceiving their

own blind sheep followers. In truth, their holding a royal flush of hypocrisy.

**Chapter Five**  
**The Bigot Press**  
**Warping the next Generation**

With all the junk we have to deal with in our world, pollution, politics, disease, starvation and poverty, we really don't need any more problems, yet the modern bigotry of evangelical Christians persist and spread to the next generation by way of brain washing children into narrow minded thinking using many techniques. Especially the use of comic books and children's videos. At least we only had to deal with hell and brimstone sermons one day a week, but these comics are everywhere.

Just doing a simple search on line brings up many links to Christian Comic Books. Some have been around for decades and I wonder what impact such works have had on my own generation. Though I am different and accepting of natural and spiritual diversity, many others my age are not. I was raised by parents of the same generation of my friend's parents, so what has kept us so apart? In researching some of these questions, I came across many answers that almost made me sick. Were the next generation, such as my niece and nephew being taught these behind the backs of my sister, who has so far raised them to be open minded and loving?

Chick publications produces Christian Thinking comics for all people with an ingenious way of keeping them in the public. Many who buy them for only fourteen cents each, buy in bulk

and leave them in public places. Malls, grocery stores and even school playgrounds. Some of these comics promote putting them in the goody bags of "trick or treaters" on Halloween night. But unless you're familiar with them, you may not know how dangerous they truly are. They are the fuels of Bigotry amongst young people and the growth of Evangelicalism is supporting adversity among our population. Chick Publications have produced small comics, known as "Tracts" with horrible messages, berating other religions such as Catholicism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims and Pagans. I am absolutely not surprised that they would be against Paganism, they themselves have vilified the ancient ways of the Pre-Christians for centuries. The Comics even go so far as to portray these and homosexuals, as ugly, stereotypical, and surrounded by demon like creatures that hang on them. The purpose of them is to over promote the idea that everybody must be converted to their ways or those, unconverted, will go to HELL.

In "Allah Had No Son" a boy asks his father on a trip to the Middle East "What are they doing daddy"?, in which the father replies "praying to their moon God". When a Muslim confronts him on his statement and declares that the religion of Islam is the second fastest growing religion in America. The track then portrays the Muslim as saying "we expect a Muslim flag to fly over the white house by 2010". It continues to berate a non Christian religion and convert a Muslim.

In "Apes, Lies and Ms. Henn" A substitute teacher who is teaching the required curriculum, and drawn to look sinister, begins to explain evolution. Little Susy, who becomes a regular in many tracts aimed directly at children, leans over to another friend and says "That's a lie". The teacher asks the girls what it was she said and she replies "I told him the truth, we didn't come from monkeys".

"Are you calling me a liar" Ms. Henn asks?

"No" replies Susy, "you're calling God a liar". Little Susy explains the bible afterwards in the hallway of the school to a classmate. She tells a boy that God said he made the first dinosaur and then the first man and that all this happened six thousand years ago, not millions. Below that specific panel, it references another track titled "In The Beginning".

"In The Beginning" starts with a man who walks into a room showing off his Dinosaur model, stating that "This creature lived 145 Million years ago". The other man responds "That's a joke".

"Hey, my teacher told me that".

"Your teacher's been brainwashed". It continues on to analyze the "Big Bang", creation in six days and that "Prehistoric" is a word that was created to brainwash us. As in all other publications from this company, the person who is being "taught" is saved in a single day and abandons the ways they have followed their entire lives, even hard core evidence defeating Creationism.

In "Last Rites" a Catholic man is hit by a car

and dies after receiving last rites from a priest. However, the angel taking him to face "God" tells him that he is facing god and that the man's hopes of being good enough is a big mistake, the man finds himself perished to hell for being Catholic. When he "realizes" that all catholics are wrong, he asks "why didn't you warn me"? God replies "I did! My servant, who loved Roman Catholics gave you a tract about your false religion". The man asks "Don't you love the Roman Catholic Church"? To which God replies "How could I John, her false teaching are why you are going into the lake of fire".

These Tracts go on and on. A Jewish Rabi who dies without accepting Jesus as the Messiah is sent to hell. Wiccans are portrayed as having demon like creatures hanging around them all the time, as are homosexuals and Catholics. Worse are the ways that they are drawn. Sinister, weak, ugly and fitting stereotypes. Tracts even portray Wiccans as the general "Witch" defined by anti pagan propaganda, conceiving children especially for sacrifice and labeling all Witchcraft as Satanism.

### **Freedom**

Those that know me, know that I am most certainly a friend of the freedom of speech and of the press. I mean, I'm sitting here writing this and expect my constitutional rights to be upheld. Understandably, so does Chick

publications and I would not want to appear as a hypocrite for saying that they don't have the right to produce their hate literature. However, just as we have the right to freedom of speech and the press, we also have the right to not accept or condone the products. Unless of course you ask one of them.

Have you ever been walking down a street and somebody just shoves a copy of their religious material into your chest? Have you ever taken one look at the cover, taken two steps past them and tossed it into a public trash can? I have, and the times that they have seen me do so have caused them to react with an "in your face" confrontation. I had one young man grab my arm, turn me around and tell me "if you didn't want to read the words of Jesus, why did you take it"?

"I didn't want it, you shoved it into my gut".

"I'm trying to save your soul"!

"How do you know I need saving"?

"I can tell, Jesus pointed you out".

"Well, apparently he's pointing out everybody to you because your little friends across the street are not letting anybody get by... leave me alone", I walked off.

I have also been told in the past that their freedom of speech does not give me the right to toss their material without giving it a chance to tell me why I should convert to their ways. Many times, I just ignore them, but if you tell them "Hey, I'm an American, I have the same rights as you, including the freedom of religion", their general response is "THERE IS

ONLY ONE TRUE RELIGION". So no matter what I say, they are set in their beliefs that I'm going to hell.

***Don't confuse them with facts  
their minds are already made up.***

Just as it is their right to produce the material, it is also my right to make sure that I am the last to lay eyes on such. I had been to grocery stores many times and on occasion, have noticed these little books laying around. There is nothing illegal about me taking the comic off of the public bench and tossing it into the trash can. If they believe that they are on a mission to convert, I should have the same right to believe that I am keeping hate literature out of the hands of impressionable young minds.

The Pagan community does not produce cheap little books and litter them all over the place, and shops that do carry non-Christian religion oriented books do so because those books do sell. There are also Pagan Magazines and newsletters devoted to all aspects of Witchcraft, not just Wiccan. Yet many radicals demand that such books, magazines and other material, described as "dangerous", be removed from shop shelves, then turn and pitch a royal fit when the shop owner also removes books written by Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell or Bob Larson. Shop owners have the right to sell and not sell a book, they should be left alone.

My only true complaint in a bookstore once was the fact that they were selling an anti-new age book by Bob Larson in the "New Age" section. I pointed it out to them and they moved it to the "religious" section, noting that placing it in the previous had been a mistake. It is a practice of good business, that when you devote a section to a target audience, it is best to not place books that insult the customers of that section. I mean, you can find "Scripture Stalls" in so many malls, how many places have to sell only one religion's literature? To the radicals, the only religion that exists is their own and all others are hedonistic, wrong, satanic, false and leading people to hell.

In truth, and it has been my experience that, you can go to any bookstore and find a ton of religious material written for the Christians, while other beliefs are left on lower shelves, in the back, or not present at all. Most of the time, if you want non-Christian materials, you must go to a store devoted to that one specific belief or order it on line.

I keep thinking back on a more simple time, a fictional time in my life, when people were open and accepting of the vast diversity that is our human race. I wonder if I will ever see it?

**Chapter Six**  
**Raising children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

I love my female friends. I have one that lives just next door and one that lives just down the street from me. Both are at that oh so difficult stage of having teenagers in their households. It's not easy for any parent, and it never was. Which is why going next door to visit is a great form of birth control, for the most part. As a human being, I do have that deep desire to be a parent, to raise a child and have my name carried on to a new generation. Her children suppress that desire. I don't mean that in a bad way.

My friend next door has four kids living with her; an eight year old girl, a ten year old boy, a fourteen year old girl and a sixteen year old boy. whenever I go there for coffee or any reason, it's like a constant attack of voices that are all calling me over and over again simultaneously. Usually because they want to show me something they got in school that day or just to see who I'm going to pay attention to first. After the first few moments, they suddenly shift gears over to their mother, making any form of conversation difficult and sometimes stressful. I hear it all the time while we're talking or she's on the phone; "mom, mom, mom, mom, mom-mom-mom-mom". Then she gets to the point of screaming "can't you see I'm talking to somebody, what do you want"? usually followed by either a request to visit a friend, eat a snack or just to say "I love you" and make her feel terrible for screaming.

Yet she makes it through the day without breaking down in tears... in my presence.

I love her kids, mostly because they're not mine. These four are simply adorable, intelligent, clean, healthy and quite social. We get along great, but sometimes it would be nice to actually be alone with adults and not have to have kids hanging around all the time. Even when all the adults go outside to sit on the front porch, drink coffee and chit chat, that front door doesn't stop opening with requests. This usually stops our conversations mid-word, as we're being extremely careful to not let them hear certain subjects or words. How does she do it?

My other friend has three living with her, two girls who are twins and a fifteen year old son. I have to respect a single mother who can raise twin girls and not go gray. These three are great also, so well behaved and loved, but sometimes they have that little problem with controlling their energy. Not that we had any problems doing that. oh no, we were so "well behaved" that our parents just couldn't wait for us to leave home, and show the whole world how wonderful we were. Giving your child a "going away" party is never for the child, it's for the parents to celebrate another step to peace and quiet. That's the way it seems among my friends and their children. Though they love them dearly and would sacrifice their own lives to make sure that the child is safe, they want some adult time with people they're not related to.

That is where the modern way of raising children comes into focus. How do you reprimand a child in the twenty-first century and not lose your hair?

### **Remember when?**

When I was young, back in the 70's, punishment was something that you knew the definition of. To me, it usually meant a spanking and sometimes grounding... which was extremely harsh on the weekends when it was nice outdoors. If I really screwed up, it was a spanking and being grounded. Not that it happened too often, punishment worked great on me.

Then the eighties rolled around and people got into this whole Doctor Spock thing that told them to stop spanking children and give them that new fangled correction called "time out". Time out for what? To conceive the next demon attack on parental units? To ponder how far one could go before they close the Dr. Spock book and use it on your little backside?

From what I could tell, that didn't really fix the problem at all. As a matter of fact, I've often believed that it just conditions them for the big time out the state gives them when they commit a crime. Some parents never punish their children and never have to worry, they know the prison system will take good care of their babies, at the expense of the tax payer. That's another gripe for another

chapter... back on track here.

As time wore on and on, so did the abilities of parents to properly raise and punish their offspring diminish. I don't want anybody to sit there and blame any politician or political party or mind set about this. It was the 80's and the world was getting more and more strange. There was more of a global attitude that children were becoming accustomed to and so many people began to swear off spankings and any other form of physical corrections like making them stand in the corner or doing push ups. Suddenly anything and everything that involved any physical contact with their children was looked as child abuse. "You're older and stronger", it was abuse when you spanked a child. Even those who didn't breed wouldn't tolerate a mother popping her demon brat on the butt when he pitched a fit in the supermarkets.

