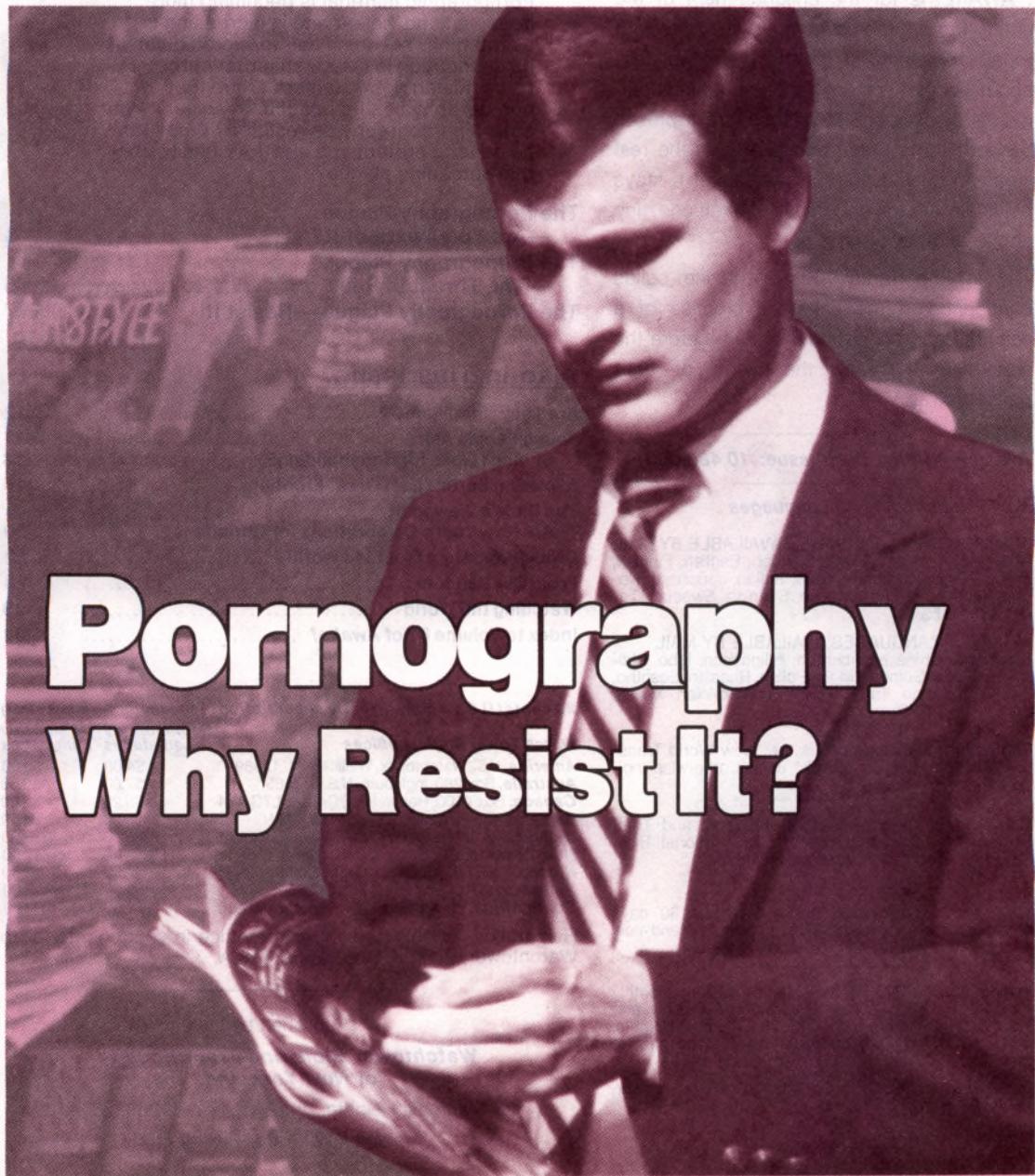


Awake!

DECEMBER 22, 1986



Pornography Why Resist It?

WHY AWAKE! IS PUBLISHED

AWAKE! is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

Most importantly, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new system before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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Feature Articles

Pornographic material is becoming more depraved and violent and is increasing in distribution. Yet some say that prohibition of its distribution is censorship that curbs basic human rights. Others argue that pornography has its benefits to society. Why should pornography be resisted? What can be done to protect you and your family from this spreading plague?

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Frederick W. Franz, President

...porno that exchanges political favors for...
-land could be... it's only state... by... the...
-moderates... the...
-beef and... STP to...
-instituted... am... 100...
-rt... against... medium...
-ene... or... get... 100...
-nald... more... in... "service"... four...
-receptors... could... moderate... own... never...
-to... New... a... no...
-to... ensure... brat...
-brat... threat...
-th... af...
-fects... millions... Like...
-unseen... but... lethal...
-fallout... from... a...
-nuclear... reactor... accident... it...
-subtly... settles... down... on... entire... populations... before... they... fully...
-realize... what... is... happening... This... plague... is...
pornography.