Do you know how many times I have been so irritated to see a mother pushing her child around in the shopping cart, the kid screaming and crying and the mother doing nothing about it except continue to shop? It makes you wish they would segregate the supermarkets with sound proof walls. One side for the moronic parents and the other side for people with enough common decency to not take a screamer to a public place. I know, I know, they can't help it when the babysitter is unavailable because of an appointment to get her new hearing aid or nobody wants to take care of the brat for fear of finally showing the

kid what for and going to jail.

Well, I can't say much for the nineties, since I was totally outside the whole family raising children idea. No longer living at home and not really thinking or caring about how people raised their children. I saw so many of my old friends with children of their own and never gave it second thought. I believed I was outside the problem, I didn't realize that the inactions of those parents, would effect my life today. I have lost touch with most youth, and though I'm trying to reconnect in any way, I would still feel a bit better if they didn't ask questions like "what's that mean" whenever I talk about something like nature or science. I even had a boy tell me that there is no such thing as the ASPCA after talking about a guy in the neighborhood who doesn't tie up his dogs and lets them run around in the streets. Seriously, he didn't believe the organization existed because he had never heard of it before.

So many parents today follow one teaching of the bible, to literal miscommunication. When it says "spare the rod, spoil the child", it does not mean to spare the rod and spoil the child. It mean that if you spare the rod, you're spoiling the child. Yet these kids have everything in their rooms, computers with Internet access, digital television, video game system, their own phones, radio and some even get mini fridges for them to keep snacks and drinks in. So when this kid gets into trouble, gets into fights, lies,

cheats, steals, misbehaves in some trivial ways, the parents send them to their room with a "time out". Screw that, that's not punishment, that's just letting them do all the other things they do when they're not outdoors.

Here's an idea for punishment, one that my dad was quite fond of. Send them to their rooms, no phone, no TV, no radio. You can walk over to the fuse box, turn off the electricity to their rooms, hand them a book and wind up alarm clock, telling them "this is how Thomas Edison spent his youth, your meals will be sent in to you. You do not leave this room except to go the bathroom, if you need a drink, there's a glass in the bathroom for you to have some water. No visitors, no phone calls. Here's a wind up alarm clock, don't be late for school and you come straight home and into this room when you get home tomorrow. Any talk back, and each word will add an extra day to your grounding. If you do not come home straight from school, that's an extra day added to your grounding. This house is my universe and I am God, any deviation from my rules and there will be an extra week added to your grounding". You can also add that all their chores will be done by any siblings, but that after the grounding is over, they will compensate by doing their sibling's chores for a time equal to the length of the grounding.

Yeah, it sounds harsh, and it's a little more strict than my dad ever did to me, but then again, he didn't have to shut off electricity to my room because I didn't have digital television

or Internet access.

Now, my friends have tried everything to make sure that their children are educated, well fed, healthy, happy and safe. You can't fault these two women for doing the job they've done while playing the part of single parent. Their techniques are not new, just a mixture of modern child rearing and old fashioned discipline. They have not eliminated harsh corrections in the form of spankings, groundings and the typical yelling while shaking a finger at them. Sometimes, I can see how the children want to argue back, yell and say things like "it's not fair".

Well, life's not fair and you have to get use to it. Parents today need to condition their children to the harsh realities of real life. Real life, the time when they have to be responsible for themselves, get a job, pay taxes, pay rent, buy food and their own clothing. It's no surprise with modern technology that children today are extremely social creatures. You want the ultimate punishment... take away their cell phones for a period of time based on the degree of misbehavior. Yikes, that should cause some pain, and you know, pain is a great deterrent.

### ***Cause and effect***

A lot of time, we really can't look harshly at a parent because their teenagers are ungrateful brats. My friend next door is lucky that she doesn't have a job and can be an at home

mother. However, my other friend had switched her work schedule around so that she would be at work while the kids were in school and she would be home in time to take care of them and be the best mother she can be. This is easy for very few in today's economy and society.

I know, from first hand experience in my later teens, how difficult it can be for a parent to raise children, feed the family and have to work to make ends meet. The Military didn't pay my dad enough to do everything that was financially necessary for raising a family, so we became the two income household. Luckily, I was not far from graduating high school and would then make my own way out into the world, thus putting some financial relief on my parents.

The two income family is so commonplace that it has effected the entire nation and given rise to the latch key kids. I was one of them, but today there's 400 or 500 percent more of them running around. Of course, recalling a previous chapter, this isn't good because some parents aren't able to warn their kids about predators. On the other hand, children are unattended and not corrected when they make mistakes that could eventually, if enough are made, cost them their lives or freedom.

Not everybody works in a job field that allows them to shift schedules around to be home with their children and not everybody is capable of making ends meet and keep their

heads above water on a single income. Then there's the issue of the single parent who has to work just so that the offspring are fed. There is almost no leeway at all for them to be the parents they need and want to be. Give them credit though, they are sacrificing a social life and romantic adventures to make sure the children are in school, clothed and fed.

The cause is economy, the effect is stress, relationship, health, happiness and quality time. I wish I had an answer as to the solution to this, then I could probably fix one of the biggest problems in this nation. However, nobody has a solution without sacrificing the modern needs. I don't mean computers and video games. I'm talking about those modern needs that every parent and family has. People want to raise their children with opportunities that they themselves didn't have. Every generation wants better for their children.

Yes, a single income family can survive, but only survive. They would have to make cuts so deep that the children may be left behind in other areas of society. Practically every child now needs a computer because future jobs require computer literacy and skills. Then they need Internet access because schools are going cyber with some teacher instructions to email their homework or download the next day's assignment if they are not going to be able to attend. Some schools are actually using the Internet as a teaching guide instead of just textbooks. Cross referencing used to be a highly skilled ability. Now it's a Google search.

The Internet is another cause of things going skiddly widdly. How can you outsmart a child when they can use the Internet to find answers? How did you outsmart the child that could program the VCR when you couldn't? The youth of today is jumping far ahead of us on the playing field of intelligence. We have to stop talking to them like children and start communicating with them on a more adult level. Hopefully they don't surpass you on a subject and leave your brain squirming in the dirt.

I think it's sometimes easy to see the advancements in youth when they are capable of multi-tasking their everyday lives, can remember phone numbers and operate high tech equipment. Even further, is the fact that today's young demand entertainment that is more cerebral. If you watch the highest rated shows amongst viewers between the ages of 8 and 16, you see shows that are extremely well written with hard core and diverse focus points. Children today are no strangers to the horrors of real life and issues such as drugs, lust, AIDS, greed and bigotry are common in many of their shows. The reason that these issues exist in their entertainment is because the producers know what will attract them. Children today won't sit and watch an episode of the original "Battlestar Galactica" without thinking it mundane or just plain stupid. However, let them watch the current series, and they can really get into it because it's a show wrapped around real human psychology and human

survival.

Everybody knows the controversies that sometimes surround the Harry Potter books, but it's because parents think that their children should not be exposed to those story lines. It is J.K. Rowling herself that understood the growing minds of children and didn't take their intelligence for granted. The evidence of higher intelligence among the younger generations is absolutely clear, when you factor in the point that she is the most financially successful writer in history... and at this point, she has only published six books.

### **The points**

Here's how you break down the issue of this chapter. First: remember that your children are smarter than you were at that age and adjust accordingly to events and issues. If you underestimate their intellect, you're setting yourself up for a mental defeat. Second: don't be afraid to assert authority and punish them accordingly. Spank them, ground them or chore them... don't coddle them with a time out. Third: Talk to them about issues that concern you and can protect them from becoming victims. If you are afraid to talk to your own children on such topics, then you're not doing a very good job as a parent. Why did you even have children in the first place? Parents who will do anything to protect their children should not lock up when it comes to topics of sex, abuse or drugs. Finally: listen to your children. They won't listen to you or take you seriously if

they feel that topics of concern are a one sided conversation. Besides, you might learn something yourself.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Abstinence, STD's and getting knocked up**

I am going to just come out and say this: "Abstinence only education DOESN'T WORK"!

Here comes the fire storm kiddies. I know I'm going to get some responses to this subject, but I'm prepared to explain why I feel the way I do about abstinence. The first reason is because vows of abstinence break more often than condoms, and the second reason is because of the twisted spin on education.

I ran across a video that is shown in school, part of the abstinence only courses that many are teaching today. It seems well produced and aimed at teenagers, but the information is spun to be totally noneducational and single sided in viewpoint. The video shows a boy with a condom, who throws it at the camera and says that it's "practically useless". They have ignored the truth that condoms are not practically useless, but 80% effective against transmission of sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy. Not that I'm saying abstinence isn't a great thing to teach, but they need to be honest and scientifically truthful about the numbers and percentages. Scare tactics aren't a good way to educate. 80 percent effectiveness is not practically useless, it's safer than "no condom".

If you keep teaching them that condoms are practically useless, then when they do have sex, they may choose to not use any protection

at all. In the mindset of human beings, why even bother with something that is useless?

When I was in school, and we were given sex ed, we were taught the full range, including showing a video of “the miracle of life” a NOVA program from PBS. We were made aware that abstinence was the safest alternative, but not the only. Yes, as I mentioned before, they didn't give us very much in the form of information concerning STD's or self satisfaction to curb the natural desires. The 80's was a decade best described as “living in oblivion”.

### **Abstinence**

Abstinence is the act of restraining one's appetites or desires, most commonly used today in references of sexual behavior. When speaking on the subject, it is usually used as a tool to prevent actual intercourse relationships between teenagers and unmarried couples. It is rarely ever used to deter acts of self satisfaction such as masturbation or other self capable fetishes.

There have been reports that show “abstinence only” or AO education is failing. Those youths that take these courses are more likely to practice unsafe sex and either contract an STD or get pregnant before graduating high school. The reasons for these unfortunate facts is that abstinence only courses deprive the students of valuable information that, if addressed, could prevent diseases and

pregnancy. However, the religious movement in the United States continues to pressure a fearful idea that contraceptives are a license to engage in sexual activity. While they have disregarded the numbers that show their preferred education is failing those they want to protect, they stress ideas that they must remain strong because sexual activity in youth leads to other sins. It's almost like they're choosing dogma over the lives of their children.

Even the medical community doesn't agree with their ideals on abstinence only and states are showing higher numbers of teen pregnancies disease transmission in groups that receive AO over those who receive a more traditional education that addresses condoms, various forms of birth control and STD's.

I see a horrible trend of the evangelical religion taking over the educational needs of America's youth and using policies to achieve their goal to create a nation of "Ned Flanders" that panic, freak out and remain ignorant of the truths behind human sexuality and proper prevention.