AN INSIDIOUS plague threatens you and your loved ones. It already affects millions. Like unseen but lethal fallout from a nuclear reactor accident, it subtly settles down on entire populations before they fully realize what is happening. This plague is *pornography*.

Misconceptions about this plague leave people unaware of the danger, allowing it to spread easily. For example, to think that this is just a big-city disease would leave you and your family vulnerable. Today it is also rampant in small towns. It has penetrated homes, schools, libraries, prisons, and the workplace.

It is also not correct to think that only "dirty old men" would produce or be connected with this threat to your family. Boy Scout leaders, lawyers, actors, businessmen, clergymen, and even preteens have reportedly been involved with it—those you might least suspect.



THE PORNOGRAPHY PLAGUE

—Are You Aware of It?



The carriers of this crippling disease are many: magazines, books, movies, TV and cable TV programs, videotapes and video games, music, and advertising. Even your phone company may be a carrier; some allow a "dial-a-porn" service! "Adult" movie houses, video shops, and bookstores are proliferating.

The smut industry's trade paper once boasted that "in 1979 there were . . . three to four times as many adult bookstores in the U.S. as McDonald's restaurants." You may not have expected to find this plague so prevalent. But that only demonstrates how stealthily and yet relentlessly it has spread.

Of course, pornography is not just a 20th-century pestilence. Obscene drawings have been found from early times on. Ancient cultures had temple prostitution and the worship of phallic images. In the time of the Roman Empire, debased Pompeii featured pornographic art. Porn has a long history.

Spreading Infection for Profit

What is different in our time is the way this infection has mushroomed into a profitable major industry. Making use of modern equipment, producers of porn turn out vast amounts of material, saturating the market to epidemic proportions worldwide. This is reflected in the startling figures that follow:

CANADA—*Chatelaine* magazine sets porn sales in Canada at "about \$6 billion a year." A report in *Pornography and Prostitution in Canada* says some "\$500 million a year" from the industry goes to organized crime. Just the pornography seized annually by the authorities is estimated by Ottawa's police chief to have a value of more than \$20 million.

UNITED STATES—The California De-

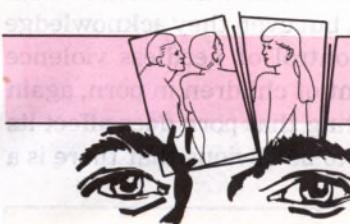
partment of Justice estimated that pornography in that state was a "\$4 billion business annually" in 1978. Other reports show profits of \$475 million a year by "ten leading 'skin' magazines" and \$365 million a year by "adult" movie theaters. An "adult" bookstore in Times Square in New York City can make \$10,000 a day. A single dial-a-porn number in the same city brings in \$35,000 a day to the phone company alone. One such "service," operating in more than a dozen large American cities, averages half a million calls *a day!*

Because of the clandestine nature of some materials, accurate figures are hard to get. But one source says that North American porn sales range "from \$12 billion a year to \$50 billion a year, not including videos."

OTHER LANDS—In 1984, Japan's "prosperous sex industry" flooded bookstores with "sexually explicit magazines for teenage girls." The government took quick action to remove these publications from the stores. Sweden's multimillion-dollar porn industry sells "half a million hard-core pornographic magazines" a month. India, Malaysia, and Bulgaria have felt the impact of video porn on their young people. And, according to an Associated Press dispatch, an upsurge of "readily available" salacious materials in China brought a government ban on pornography there in 1985.

Clearly, this plague is raging all around you. Be aware that it exists in forms that can quite easily enter your home or that can be picked up at any corner store.

But is it really fair to label pornography a "plague"? Has it been established that it is harmful? Can we honestly say it is a real threat to you and your loved ones? Would not strict censorship or a ban curb the rights of people to read and watch what they choose?



THE PORNOGRAPHY PLAGUE

—The Threat Is Real!

WHAT you may read below is a sampling of pornography today. Does it shock you? Does it make you feel sick inside? Yet it is from publications that give a *mild* description of the content of some of the pornography presently circulating. Though the quoted sources used language they felt suitable for public reading, to spare you, *Awake!* had to edit some of *that* language further.

Hence, saying that 'porn has always been around, so there's nothing to worry about' reveals an unawareness of a significant change in content in recent years. It is no longer just scenes of nudity or sexual intercourse. Nowadays it is a loathsome outpouring of filth, perversions, and raw violence. There are scenes of heterosexual and homosexual rape; Lesbian, gay, oral, anal, and group sex; incest; bestiality; torture, mutilation, and murder—often involving pre-teens. This is important to keep in mind as we consider the view of some that pornography is harmless and hence no threat to you.

"Three men successively kidnap a woman, a twelve-year-old girl, and a grandmother, and beat them senseless, kicking them in the face, head, and body. After they have passed out, they are raped and beaten again."

'Women's naked and mutilated bodies suspended upside down on barbed-wire fences, and a woman forced to [participate in an act of bestiality].'

'Little girls [involved with oral sex and bestiality], and boys of eight or nine being . . . sodomized.'

Harmful or Beneficial?

There are two general theories about the effects of porn. One is the catharsis, or "release," idea. Its advocates contend that such material has no bad effect on normal people, yet it provides a safe release for the sexually aggressive and therefore is harmless and may even be beneficial. Of course, those who argue this way are admitting that what a person reads or sees *does* produce an effect. Still, they say that there is no solid evidence to show a link between pornography and rape or other kinds of violence.

But voices just as strong argue that there *is* a link. These are the voices of experience—of those who have to deal directly with the depressing effects of porn. They reject as specious the many arguments that demand 'exact scientific data' to prove a link, and they insist on the other theory: that there *are* people who imitate and have imitated what they see in pornography.

In a letter to *The New York Times*, the associate editor of *Police Times*

listed examples of what convinces many in police work that "pornography helps create a moral and social climate that is conducive to sexual abuse and exploitation." Some examples provided were:

- "William Marshall, studying Canadian rapists in prison, reports, 'various forms of pornographic fantasies may lead to crime.' Ten of 18 rapists confessed that pornography influenced them to force females to have sex."
- "According to . . . [the] founder of the Phoenix-based Citizens for Decency Through Law, 'Police vice squads report that 77 percent of child molesters of boys and 87 percent of child molesters of girls admitted trying out the sexual behavior modeled by pornography.'"
- "The Los Angeles Police Department points out that in the more than 40 child-sex-abuse cases it investigated . . . pornographic photos were found to be present in every case."
- "Adult and child pornography is used . . . to seduce children into sex. In one case, a 6-year-old girl testified that her father used pornography to entice her."

In addition, according to *The New York Times* of May 14, 1986, the commission on pornography formed by the Justice Department of the United States has concluded from its one-year study "that substantial exposure to materials of this type bears some causal relationship to the level of sexual violence, sexual coercion or unwanted sexual aggression in the population so exposed."

True, there are those who disagree with this conclusion, but even they acknowledge the need for control of needless violence and involvement of children in porn, again in effect admitting that porn does affect its users. It ought to be obvious that there is a

A March 1985 poll conducted in the United States by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek* magazine shows the following interesting views held by Americans on matters relating to pornography:

- An overwhelming 73 percent of Americans believed that explicit sexual materials "lead some people to commit rape or sexual violence."
- Only 34 percent thought pornography provided "a safe outlet for people with sexual problems."
- The majority, 76 percent, believed that explicit materials "lead some people to lose respect for women."
- More than two thirds, 67 percent, felt that pornography can "lead to a breakdown of public morals."
- A notable 63 percent to 73 percent thought a *total ban* ought to be placed on videos, films, or magazines featuring sexual violence.

connection between what one sees and reads and what one thinks and does.

Despite clever arguments against the idea of links, one thing is clear: Pornographers know exactly why they produce smut and users know exactly why they buy it. Its purpose is admitted by pornographers—*sexual arousal*. What then follows, whether masturbation or worse, cannot callously be dismissed as solely the responsibility of the user. The product by its very design *abuses the consumer*. It and its purveyors are every bit as reprehensible as any addictive drug and its pushers.

'What About Our Rights?'

Still, there are those who warn about depriving people of their rights to possess,

read, and watch whatever they wish in the privacy of their own homes, as well as of rights to publish and distribute such material. Abuse of censorship is feared.

These are generally valid concerns. But even though there is such a thing as freedom of speech, you cannot say or publish libelous things about others or make a false public outcry that would endanger the safety and lives of others. No human government guarantees absolute freedom. The rights and freedoms of others must be taken into account.

Those who ask, "What's wrong with a person's viewing pornography privately if he does not imitate it to hurt others?" are overlooking an important facet of human rights. Since porn is used to seduce the very young to get involved in incest and other forms of child sex-abuse, and since both adults and small children shown in photos and films are often forced to participate in producing pornography, how can anyone deny that harm is done to *them*?

Moreover, what about the violence suf-

fered when those used for pornography are bound, tortured, mutilated, and submitted to painful, unnatural sex? And what about some children being turned over to child-sex rings for their profitable international trade? "Disgusting!" you say. But what about their rights? Is that the price that must be paid for other people to have the right to "enjoy" pornography? Is that 'doing unto others as you would have others do unto you'?—Matthew 7:12.