### **STD's**

Here's a subject that I'm so familiar with, since I live with AIDS. To be honest, it doesn't really matter much to me anymore in the sense that I'm not being a paranoid anti social lunatic in fear of spreading it by common contact in supermarkets. I've survived to this point and I'm healthy enough with my current medication

that I may just live to a very ripe old age, maybe even outliving a person who doesn't have HIV. What does matter to me is stopping the disease. Stopping it from killing and stopping it from spreading

However, and I hope that people listen to this part of my message. If you read nothing else in this book, read this: I have AIDS, and I'm going to be taking medication for the rest of my life. My life depends on pills that are huge, hard to swallow and cause many side effects. My social life is ruled by stomach upsets, diarrhea, dietary needs, fatigue, needs for naps, vomiting episodes, pain beyond tolerance, living on low income social security because I can't handle a normal job and hormonal imbalances that cause erectile dysfunction, low sex drive and depression. Such a wonderful way to spend your adulthood.

I think that if I were to walk into a high school, and tell every student who I was, what I have and how I live my life, they would get a better insight into why it is important to abstain or practice safe sex. I am a walking billboard for showing how irresponsible behavior can ruin the very things that are important to a healthy and happy lifestyle. No, I can't go out to clubs and dance, I hurt too much. All I can do is sit there and watch gorgeous young healthy people do the things I yearn to do again. I can't run a marathon, I can't always go to a movie because of diarrhea and cramps. I can't go out to nice restaurants because I live on social security, I get \$603 a month and bills have to

be paid. I get stuck with needles every time I go to a doctor because I have to have blood tests every single appointment to keep track of the disease. I can't tolerate the heat very well anymore because my skin is sensitive, a side effect of one of my meds. I sleep late and go to bed early, I suffer headaches and body aches, I wake up wanting to hack up my toe nails and can't tolerate a normal portion of food because too much makes me ill. I have to watch what I eat, when I eat, how much I eat and make sure that I take a hand full of pills every day.

Sexually transmitted diseases are everywhere. I only have one, but there are many more out there that have more immediate and painful effects. Herpes causes painful genital blisters. Syphilis causes big painful red spots all over your body and can destroy your mind if not treated and Gonorrhea causes yellow goo to ooze out of your penis or vagina like some sort of slimy sewer. AIDS isn't the only disease... it's just the most silent at first.

HIV, which causes AIDS, is a disease that basically deprives your body of an immune system. It attacks and destroys the CD-4 (T-cells) of your body, which are you basic commanders of the rest of the immune system. Without the T-cells, the little army doesn't get commands and does nothing to stop other infections from coming in and taking over. Even a simple cold can become something more, like pneumonia, which can become an upper respiratory infection, which can kill you.

A normal healthy body can easily defeat a cold, we just need a little something to handle the discomfort of symptoms. But a person who is not healthy can't recover as easily, if at all.

Now, HIV causes AIDS, but it's not the only cause. I have met many people who have AIDS, but are HIV negative. The reasons for this is because any disease, such as cancer, with unsuccessful medical treatments, that strips the immune system, causes AIDS. One lady that I met at a local AIDS resource center, had cancer and an unsuccessful bone marrow transplant destroyed her abilities to fight off infections. So AIDS isn't a disease itself, it's the lack of or absence of an immune system. I concentrate on that one STD because I'm practically an expert in it after living with it for so long. I'm in my thirteenth year of living under the label of "full blown".

Throughout the age of AIDS, the Gay community, Medical professionals, and STD resource centers have been highly successful in passing on the knowledge that people with HIV or AIDS are not evil or to be shunned by society. These people have successfully taken the stigma away from the disease so that we could be treated like normal human beings and not locked up in concentration camps like animals, which was proposed to humanity during the early years of the disease. Unfortunately, removing AIDS from the status of social blemish created a whole new monster. Today, youth are not afraid of AIDS, they've never seen a friend die from it and the treatments are so successful

that a long life is possible. Thus, they are not afraid of it and are even seeking out the disease to claim it as their own.

For those who are still afraid of getting it, and those who go out and drink and do drugs... I feel sorry for them. Yes, disease should be feared, but why do you fear it when you're doing something totally stupid and putting yourself at risk of being infected by it?

Here's an exercise that you can try out on a group of teenagers, the most likely youth group to get the message of this exercise. Take 100 high school students, gather them in a group in the gym and blindfold them. Each one is given a piece of paper and told to put it in their pocket. Many of these pieces of paper are blank, but many also have red marks on them. A for AIDS, S for Syphilis... etc. Now have them silently shuffle around, moving around and across the room. After a bit of time has gone by, have them place their hands on a fellow student's shoulder, that is within reach. Making no sounds as to determine who that other person is. The supervisors of this exercise will turn the two towards each other so that they are facing one another. Now, have them take off the blindfolds and look into the face of the person they just had sex with while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Yeah, it can be a bit of an embarrassment when two heterosexual boys are matched up, but it gets the point across. Now, have them pull out their little pieces of paper. While under the influences, they have not only engaged in sex

with a total stranger, but may have been exposed and even infected with a sexually transmitted disease. Maybe such an exercise will be more than enough to produce a youth that will think before they act.

### **Getting Knocked Up**

Teen pregnancies are still a problem in this nation, and nobody is to blame more than the mother or older female guardian, whatever the case may be. The abstinence only talks of "going to hell if you do it before marriage" may not be enough to warn them of the responsibilities of engaging in sexual activities. Sure, some acts of sex are guaranteed to not cause pregnancy, such as fellatio, but most sex education doesn't even mention that, and I'm sure very few parents are willing to sit with their children and talk about "smokin' the bone" or whatever teenagers call it these days. This is where it gets into the ickity stickily, because it seems that the only source of information many teenagers have today are other teenagers with experience, and those who are "practiced" at it may not know the behind the scenes information either.

Again, the overly conservative ideology is frightening me. I understand that the bible tells people to be fruitful and multiply, but damn... slow down. Family values are important, but when those values are devoid of actual information and your teen-aged daughter walks in looking like she ate a medicine ball, don't blame society for not telling her about the birds

and the bees. Now that's not every conservative parent, just some of the ones that I have met. You probably know the type, the ones that lock out channels or cover their children's eyes when a commercial for feminine itch cream comes on the TV.

I had the unfortunate honor of meeting one family that crossed absolutely no lines when talking to their children, whom I went to school with. The father had a talk with the son, the mother talked with the daughter... and they kept it at that. So when the girl was concerned about her "date ability", she was basically told, by the mother, that it was nothing to be concerned about. "Dating", as it was relayed to me later, "is unimportant". Yeah, there's a great way of ensuring your daughter marries the first man to come along and offers her some freedom. He may be abusive or a child molester, but what does she know, she's never dated to learn how to wade through the social muck.

Still, there's also the factor of kids gone wild. Boys with hot young hormones just popping all over the place and the girls that find them sexy. OK, so she's only 13 and he's 15. Nice age to be parents? I don't think so. If parents were really concerned about their offspring, they would be more open about sex and sexuality, giving them a clear view of the open road ahead of them and all the opportunities that can be shut forever if they fool around.

Today, parents shouldn't be afraid to talk

about sex, it should be a parent that becomes the best friend, and can talk about anything. Children shouldn't be afraid to speak openly about it either. A little dirty talk isn't so bad is it? I mean, look at so many families out there that don't have the embarrassment of teen pregnancies. They barely act like parents sometimes, instead, it's like older sibling or something.

This one thirteen year old girl I know, who was the girl friend of the boy next door, has a mother that is totally cool. It's like they're sisters or something. The Mother, a free spirit, is raising her daughter to be the same way, and the end result is a girl that understands and takes charge of her own life, body and mind. She's a little goth chick with a will of stone. She doesn't fall into traps, enjoys life and is physically responsible. She's not living in a stagnant conservative world that drives her to dangerous realms of exploration because she can talk to her mother in ways I most certainly could not talk to my parents.

“A breath of fresh air” is how I describe their relationship, and it's paid off. I don't think that any mother or father could have raised a child any better. When you think about it, you wonder if you still have a chance to be your child's friend as well.

Stop being such an old fart, start being “like, you know”, like the coolest parent your children's friends have ever seen. You might find yourself with a wider range of influence

when it comes to protecting the fruit of your loins.

**Chapter Eight**  
**Bubble Bubble, Toil and Trouble**

A few years ago, I was troubled by actions of some people in our nation and our Government concerning the issue of Wiccans in the Military. While Bob Barr openly stated his beliefs that Wicca, or Witchcraft is not a legitimate religion, Christian groups called for a military boycott, asking Christians to not enlist or re-enlist due to the rituals being performed by a small group of Wiccan military members on base in Fort Hood, Texas. Again, I keep having to go back on the whole first amendment argument. The government cannot stop the free exercise of religion, and the Military, a representative of the Government and the United States, also cannot place one religion over another in equal opportunity and treatment. If these men and women, who fight for the constitutional rights of American citizens are not given those same rights, then what are they fighting for?

Legal recognition of Witchcraft has been around since the 1950's and has met the criteria for religious belief as assigned by the civil rights act of 1964, has millions of followers in the United States, is growing rapidly amongst the American population and recognized by U.S district courts and departments of correction.

Even George W. Bush, while serving as Governor of Texas, stated in 1999, on television, "*I don't think witchcraft is a religion. I would hope the military officials would take a second look at the decision they made.*" I'm

sorry, but you are an elected official who has sworn to uphold the constitution, and you should never put your own beliefs above the document which founded the freedoms of this country.

In 1978, the US Army prepared the book *"Religious Requirements and Practices of Certain Selected Groups: A Handbook for Chaplains,"* . It contains an excellent definition and description of Wicca, as well as information for guidelines and resources. In 1990, the book was re-written, and the information remained positive and non-judgmental. I cannot add the text from that handbook here, the information is too extensive. However, you can look up the book on line and read it, or contact the US Army and ask if copies of the handbook are available to the public. I will also mention that the book was written and published for the purpose of working with "non traditional faiths" of soldiers, and Wicca is not the only one mentioned or defined in the handbook.

An elected representative must separate their religion from their politics and oaths of office. They do not represent their own beliefs if office, they represent their people. Not a religion, but a citizen, whether or not that citizen follows the same religious belief. As far as the military is concerned, I would like to ask the following: Why is it that the military provides churches and services, paid chaplains and offices for said people of the cloth, but does not provide temples, high priests, priestesses or offices for them? Why is the

military spending tax dollars to support a limited number of recognized religious beliefs, but not all?

Let me break this down in the area of "Conservative vs. Liberal". Liberal, is not a bad word and is unfortunately being used as an insult to anybody who is not Conservative or Republican. Ann Coulter referred to Liberals as "Godless", when that is far from the truth. I think us Liberals are just too forgiving and too open minded for dear Ms. Coulter to deal with.

Definition of Liberal: Not limited to or by established, traditional, orthodox, or authoritarian attitudes, views, or dogmas; free from bigotry. Favoring proposals for reform, open to new ideas for progress, and tolerant of the ideas and behavior of others; broad-minded. Of, relating to, or characteristic of liberalism. Liberal Of, designating, or characteristic of a political party founded on or associated with principles of social and political liberalism, especially in Great Britain, Canada, and the United States. Tending to benefactor. give freely; generous: a liberal: generous in amount; ample: a liberal serving of ... .

Definition of Conservative: Favoring traditional views and values; tending to oppose change. Traditional or restrained in style: a conservative dark suit. Moderate; cautious: a conservative estimate. Of or relating to the political philosophy of conservatism. Belonging to a conservative party, group, or movement. Conservative of or belonging to the

Conservative Party in the United Kingdom or the Conservative Party in Canada. Conservative Of or adhering to Conservative Judaism. Tending to conserve; preservative: the conservative use of natural resources.

Now you should understand why I'm a Liberal. A conservative, "tending to oppose change" is backwards, stagnating and dull. Conservative use of natural resources, while opposing environmental acts that do just that? The second part doesn't seem to relate the conservative party in the United States at all.

So from now on, all us Liberals should wear the word with pride and let those narrow minded, cowering from progress, conservatives know what a true Liberal is.

## **Chapter Nine** **Revolving Door Policies**

Have you ever really paid attention as to what was happening in the prison system? Where is the justice in it? OK, now I'm going to sound a little harsh for the first part of this chapter because I do believe that limits should be made for those who violate the rights of others and spend time in prison. When somebody commits rape, robbery or murder, it is their law abiding victims that pay for the food, clothing, medical services, dental services, education and entertainment of prisoners. Even Gary, my partner's brother, who used to install cable, told me of when he installed cable television in a prison. That's not all, they also get Internet access.

Prison gangs account for probably more than half of the general population and even the most violent and operators of illegal businesses still run their operations from prison. Through general conversation codes, it is easy for them to send and receive information as to the running, smuggling and selling of controlled substances, child pornography and mob related business such as hits on financial competition.

It is with a heavy heart, that I have to just give up on the idea that these type of people can be reformed. Instead, we have to think of their victims and how they are footing the bill for being victims. It's time to consider other options that will eliminate prison gangs and how they can run their illegal businesses at the

tax payers expense. It's time to get tough, get creative and back track to the days of penal colonies. This hurts to consider this, but here are the ideas that I feel we have to implement in order to make prisons live up to the true sense of the word and give true punishment to those who violate the rights of others.

Prison on the inside should not be a walk in the park. No cable television, no phone, no letters in or out, no visitors and no communication with other inmates. Violators of our laws would be placed in a prison system that is absolutely solitary, except for seeing the guard on a regular and random schedule. Shrink the size of cells to a one person capacity with solid doors... no bars. Three bland, yet nutritionally complete food bars and day, and all the water they can drink out of the fountains attached to their toilets. With concrete walls, communicating with other inmates is extremely difficult if not impossible. This would completely get rid of any possible planning for violent episodes or new gang recruitments.

Sex crimes are the most horrible, in my opinion, because the victims live the rest of their lives knowing that somebody molested them. Yet that victim might be left with footing the bill for everything, including expensive chemical castration drugs that the perp will have to use. Perhaps the best method of dealing with this is to lessen the burden on society and the tax payers and to surgically castrate the offender. I mean everything, penis and testicles on top of a mandatory prison

sentence of no less than seven years.

Education is most likely wasted on prison inmates. They only leave, to be frustrated by having to start over again. They become smarter criminals, but criminals none the less. The last time I checked (back in the 1990's), we spent six thousand dollars per prison inmate to educate them. However, we only spent ten percent of that to educate the average public school student. Here's a thought, reverse the numbers and give the children a higher quality education that might lead to them not committing crimes. They will have a more intellectually stimulating and legal outlet, besides holding a gun the wrong way.

Adopting European ways of running a prison could be a fantastic deterrent from committing a crime. When I lived in Germany, I was informed by many of my German friends as well as my Dad's military service friends that German prisons were harsh. For one, there is no parole, the sentences usually come with hard labor if the inmate was physically capable, and inmates didn't eat very well unless their families paid for the food. So strict are the limits on prisoners, that Spandau prison in Berlin was demolished in 1987 after having only one prisoner for 11 years. That prisoner of course was Rudolf Hess. It was demolished to prevent the site from becoming a neo-Nazi shrine. Honestly, since I haven't seen this for myself, I can only write what I was told. I have no experience in the European Prison System. But you have to admit that having only one

prisoner for eleven years is something else.

Now I have opened up my third Guinness... the Ale of the Gods, so the style of writing might change a bit. Our nation is in a constant state of struggle, we struggle to pay bills, struggle to hold a job, struggle with the onslaught of new inventions that are supposed to make our lives easier, only to add onto our work load and organize our already overworked days and nights. PDAs that buzz and beep and tell us we're ten minutes late for a meeting with a potential customer that just unfortunately overlapped the board meeting. We add all of this on to having to hear about this and that on the news and possibly even worse when you see that a few blocks away, somebody was murdered.

We live in fear of violence and crime because the legal and justice system of this country is more concerned about the treatment of prison inmates than it is in actually preventing and stopping crimes. Lock em' all up in a dark room, no visitors, no letters in or out, no phone calls, feed them with a slingshot, add hard labor to the sentence (hey, there are highways that need cleaning) remove the cable television, remove the Internet access and get rid of the whole idea of parole. I really don't like the idea of the death sentence, I mean, we're supposed to be an evolved society (note, I said "supposed to be"). Instead we put ourselves in the position to determine where and when a person will die. That should not be up to us, let nature take it's course.

Did you ever read about that death row inmate that needed a new heart? From what I understood of the story, some idiot allowed him to get a heart transplant, just so that he would live to his execution date. I just wonder what straight A student with a bright future was laid six feet under because some violent criminal got a new heart instead. There is a lot we can complain about, I mean, most law abiding citizens of this country can't afford that kind of health care, but the tax payers are anteing up so that the most violent people can get a vital organ while the young man or woman with so much potential and the mind the improve the world, maybe even discover a cure for cancer and/or AIDS dies, without ever being able to receive a high school diploma.

Basically, the prisons want to avoid any form of complaint about "deliberate indifference to a prison inmate's health". Screw that, if he's on death row... well, you know. I'm not being mean, but I am so fantastically happy to know that my organs are unusable. I would really hate to think of my heart, or liver, or any other part of me going to some pedophile sitting in the state or federal prison. If I wasn't HIV positive, I'd tear up my organ donor card. In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that prisoners were entitled to the same medical and dental treatment as every other citizen. Prisons that withhold necessary care can be held liable for violating constitutional bans against cruel and unusual punishment. Fine, then how about giving those same benefits to

the under privileged that work their asses off to stay just a hair under the poverty level? What about the cruelty and unusual punishment against good people who never even use bad language. For crying @##!!!\*\* out loud!

Hey, lets even put our minds to considering the horrible idea of giving Osama Bin Laden an organ transplant (if he ever gets captured). Yeah, that'll make people realize what kind of shafting they're really getting. You have to really question if this is an appropriate use of your tax dollars. I live on disability of only \$603 a month and I don't get this kind of good treatment. Man, if I make good money on this book, I'm gonna have to start paying taxes... now I'm concerned as to where that money is going. Maybe I should just write enough checks to charities to compensate taxable deductions so I won't have to pay taxes, and the money goes where I want it to.

### **Kill the Death Sentence**

My personal views have me deeply opposed to any form of death sentence, no matter what the case may be. When I was younger, I didn't really think about the end results as much as I did the fact that a death sentence was too quick and maybe they should lower to wattage so the criminals would feel it more. Now that I'm in my thirties, and progressed in mind, I think mankind should be more evolved and get away from killing.

Yes, I know that death is the ultimate

deterrent and “they'll never do it again” is a comment I hear so much in my home. However, I don't see it as the ultimate deterrent, I see it as unfair. Here's a man, we'll call him Mr. M (for murderer). He's killed 2 people in a jealous rage because she, Ms. V (victim), was the woman of his dreams that he could never have. He stalked her every night, standing outside her window, watching her undress and sleep. He tried to meet her, but he never caught her eye, even when he delivered that pizza to her that one night.

Mr. M didn't see her for several weeks, when Ms. V. suddenly came home with a diamond on her finger and in the arms of another man. Furious, he broke into the house one night and fought off the young handsome husband, stabbing him in the chest and throat. She screamed as he held her down and violently raped her until she couldn't make another sound, at least not until he ripped her apart with his knife.

Mr. M stripped off her clothes, taking one last look at her as he went into the bathroom to take a shower and wash the blood off of him. He left, with no remorse, just a sick sense of victory in getting the woman of his dreams.

The investigation was quick and simple, he had left semen inside of her, bloody fingerprints on her bruised thighs. His pubic hairs were found on her, as well as body soil and blood left in the drain trap of the shower. He was quickly apprehended, put on trial and found guilty of

first degree murder. He was sentenced to death.

Ms. V's family buried their only child, never again to look upon their beautiful daughter or hear her laughter. Her mother would never know the joys of spoiling grandchildren or seeing another Mother's day. She would never again have the chance to correct her daughter on those now so important little cooking mistakes on Thanksgiving.

Ms. V's father lost his little girl, and his new son. The last he saw of her was the happiest day of his life, when he walked with her arm in his, down the aisle to entrust his precious princess to another man's care. He would not see those 4<sup>th</sup> of July barbecues, or toss the old pig skin around with his son in law. He would never sit on the front porch, old and gray, with grandchildren surrounding him, listening to his scary stories on Halloween night.

The two would grow old and gray, always remembering, with tears in their eyes, the life that was taken from so many people with the death of their darling daughter. They never got the chance to tell her all the things they wanted to. They could only say goodbye when they stood over her closed casket.

Mr. M's mother, father, brother and sister came to visit him for the three years he sat on death row. He prepared himself to meet death. A priest came to him so that he could confess his sins and receive absolution. He was walked

down a long corridor and put on a comfortable padded table. They put the needle in his arm and waited for the determined time. The plunger was pushed and Mr. M fell into a deep sleep, slowly he passed, gently and easily as his breathing stopped and then his heart.

Mr. M left this mortal realm peacefully, having said goodbye to his loved ones and died the peaceful death that he had denied his victims. How unfair that is in our "evolved society".

And that is why I am opposed to the death sentence. I say lock them up in solitary for life, feed them to keep them alive, but never let them forget why they are there in the first place.

### **afterwards**

Here is another situation dealing with criminals in this day and age, and it's mainly focused on the rights of those who are no longer incarcerated. There are many who have been convicted of felonies, were reformed and have never committed another crime since serving their time and being released. These people have successfully reintegrated into American society and made something of themselves. They are now loyal tax paying, working, family folk who prove that reformation is possible. Yet, they have become victims of an unforgiving bureaucracy that takes forever to turn them away when they appeal their rights to vote.

It is understandable that convicted felons can not vote, while they are serving time, whether it is in the prison system or on parole. But when a person, who has been free for ten years, and never again saw the inside of a courtroom, other than jury duty, is still denied full citizenship rights because of mistakes, it becomes a sad symbol of our nation. What does it say to our own people and the rest of the world when we show an inability for people to regain such a right? I keep hearing the term "compassionate conservative", but I'm not seeing any evidence of compassion, nor am I seeing any Christian teachings of forgiveness.

They've served their time, they are productive tax payers, and still denied full reinstatement into citizenship. Yeah, the government takes their money, but gives little in return. They have no voice into who is going to use that tax money. It is unfair, to say the very least, and an appalling common fact in America.

How many more ways can this Government system harm it's citizens? I wonder.. will those laws concerning the voting rights of past felons change when the imprisoned friends of Jack Abramoff are finally out? Hmm, makes you wonder doesn't it?

If it were up to me, and I know I may say that a lot sometimes in conversation, but if it were, I would have an open policy of forgiveness. If a person released from prison

can keep their record clean for two years afterwards, and is holding a job and paying taxes, their rights to vote will be reinstated. They are Americans too, and if you can't see that enough to forgive them for past mistakes and continue to judge them... then why should you be forgiven and why shouldn't you be judged for your mistakes?

## **Chapter Ten** **Fitting in Social Standards**

OK, so I'm sitting in front of the television watching "Charmed" when a commercial break gives me visions of people complaining about the appearance of their bodies. Looking tone, tan, and able to get into a size six dress is the image of a perfect human female... as it's the image that is crammed down our throats everyday.

Not that I'm paying any real attention while filling my face with spoonfuls of whatever flavor of ice cream sounded good that day. In truth, I sometimes wish that I had that kind of waist line, those tone abs and that killer buttocks, but I don't. I'm not as muscular as I was, I'm not as thin as I would like to be and I'm not as active as most others my age are. However, I am not complaining, it's not my fault that I am the way I am. I have to deal with the fact that, like most others, as I get older, my metabolism is slowing down. Hey, it happens folks. That's just one little problem most of us have. Our ideal images of perfection are killing the way we see ourselves and destroying our own self confidence.

What are we supposed to think or do with our lives if we are just not capable or medically able to achieve the ideal perfection? We should not be thought of as "less than" anybody else who has that perceived perfection. It all starts from being the victims of shallow individuals who see nothing of the personality unless it fits

into a certain size clothing. Take, for example, the stereotypical single heterosexual male.

You know the type that actually owns a "No Fat Chicks" T-Shirt and was only able to be dragged to see "Titanic" because Kate Winslet showed off the goods. For starters, If they even wear that T-Shirt in public, it's safe to say that they are single, and staying that way. If they aren't single then I might think of them being involved with some scrawny bimbo who includes vomiting as part of her daily dressing ritual, an obvious victim of gaining his attentions by being his ideal image. Those who are the weakest swimmers in our human gene pool always stay in the "shallow" end.

I shall not miss them when they are gone from this world, but I do hope that their deaths aren't physical deaths, but the improvement of their lives to better themselves without having to rely on what other people think of them. Now, that heterosexual man is probably only interested in a short list of things. A Hemi powered truck, boobs, legs, sports and keeping track of everything that is not manly so he can classify it as "Girly" or "Queer". This is the stereotypical hetero I'm talking about, so I don't want to hear any of you going ape on me just because I put some definition of a type that defines everything else. Where exactly am I going with this on the subject of weight loss and weight gain? I'm hitting the nail on the head here... from my point of view. First, when you see naked women in a movie, you have better chances of seeing her completely naked

than you would seeing a completely naked man, most of the time, men only go down to their underwear or you only see naked buns, rarely do you see the front.

That's because most men don't want to see other men naked because they're still mentally in a junior high school locker room laughing and pointing at each other. They rarely understand the beauty of the human body and normally only admire their own manliness. As for the image of a naked woman, that's the only thing they can see when she's present. Her inviting appearance is most likely what got her the acting role in the first place. What makes her so appealing? The size of her chest and the lack of size of everything else. The "ideal" beauty. But that's why you see more female nudity than male nudity. It is the assumption that the perfect man needs no work, but since the image of a perfect woman can change, it's the duty of the media and movies to present that view and keep women shelling out money to join fitness clubs to continue looking like that. It even goes so far as needing plastic surgery, breast implants and liposuction to remove that extra  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. It's easy to realize that woman have more control over their senses and look for substance in personality than just a set of abs and a bulge in the jeans.

However, there are women that I have known, that are just as guilty about the appearance factor as any man is, though they are a minority as far as women are concerned. In a crowded room, be it a bar or shopping

center, their eyes seem to lock on the first gorgeous guy they see, totally missing the geeky little worm smiling at them or the other girl (or guy) Mr. "Right Now" is holding hands with, giving them a look of death. Truth be told though, they see him only as eye candy and would not see him as such if his attitude didn't match his appearance.

In art, for thousands of years, the image of the ideal man has never changed, the perfect man still has the physique of Michelangelo's David. While from culture to culture, throughout time, the image of female perfection has been transformed many times over. In and around the renaissance, beautiful women were portrayed as somewhat plain (in modern thought), obese, and considered to be "Strong robust women who can bare many strapping boys". Today, the girl every boy wants, looks like she would gain weight just by holding her breath. Goddess forbid they should have more than one tic-tac for breakfast. We are being driven to insanity by images of what we should look like pressed upon us by the modern media, swimsuit issue magazines, the 100 most beautiful people issues and the super models that children are starving themselves to look like. It's amazing that parents put filters on the Internet to keep their kids from seeing harmful images, but they're not filtering the crap that is printed every month and aimed right at that age group. Fashion is killing us, not because that new outfit cost an arm and a leg, but because it's costing us a buttocks and good health to look as good as the model

wearing it. Honestly, seeing ribs through skin doesn't make me think "pretty", it makes me think "hey, how much heroin did she buy with the paycheck from that modeling gig?" Seriously, most of those women look like heroin addicts because that is what is now perceived as feminine beauty. Simple solutions here folks. Don't worry about how others see you, stop skipping meals or cutting back on the Carbs. Eat healthy, eat sensibly, and for crying out loud don't strain a gilet reaching for the remote control. I bet only the poor people ever walk to the corner store.

I've actually had people tell me "Why walk, I got a car"...Yeah, the width of your ass is exactly the same as the width of your car seat. To think that they're going to the corner store for a six pack of diet cola. I'm not four feet wide, I eat what I want, I don't have a membership to a fitness center and I'm still within my scientifically determined weight. Now how do you suppose I did that? Metabolism? Nope, I've been a bit heavier before, it's just that I don't play the "perfection game" and came to grips with being who and what I am, no matter what. Most importantly, I walk to many places, not just because I don't have a car. I could easily wait for my roommate to come home and ask him to take me around... but I walk because I know it's healthy for me to get exercise. Setting a goal to look like another person is not being yourself, it's being a "wannabe" and you will only find yourself in a pit of depression that you dug.

## **Fatty fat fat fats**

Now, about weight gain. Many Americans who don't fall into the fashion trap, are absolutely disgustingly fat. I don't mean chunky or just above average, I mean that the earth quakes when they collapse from exhaustion while getting up to check their mail. The majority of over weight Americans are poor and they over eat and become fat because they're depressed or bored because they are poor. They eat greasy fatty foods that are inexpensive, fall right into the category of "junk food" and practically live like slobs because they're not eating the right things to give them the necessary energy to even clean their own homes.

Which reminds me, I should spend less time writing about this and actually clean my own house. Goddess give me a maid. I deal with this every day, I myself am poor, living on disability payments of only \$603 a month. I have to pay bills with that and usually don't find myself having enough left over to buy some of my favorite foods. I'm not talking about junk food, but things that I usually go out of my way to obtain. I like green vegetables, tofu, a lot of vegetarian stuff and pretty much anything Japanese or Chinese. I shop in Chinese Supermarkets and can usually get things very inexpensive compared to buying at the local American oriented stores. I spend half as much money for twice as much food than I would anywhere else. So being poor is not an excuse for bad eating habits, and bad eating habits are

nobody's fault but their own.

Imagine suing a fast food chain because their food made you fat. Get with the program, they didn't force it down your throats. What made you fat is not being able to find your way around town without passing the drive through window. The same type of person you actually imagine using burger joints as landmarks when giving driving directions. "Yeah Joe. Go three miles... (breath), turn left at greasy's (breath), go down until you see fatso's burger palace and shakes (breath), pass the pizza slut (breath), and turn right at Taco Hell (breath). I'm in the front yard, where I'll be unconscious..."

However, it's not just the poor that are disgustingly fat, it's just about anybody in America these days. The quick fixes are just so tempting to those who are lazy. It's easier to take a pill or wear a vibrating belt, waste money on something that can't possibly work or won't work because it's supposed to be used in conjunction with a doctor approved exercise program. Do they even bother? Hell no, they just like the idea of "lose weight while you sleep". Then they crap their Pj's the next morning after discovering that the left over cake they ate the night before gained them an extra pound.

Funnier yet is the fact that some people have been known to blame weight gain on their bathroom scales being defective. I just have to ask "how many did you buy before you found a

real defective one that gave you desirable results"? What makes so many people gain too much weight? Being lazy. Plain and simple, pure and true, being lazy is the number one reason for so many fat people. Would it really hurt to get up from in front of the television and cook a really good meal, with a side salad and maybe... dare I say, fruit desert? Perhaps it's just not normal for fiber to come in any form other than pill or powder. Your fat, constipated and addicted to ho-hos, but that's alright if you have a steady supply of weight loss pills, fiber powder and recently cut back to only two boxes a day. Hey, you're an American, it's your right to be large enough to squash anybody who gets between you and the all-you-can-eat-buffet table.

It's perfectly normal to foresee having the fire department show up and use the jaws of life to remove you from your car. It's totally American to think that someday you too can have Richard Simmons cry for you on national television because you wash yourself with a rag on a stick and haven't seen your genitalia in over a decade. Now I'm in trouble. People are going to look at me and say "Well you don't understand, your not obese, I can't help it, I have a medical condition".

That may be true, but I'm not talking about true medical reasons, I'm not thinking about thyroid disorders, diabetes or naturally obese caused by side effects of needed medications or surgery. I'm talking about the people that where all star varsity in High School, who show

up for the ten year reunion looking like they swallowed their former selves because their school sweetheart dumped them after the senior prom and they just dove right into a bucket of chicken to handle their depression. OK, guilty on the eating thing here, I know one of the best ways for me to deal with tender emotions is to sit and watch some sappy ass movie where girl meets boy, girl loses boy and I make out with a tub of Cherry Garcia, followed by a microwaved pizza. However, that's not a normal routine for me and a binging on occasion isn't going to hurt me.

Come to think of it, since I've been in a relationship, I haven't had one of those nights for nearly six years. "Oh, well you have somebody in your life, what about us lonely people"? Again, it wasn't an everyday event for me and I never used my loneliness as an excuse to be depressed. Yes, it was depressing, but I also had to think about myself in the ways of self-respect, self-love and understanding that I will forever be lonely if I let go of my self-values to the point of being dragged back into the ocean, mistaken for a beached whale.

Let me put an end to this confusing diatribe of the American dietary habits with this little tidbit. We are trapping ourselves with ideals of perfection, quick fixes for the lack of and careless behavior in the ways we exercise and think on those subjects. We are not giving our children a healthy future if we stand on either side of the situation and most are probably going to be angry with me because I don't fit

either group and yet have a lot to say about it. The reasons you don't really hear the in between crowd speak on these subjects is because we're usually the ones spending all our time speaking about you behind your backs, feeling sorry for you, not understanding why you hate yourself so much to either let yourself go or question why you can't just be yourself and happy with it.

We're the ones who think you have some mental illness that prohibits you from using common sense and we like being average because we could have gone either way but chose not to fit any mold. We're taking care of ourselves, our families and our lives are too full of being concerned about how we feel about ourselves instead of worries about other people's views. I dare anybody to use the issues of health against me on this subject, I know about being healthy, I've been diagnosed with HIV for years and have been full blown AIDS for thirteen of them.

One pill is supposed to control some fat hormone and they keep coming out with more and more diet aids, but at the same time, we've seen an increase in courts being filled to the rafters with one lawsuit after another because the side effects are almost deadly. The modern high tech world was supposed to make it easier on us and reduce stress. Instead, we're eating bad food quickly on the go and suffer bad digestion just to keep up with the on demand world. I honestly don't remember seeing very many fat people before the days of MTV and

lighter work. It's evident that perceived perfection has effected all markets around this nation and possibly the world. Look at the scandal involving the duo "Milli Vanilli". They were one of the hottest acts in the music industry until the lip syncing was found out. Why? Because the actual voices behind the hits were two "not so beautiful" people and the record company wanted to sell their sound, just not their waistline. They found two beautiful male models and gave them the career that made them house hold names.

Is beauty so important that the public has to be lied to in order to make a decent living? Nobody cared what a singer looked like before. More than half of my favorite bands were complete strangers to me. I hadn't seen any of their music videos until I hunted them down at streaming media sites. I liked their music and regardless of their appearance, I still like them. I'm not one to sit there and say "Oh I used to like her, then I found out she was fat". Granted, a lot of my favorite bands have some total hotties as lead singers... but isn't it just a total shame that it was most likely appearance that got them in the recording studio in the first place. Some music label executive promoted the band based on marketability, clothing, hair cuts, style and looks instead of "new cool sound". OK, well they do sound and look great, but what about the bands that don't make it because they don't have "the look" to make it in the music industry.

How many modern greats have been passed

up because they have "pot bellies" instead of "washboards"? The ideals of what people should or should not wear, how they wear their hair and shapes of their bodies is a cruel and unjust mentality pressed upon us by a ruthless group of pathetic media promoters that use naturally beautiful people to gain attention from unsuspecting brainless morons who are themselves an image of this faux beauty. Listen up! Stop starving yourselves, stop spending your money on worthless diet plans, live healthy, live for yourself and if someday you find true love, it's because they love you for who you are and not what you look like. Beauty truly comes from within and if you find your own inner beauty, then people will see the beauty of you.

## **Chapter Eleven** **Tax The Church!**

When the Vatican released it's übersexist document blaming feminist for undermining the "traditional" family, I had to ask "Traditional to whom?" There are diverse cultures and beliefs in this nation and you should never get away with dictating your ideals as the only tradition that needs to be respected. Nor can you expect to be respected if you can not or will not give so in return. Need I continue to remind people that we live in the United States of America and if one religious order decides that it wants to back track to the middle ages, then that's fine. However, please do not use your Christian beliefs to dictate to non-Christians or other Christian denominations, how to live or what to accept or how to vote.

In response to the Vatican speech... We, as humans, intelligent and diverse, must remember that women are the true power of humanity. They bore the human race and carry it to this day. Women are the stronger gender as they have the bodies capable of enduring the pains of child birth. I don't like listening to the constant fallibility of stagnant minded men who claim "women were made by God to make babies"... it's a falsehood. If we were to take the bible as a true history, then we would have to include all it's original text, not just those accepted in it's final version when the book was canonized around 375 C.E (Common Era). Then we would have to acknowledge the woman named "Lilith", Adam's first wife, created in the

same manner as man was. Of course she was equal to Adam, being created in similar fashion, thus Adam tried ( and I do mean *tried*) to dominate and rape her. However, since she was so strong and independent, that part was absolutely left out of the final Bible by pompous megalomaniacs who wanted to dominate over every living thing. If such a text is to be taken as actual history and faith is based upon this, then why was anything left out, dominated or destroyed?

Perhaps... no actually, I would really like to see this happen, the women of this world need to close their legs tight when men are present. It's driving a point where it hurts the male ego most. "No sex with you, you chauvinistic pork rind". Feminist are probably the best indication as to the equality of mind and soul between the genders. They are strong, they can be dominant and forward with their ideals, and they can choose how their bodies are used or not used. I have also witnessed, unlike most stereotypical heterosexual men, that women can control their dependence on the opposite sex. They don't need to be locked down, dominated or biologically attached to a man through having children.

Feminists, and all women... if you want to have a child of your own, may I suggest artificial insemination? Why should the man have his night of conquering you and sexual pleasure, only for you to endure 9 months of bloating, hemorrhoids, micro bladder adventures and child birth? Adding only to

giving that child his surname. Take the man out of the equation, and let that child carry your name, your heritage, and your family. Make parenting all your choice and none of his.

End of response

Religious domination doesn't just stop with the gender issue, it continues through how some generations wore their hair, clothes, makeup and even the claims that consumption of alcohol and tobacco are sinful. Yes, it was once believed that wearing makeup was a sign of witchcraft, because it was "bewitching" a man with artificial beauty. Huh? There are clothes that are for women only and clothes that are for men only. Remember, Joan of Arc was also accused of witchcraft because she cut her hair short and wore armor. They even stripped her and forced her to wear men's clothing just to further accuse her of their claims.

Now remember, Jesus turned water into wine, sure it may not have been as powerful as the stuff we produce these days, but can really be sure of that fact? As far as I am aware, the use of tobacco post dated the writings of the Bible, yet modern Christians claim that smoking such is a sin... so where does it say in the bible? It's just another attempt to dictate other people's lives. I'll actually address the issue of smoking tobacco in a later chapter. About the accuracy of the use of tobacco. In the past twenty years, we have actually found scientific proof that the ancient Egyptians used cocaine.

Thanks to their mummified remains, we know that they had access to a plant that grew nowhere else in the world except the South American Continent, at the time, an "undiscovered" land. So it is possible that ancients of the old lands also had access to tobacco plants, though difficult to prove since tobacco isn't usually detected by normal toxicology screening. Thus, I can theorize that ancient biblical writings may have noted a disgust in any substance used exclusively by a culture that at one time oppressed them.

Biblically, we know that the Egyptians enslaved the Hebrews, and they freed themselves of all things relating to them. However, mentions of any substances, such as tobacco, was either omitted or never written in the first place. So it is safe to say, in my opinion, that failure to include any possible writings, removes the church from taking any social standings on the subject. You have no background or a backbone to base your objections on.

During the 2004 election year, we were bombarded with news about the church's standings on the issues that would make or break a presidency. We were seeing how the people had been asked to consider how they vote before taking communion in the Catholic church, how other denominations of Christianity had set up voter registration booths to encourage votes based on religion and even saw pamphlets published by tax exempt religious organizations, dictating as to how

christians should vote. All of these are violations of section 26 of the internal revenue code concerning 501(c)(3). Yet most of these offenders have not been reprimanded by removal of their tax exempt status.

In the United States, we have this so called "freedom" of religion and some even consider it equally as a freedom "from" religion. I will not argue that at all. In this nation, we are supposed to be equal, and it is absolutely unconstitutional to dictate any law based solely on dogma. To do so, we would have to legalize the eating of meats because Seven Day Adventist and Buddhists religiously do not eat any part of animals. We would have to give national holidays for all four of the sabbats and all four of the esbbats of the Pagan religions. Every religious holiday or holy day observed by all beliefs would have to be as equally recognized as Christmas is. However, very few are actually observed here in America. We have Christian and Jewish Observances recognized as national, but none others. This is not following the lines of the constitution which clearly states in the first amendment: *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."* Thus, the federal recognition of only two religions holidays is a blatant violation. Recognize them all, or recognize none.

In 1802, after Thomas Jefferson was elected President, Baptists of Connecticut wrote to him asking for a national day of fasting to recover from the harshness of the presidential elections. However, he completely denied them this, holding on to the values he helped set in the constitution. He replied to them stating: *"Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legislative powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with solemn reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church and State."* Is it any wonder why I feel that churches are illegally remaining tax exempt?

They are hateful of the fact that they have lost power to dictate the lives of others. The church or any religious institution is not in power, or not supposed to be in power anyway. Yet they are forcing their views and beliefs on the American people and onto the constitution. I have absolutely no standing in my religion concerning the laws of this nation. I refuse to mix my politics with my beliefs, because faith has no politics. It's faith... it's not elected, ratified, or amended.

I am not anti-Christian, nor am I anti-religious. However, I do stand on my principals, that any form of belief system should have no

legal standing on the makings of the laws in the United States. We have existed for two hundred and thirty years and yet we have the slowest social evolution... people are letting their religion get in the way of the spirit of America, always believing that their religion is the way all should live and using the laws to dictate their ideals.

Living in Europe during the 80's, I was taken in by the amazing amount of understanding and tolerance. Why can't Americans hold the same values? So to those who would dare tell Americans how they can live and whom they may love... All I can say to them is "leave us alone, get out of our homes, out of our lives, out of our faces and let us be free and equal as written in the constitution".

### **Example**

In November of 2005, Texas voted on a bill to ban same sex marriage, Proposition 2. Of course, I voted against it. This bill was signed on the grounds of a church by Governor Rick Perry. I therefore suggest that Mr. Perry's signing of the bill, be considered illegal and the amendment stricken from Texas's constitution, as these actions on church grounds respects the establishment of religion as a reason for the ban.

We are soon going to be voting again for Governor of our state, and I can assure you that I will not be voting for Mr. Perry's re-election. I won't tolerate anybody who actively and

blatantly looks down upon people like me as “less than” just because I don't fit into their narrow little world. I kinda wish we did something that they did during the Iraqi votes. Can you guess which finger I would put an ink stain on, just to show Mr. Perry himself?

## **Chapter Twelve**

### **Consumption of the masses**

In the United States, alone, there are approximately 56,000 farms dedicated to the growing of Tobacco in the United States today. In 1954 there were over half a million. The history of this plant goes back thousands of years before it was ever exported to Europe and around the world.

The Department of Agriculture puts it in its price support system, mainly because of its economic significance in the southern states ,and as the seventh largest cash crop in America. Don't forget that it became, and still remains a very important commodity for export. The economy of this nation earns millions of tax dollars from the domestic sales and millions more from foreign sales of tobacco products, making it a major player in our revenue.

In the state of Kentucky, tobacco is still seen as the state's most valuable agricultural commodity. If you look at the history of the tobacco industry in the United States, you will find that the warning labels on cigarettes have been in existence since 1969, yet those who started smoking in the 70's got cancer and blamed the cigarette manufactures in the 1990's. If the warnings are there, they knew they were taking a chance and still blamed others. Did anybody really force them to continue their habit? Perhaps they shouldn't sue the tobacco companies for selling

cigarettes, instead, they should sic their shysters on the schools that allowed them to graduate illiterate.

I haven't seen those irritating little twips from truth.com on TV in a while. I wonder if maybe they just lost support because they kept bashing a major economic industry and realized that there is more at stake if tobacco products were legalized?

Found on the net, a critic of prohibition named H.L. Mencken once wrote in 1925 "*Five years of Prohibition have had, at least, this one benign effect: they have completely disposed of all the favorite arguments of the Prohibitionists. None of the great boons and usufructs that were to follow the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment has come to pass. There is not less drunkenness in the Republic, but more. There is not less crime, but more. There is not less insanity, but more. The cost of government is not smaller, but vastly greater. Respect for law has not increased, but diminished.*"

There are many people that I have met throughout my life that feel that all tobacco products should be illegal. Why? Because it is legal, it can be controlled, taxed and buyers must be of a certain age. Those things that are illegal are being sold on street corners and making tons of money for the dealers and smugglers. Do we really want to add tobacco to the war on drugs and make it a boost for illegal gains of money, thus placing a bigger

burden on the economy that fights illegal drug trades? I hear it all the time... "it's bad for you". Hello? Bad for you doesn't stop cocaine from being bought and sold, it doesn't stop marijuana from being bought and sold, during the era of prohibition, alcohol didn't see any slumping sales and besides.... I used to live in a city, the polluted air was bad for me.

The consumption of alcohol causes people to lose motor functions and ability to make logical and common sensible decisions, causing traffic accidents and deaths. Though it too is legal, we have AA meetings, but I've never heard of a Tobacco Anonymous meeting... have you? Don't tell me that I don't know what I'm talking about. During a difficult time in my life, I made a mistake and was arrested for DWI in September of 1995. I know the difference between the effects on my brain between alcohol and tobacco consumption. I don't get high or intoxicated while smoking a little cigar or cigarette. My use of tobacco doesn't cause me to act up in public, scream out harsh language, beat on my partner, get me arrested for driving while using or give me hangovers. So lets go ahead and illegalize all things that are baneful to humanity.

Well, there's a big list if I ever saw one. Lets start with the following:

Tobacco: Causes breathing problems, increases chances of cancer, heart disease and birth defects if used by women while pregnant.

Salt: Shown to increase blood pressure, a major player in strokes and heart attacks. Also attributed to osteoporosis, stomach cancers and asthma.

Alcohol: Causes people to lose mental capacity, motor functions, ability to make good decisions and effects driving that could result in death of user and innocents.

Meat: Contains saturated fats that increase bad cholesterol, accumulates in and around vital organs and blood vessels, often leading to cysts, tumors, and hardening of the arteries. It has also been known to cause impotence in men who eat a high meat diet.

Pollutants: Here's the biggest list ever. From automobile exhaust fumes, electrical plants, textile factories, any factory that uses machinery and waste in our land fills. Everything makes it's way around us on a daily basis. It's in our water, air, clothing, hair, in our homes and in our bodies.

Oh what the hell, lets just illegalize breathing, breeding, walking, running, eating, drinking, and all forms of sex. None of this is absolutely good for us anyway, everything has a chance of causing a problem. So lets just illegalize the entire human race because a few people don't want to realize that there is no escape from death. Everything we eat and drink has something in it that is bad for you.

Yes, there are healthier things to consume,

as a vegetarian, I have done much better with my health than I did when I was not. I take care of myself, but I don't sit there and tell you that you can't eat a big steak because it's bad for you. I think that we, as humans, are capable of understanding the risks of lying in bed, getting up out of bed and bending over to pull our pants up. Why do we need anybody else to force upon us their values when it doesn't concern them.

Don't tell me I can't light up a cigarette or two... or a pack a day, just because you don't smoke. If you don't like being around smokers, don't go out anywhere. Or maybe you can go to a nightclub in Dallas where all public smoking has been banned, to the unsatisfactory of business owners. I remember when going into a club or bar, I would see a sign that read "*this establishment does not provide a non smoking section*". Well now, in Dallas, they do not provide any smoking sections. Mayor Laura Miller really screwed that up and I seriously doubt if she will be re-elected. Thank the Goddess I don't live in Dallas.

So now I'm done with the gripe session of this chapter. Let me tell you now that I am in the process of quitting smoking. Somewhat. I don't know how successful I will be, since stress tends to draw people back to tobacco use very quickly and I'm not taking pills to help deal with the hair pulling factor of the process.

Yes, I'm quitting cigarettes, but not because

of the “health” issue. I'm quitting because of the economic factor. I need to save my money. Of course, this doesn't mean I'm quitting all forms of tobacco. I still plan to enjoy the occasional cigar, a good pipe or even my dry nasal snuff that I use in the winter. By the way, if you've never used nasal snuff before, and regularly consume tobacco, give it a try. I have found that it is most beneficial, for me at least, during the winter months and helps with sinuses.

## **Chapter Thirteen** **It's a madhouse**

Beyond politics, social programs, prisons, polls, elections, revolution, health, war, and political parties, the Education system of this nation is the epitome of an abysmal failure. Teachers strike for more money to give children a sub-standard education, the children are leaving schools unable to understand the most simple workings of the world and most of them are totally unprepared for real life outside of the schools.

Education has to start where it is best. At home. The babysitter should never have a remote control, parents need to start being parents and raise their children to be better behaved, because if they don't, then these kids act up in school and distract the other students. Unfortunately, the teachers have no other recourse except to write them up, give them bad marks or just send them to the principal's office to a lecturing on their behavior. This solves nothing. Teachers should be paid more, but should not be unionized. They should be given the use of the Board or Education...and I don't mean a group of people sitting at a table arguing school policy. I'm talking about a two foot long solid oak paddle for maximum efficiency. The power of the paddle was taken away from the schools by parents who said that nobody has the right to spank their child, but if parents aren't going to do it, then don't expect to just dump your child off at some tax-payer funded institution to distract the children of

other tax payers.

The schools should be able to do what is necessary to make their schools efficient and productive to all students and their tax paying parents. If there is a mis-behaving child in the class, and a few whacks can get them to pay attention, then I say "swing teach, swing". I remember getting spanked in elementary school for misbehaving...never got into trouble again. Well, except for the time I was caught trying to skip assembly while attending Augsburg American High School in Germany. That was all though. Today, school violence is on the rise not because of television and music, but because of parents not raising their children and schools unable to punish trouble makers that drive other kids to carry guns into classrooms. Schools also fail because they allow too much class to carry on during and between classes. I mean "class" as in financial, economic or the popularity hierarchy. I heard it in high school, the attitudes of "I'm better than you, I can afford \*\*\* and \*\*\* name brand". "I'm better, I'm richer and I wear real silk...you have some god awful cotton knockoff...ewwww...get away from me geek". Such behavior causes so much stress. Kids are not taught that appearance won't get them through life, because looks fade, but the well educated mind makes a better lifestyle. You've probably seen it. The class hunk ends up in jail or homeless because once he has too many responsibilities outside of his looks, or he's no longer the eye candy, he's left with few choices.

Or how about the hottest girl in school ending up in an abusive relationship or working as a stripper because she had nothing but her looks. The trust fund kids get everything on a silver platter but couldn't boil water if their lives depended on it, because they didn't consider home economics as necessary as long as Jeeves is around.

This all needs to end. NOW. Here is how it needs to be done. Lets take a lesson from the Japanese. Yes, I love the way the Japanese do just about anything and everything. They have the best work ethics and the best education system in the world, in my opinion. However, we do have to make some modifications to how it is done. Start with year round school. Instead of 9 months on and three months vacation. Get it going to where they have, here in America, about three weeks off for the summer vacation. Now, theme park owners, with all you're stupid greed, don't start having a heart attack. All that needs to be done is for each school district to assign what schools get what three week period off for a vacation. Theme park admissions will maintain, but the visitors will shift, and there are still weekends. After we set the order of the year round schools, we set into place, mandatory uniforms. Yes, School Uniforms, completely devoid of individual hierarchies. The only custom tailoring that should be allowed is size, not material, not adornments. The only exceptions to this rule is if a student is allergic to the standard fabric, then we should allow a similar appearance material to be substituted.

Female students will not be allowed to wear excessive makeup or large ear-rings...studs or small hoops only. All students will be allowed simple jewelry, but all personal religious jewelry will be required to either be not worn or worn out of sight. Male students will be allowed to wear ear-rings as well, so long as they are just simple studs. All students will have to wear school regulated shoes, no expensive sneakers or boots...except in the case in which special shoes are needed for medical requirements. No additional piercings are to be allowed or seen. No eyebrow piercings, no lip piercings, tongue piercings or splittings. No body art is to be seen. No tattoos, branding or modification implants.

Male students must be clean shaven at all times, no beards, mustaches or muttonchops. All students will be clean and will maintain excellent hygiene. All hair on either male or female students must be well groomed whether long or short. Males with long hair must keep their hair pulled back into a ponytail. If hair is not long enough to tie back, then they must maintain it in a well groomed and respectable fashion. The behavior of the students is to be handled by the schools themselves without the parents interference. If a child has misbehaved, then that kid will stand out in the hallway with a sign over their necks stating that they are "a disruptive student". If behavior has not improved, then the student will be required to remain after school and clean the classroom. If the student is either unwilling or unable to

remain after school, then the parents will be billed a fine to compensate the school for lost time during that student's ill behavior.

The continued misbehavior of the student will be noted and if the parents are unwilling to pay fines of compensation, then the student will be released into a class designated for trouble makers. This will allow the other students to receive an education without unnecessary interruptions. Student will not be allowed to have phones, games, pagers, PDA's or calculators. These are devices of distraction and any student who brings these into class must take them to and leave them in their lockers. The only allowable devices are those that are medically necessary, such as medical alarms that remind a student to take medication or to check blood sugar levels. However, the students must be given a pass to leave class to do either of these things.

All homework will be completed and turned in based on the instructions of the Teacher. If a student fails to do so, then that student will stand out in the hallway or be sent to the library to complete the necessary assignment. The only exception to the homework rule is if a student is ill or hospitalized. Students who fail, will be given grades accordingly, no student will be allowed any extra credit assignments. If the student is unwilling to complete standard assignments, then they must accept full responsibility for their lack of work, regardless of the feeling of that student.

Grades will not only be sent home in the form of a report card, but shall also be posted on the door of the class room where students can look up their own grades.

Competitive activities are necessary to teach the life lessons of teamwork and competitive edge needed for the real world outside of school. Whether these activities are sports related or intellectual, they will all be equally important. Tennis, Taekwondo, Fencing, Chess, Debate, even grades in class have the ability to set strong ethics into the minds of students. Competitions will be fair, sportsman like and equal, no one activity is to be placed above another. NOTE: I did not feel it necessary to mention football, basketball or baseball. None of these sport activities have shown any real moral ethics. The overuse of drugs and foul behavior seen on television leads me to believe that these are not sports to idolize. However, I give some way to them in the following paragraph.

Any sport that students wish to participate in, will fall upon that student and his/her family to provide equipment for that sport. Though some equipment will be provided by the school, such as padding, balls and field... shoes and uniforms are the responsibility of the student and the family of the student. The same will go for Basketball, Baseball, Tennis, Taekwondo, Fencing and so on. By doing this, the school's sports program is not funded by the parents of uninvolved students. However, the school can receive sponsorship from anybody who is

willing to provide financial funding for any sport. They may even hold events to raise money for the sports, so long as no primary tax money, received by the school, is used for sports.

Competition is not for the purpose of making one feel higher than another, nor is it to insult or hurt the feelings of another student. Competitive activities should not be eliminated. If we allow such things to die, then how will our children be prepared for the competitions of employment and life in general?

Subjects to be taught will be standard subjects such as Math, Science, History, Literature, Economics, Home Economics, Government and any other subject currently needed. History is history, it has already happened and should not be edited or altered to change its impact. Though many may feel offended that a certain part of history is taught, we must not allow political correction to influence how it is presented to the students.

Literature is the heart and soul of the era in which it is written, it presents the ideals, beliefs, philosophies, theologies and understandings of the times in which the author put pen to paper. Basically, literature is the history of human social evolution. Literature shall not be altered to become politically correct. It should remain as the original author published it to be. This is the point behind literature. Change it and it becomes worthless.

Science has been around for centuries upon centuries. It is taught so that people understand the working world and the universe. It will be taught with proven facts and scientific theory that present evidence of being more than just theory, as such stands in the current times. The theory of evolution will be taught in the science class because it is a scientific theory based on fossil evidence. Regardless of the fact that it is disputed by religious beliefs. There will be no integration between science and religion in the classrooms. Math shall be taught without the intervention of electronic assistance. The complex thinking of the brain must be stimulated and exercised. Whether it be basic math or algebra, or any other mathematics that can be completed in a timely manner without electronic assistance, the students should be taught to either make these calculations in their minds, write them out by hand or the combination of the two. Thus, there should be a set standard similar to the subjects mentioned above and given full attention to ensure that the students receive the best education possible by the human mind. Only then, can we achieve a better society of students, which will in turn help prevent crimes as they will have more choices in life to make.

Health is still a necessary subject, especially today when the world is so full of possibly dangerous materials and known dangers as well. Just as young women should be taught the proper ways of performing a breast exam on themselves, so should young men be taught the proper methods of self examination. Thus

answering questions about breast cancer and testicular cancers. Both genders should be taught to be comfortable with self examination and their own bodies. I have always found it very necessary to know every inch of my own body so that any new variations can be addressed with a physician. This is something I have always felt necessary to pass on to younger generations.

Mental Health should be included in the curriculum. Understanding all forms of dysphoria is essential to ensure that students become comfortable with finding help if they are experiencing any form of depression, anxiety or unease. Thus hopefully preventing suicidal behavior, self mutilation and/or violence. Sexual education is not a dirty subject. It is necessary for both genders to fully understand what changes their bodies are capable of making and what to expect. However, I found it highly unnecessary for boys to only watch the film about a girl's body and the girls to only watch the film about the boy's body. Watching films only about the opposite gender doesn't teach them anything they really need to know. Both Genders need to be familiar with each other as well as themselves in a proper educational atmosphere, so boys and girls should see all sex education films together to instill respect for opposite sexes.

Subjects of sexual intercourse and procreation need to never be excluded. They should be made aware of how such events happen in order to prevent teen pregnancy. The

better they are educated in the facts, the less likely they are to make a misunderstanding and mistake. All forms of birth control should be addressed, from condoms to abstinence. If it is left to only teach abstinence, then the natural psychological response of rebellion will surely take hold and then the purpose of teaching sex education to prevent unwanted pregnancy will be for nothing.

Homosexuality is to be addressed during sex education, as it is one form of sexuality, as is Lesbianism and bi-sexuality. This will help some of the students, who may or may not be in the closet deal with understanding themselves and help prevent depression due to unnecessary feelings of being "not normal". Trans gender subjects should also be addressed as it is also present in our world. Medical and psychological sciences designate and accept Gender Identity dysphoria as a true medical condition. Again, this helps trans gendered students to understand why they are the way they are and prevent depression caused by unnecessarily feeling "not normal". They should never be placed into a position of being considered abnormal.

Now on to the hard part. Yeah, there is a hard part. Teachers Today, there a lot of issues to be dealt with if you're a teacher. For starters, you're not paid enough to deal with the problem children..but if the previous parts are followed, you won't have that problem anymore. I think teachers should be paid more and treated with respect. After all, they are

trying to educate and control your brats. However, they should also get out of those horrible unions and just do their jobs. If a teacher is not doing his/her job, then they don't need that job anymore.

Teachers should be responsible to their students, the student's parents, the schools and themselves only. It is the schools that should handle any situation dealing directly with their teachers. Unions get in the way and they could also be a burden to the normal operations of a school and the teachers. Unions were basically created to ensure the rights and safety of employees, but since federal laws were created to do just that, why do we still need unions? Here are the solutions I have in mind:

All teachers are the individual employees of the school in which they educate. The school is responsible for the salary, security and compensation in event of illness or accident caused in the performance of their duties. Teachers will be on a salary, not paid by hour. Teachers will have the right to protect and defend themselves without the fear of prosecution. If an underage student attacks or harms a teacher, then the educator can do what is necessary to subdue that violence without risking charges for "assault on a minor". The teacher can then decide the punishment of that student, be it detention, movement into the class designated for trouble makers or suspension.

In the event that the student's behavior

warrants expulsion, then the teacher will need to provide proper paperwork and full report to the head master or principal of that school, thus the principal will decide if the student is to be expelled. If a teacher is harmed in any way, then the student and their family will be fully financially responsible for any medical treatment incurred as a result of his/her behavior. Teachers are to be without opinion of the students, lifestyles, subjects taught or beliefs. The teacher is to express themselves solely on the matters at hand without excessive arguments. Conditions of example would be literature. Literature is to be taught based on the curriculum, the teacher may express his/her opinion, but also express an opposing opinion based on the history of the piece subject. After all, literature contains many interpretations, depending on subject.

Teachers should encourage students to make their own opinions and even allow classes to discuss the diversity of assimilation. Thus encouraging students to express intellectual comprehension and develop communication skills on a higher level. The classrooms are to be totally secular. There will be no mention of any religious beliefs by the teachers nor the students. When religion influences a piece of classic literature, or is a part of the expression of the work, then it is used only in reference of influence of the author. There is to be nothing more than what is included by the author concerning religious beliefs.

Ok, I may have left some things out, but I'm

sure I've covered enough to base a standard on. Now onto other important parts of the education reformation idea:

The modern eating habits of your average child can be greatly improved and expanded when the schools take the variety of eating habits into consideration. Cafeteria food is usually ridiculed and parodied with such things as "mystery meat", "rat burgers", "fish scale sticks" and "cheezy cardboard". I don't know what kind of nutritional value you can get out of foods that children can't stand to eat. Meats should be properly cooked and inspected on a daily basis. They should also be devoid of any and all spices to ensure that none of the students has an allergic reaction of that the food is not in violation of a medically necessary diet plan.

Vegetarian alternatives should always be readily available for students who wish to maintain a diet absent of any and all animal products...including breads and pastries that may contain lard or any other animal fat. Variety should be explored as often as possible based on the finances ear marked for cafeteria expenses. Sometimes, it promotes a comfort with trying new foods. Multi-cultural cuisine, rotated into the regular menus are encouraged. Dietary Necessities are to be monitored and regulated at all times. Never should there be any possible or accidental integration of one food into another. Thus again, preventing allergic reaction or medical problems caused by the ingestion of a food that the student is not

allowed to eat.

Examples of such would be any food high in carbohydrates, when the student has a thyroid disorder and can only eat so many grams of carbs. In other words...don't use bread crumbs as a filler for meat loaf and not tell the student that it contains bread. Another example would be to not prepare a veggie burger in grease produced by the cooking of meat burgers.

Public Displays of Affection, the most obvious subject on the minds of today's teenagers. However, there needs to be some control over displays of relationships on school grounds. Basically, when the students are on school grounds...their relationships, whether opposite gender or same gender, will cease to exist for the duration of their time on school grounds.

Students will not be allowed to hold hands, kiss on cheeks or lips or show any other form of relationship style affections. Now, you can't really take every single touch as an act of affection. The sharp witted teenagers of today would play around and a boy may kiss the hand of a girl, or the cheek of another boy just for humor or examples. You know the kind where the boy kisses a girls hand as an example of how a true gentleman shows respect? Hopefully, with the kind of school system I've been laying down here, that kind of respectable behavior will return.

An exception to the rules concerning public displays of affection would obviously have to be

school dances. We cannot eliminate school dances, they provide a safe social atmosphere for students and help them develop a comfort with social events. However, the displays of affection should be kept at a level of decency. No extreme sexual gropes or make out sessions should be allowed at school events.

Same gender couples should not be treated any differently than opposite gender couples. They should also be held to the exact same standards of displayed affection as opposite gender couples, but not prohibited from doing the same things allowed to the those other students. However, if the school wishes to disallow all students from holding of hands, hugging, slow dancing and small kisses...then they may do so. However, they will not be allowed to make biased exceptions based on perceived "tolerable" or "normal" relationships.

Well, I guess that's all I can put down about the schools and education. Perhaps, by following my ideas, we can eliminate school violence, improve the quality of education, increase awareness and higher thinking in our students, ease peer and social pressures, help prevent violence caused by depression and anxiety, and give them something more than just what is written in books, but give them a mountain of self confidence and pride. Only then, can we see the future of this nation, enlightened, peaceful, patriotic, sensible, educated and tolerant. The end of this nation's stagnation starts with the youth of today.

## **Chapter Fourteen** **Afterthoughts and feelings**

I know that I'm going to hear some bitching about making this book thirteen chapters long. I still run into people that are deathly afraid of the number 13, won't leave their house on those Fridays and associate the number with the general population of a Witch's coven. Many still feel that 13 is an unlucky number.

They never bother to bury their superstition with realizing that the United States was founded by thirteen colonies, there are 13 stripes on the American flag and that it originally had 13 stars on it. If that number is so unlucky, then why was it so successful in the foundation of the U.S?

Of course, that was when the founding fathers made America a nation with the bill of rights and constitution. Maybe some Christians feel that 13 is just an unlucky number to the church that lost power because of the constitution. I don't know. Why are so many people superstitious anyway? I'm not even going to explore that.

On my afterthoughts. The evolution of America is something that is being fought with even as I type this last chapter. Many people feel that America shouldn't change and that it should be left alone. They don't want change, they don't want social progress, they want things their way and their way alone and they don't care if their country is being left behind

by the rest of the evolving world.

Look at this idea. The United States was once a colony of the British Empire. Our ancestors fought for independence, won the war and gave us a new nation, conceived in liberty and justice for all.

Now, Today we fight for our equal rights in this very nation, while the empire we left has surpassed us in equal rights and equal protections. Yes, Gay marriage is legal in the British Empire now and we're still struggling.

It's sad. We're supposed to be a beacon of tolerance and hope for the rest of the world, the great melting pot. Now, we're just falling behind.