Still, many say that censorship is not the answer. For one thing, to prosecute pornographers you have to be able to identify what is and what is not porn. Yet, even the courts have not been successful in doing so.

What is clear is that you and your family are threatened by this porn plague. The police, antipornography groups, customs agents, and censors all seem unable to control or eliminate the epidemic. Is there any way for concerned people to protect the ones they love?

THE PORNOGRAPHY PLAGUE

—Resist It!

GREEDY money lovers, and those who have "gone out after flesh for unnatural use," have flooded the world with highly contagious material in movies, videos, plays, books, magazines, and music—a plague of pornography. (Jude 7) Thus the U.S. Attorney General's Commission on

Pornography, in visits to just 16 stores, was able to catalogue "2,325 separate magazine titles, 725 books, and 2,370 film titles" of pornographic matter.

With little thought as to the havoc they create in the lives of others, these "pornocrats" callously lower the moral climate of

society and contribute to the epidemics of fornication, adultery, incest, sexually transmitted diseases, perversions, divorces, broken homes, disturbed children, and physically and psychologically damaged marriage mates.

Can you protect your family from this plague? If you have become addicted to porn, is there any way to break free? The answer to both questions is yes! How?

Porn problems thrive in an environment of infectious wrong attitudes where there exists little resistance to "the works of the flesh." (Galatians 5:19) Such problems flourish when people lack or ignore accurate knowledge and allow wrong information to pollute the mind. Our best defense against porn, then, is to build spirituality and individual immunity by cultivating healthy attitudes based on sound knowledge. To do this requires that we uncompromisingly embrace, as antidotes to porn, the following Bible viewpoints.

Right Attitude Toward Sex

The first prevalent wrong attitude to resist is that toward sex itself. Jehovah God created the male and the female with sexual desire for the purpose of procreation, as well as to bring them pleasure as a married couple. (Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:18; Matthew 19:4-6) Thus if sexual relations are viewed as a means of mutual expression of love by marriage mates and not as a means of exploiting others or merely for the gratifying of self, it will help us to resist pornography.

—1 Corinthians 7:3; Acts 20:35.

To abuse sex dishonors its Designer and brings harm to the abuser. Hunger for food is also designed by God for our good and pleasure. But if abused by excesses or by ingesting polluted food, harm can result. Therefore, do not become greedy—idolizing sex. Rather, control "your body members . . .

as respects . . . sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is *idolatry*."

—Colossians 3:5, 6; Ephesians 5:5.

When ancient cultures idolized sex, they "exchanged the truth of God for the lie and venerated and rendered sacred service to the creation rather than the One who created." That led to "disgraceful sexual appetites," excesses that polluted them. Thus, "both their females changed the natural use of themselves into one contrary to nature; and likewise even the males left the natural use of the female."—Romans 1:25-27.

Right Attitude Toward Women

Many pornographic presentations nowadays are of women subjected to rape, degradation, and violence. So your family must see pornography as a vicious attack upon womankind. Porn conveys the seductive idea that females are meant to be and even want to be thus maltreated—that they actually experience pleasure when raped and otherwise hurt. That is a base lie.

No decent male can have such an attitude toward women. God made both male and female. The woman was to be man's complement, not his inferior deserving of ill-treatment. (Genesis 2:18) Rather than maltreat the body of any woman, the Bible tells men to deal with "older women as mothers, younger women as sisters *with all chasteness*." (1 Timothy 5:2) And instead of subjecting wives to the perversions that porn advocates, "husbands ought to be loving their wives *as their own bodies*."

—Ephesians 5:28, 29.

Right Attitude Toward Children

Annually, children by the thousands—often just tots—are sexually abused, some by their neighbors and family friends, others by incestuous practices of



Avid reading of pornographic literature has interfered with married couples' enjoying a normal sex life

their own parents and other family members. Porn plays a big part in suggesting that this abuse is acceptable. Thousands more are kidnapped, raped, and prostituted by sexually depraved pornographers. What an unfeeling betrayal of innocent, defenseless children!

"Sons are an inheritance from Jehovah," the Bible says. (Psalm 127:3) Your family members need to respect that inheritance and its Source and not entertain unwholesome attitudes toward the young in their own or other families. Sexual abuse of minors does physical and emotional damage and corrupts. It is a cruel lie to say that children are benefited by such abuse.

Hence, pornography is based upon God-dishonoring *lies*, wicked misrepresen-

tations as to sex, women, and children. The sickening fruitage from propagating the lies tells us who the father of such lies must be. (John 8:44) In view of this, genuine Christians who wish to maintain a clean relationship with their

heavenly Father cannot have anything to do with pornography!

Other Perilous Attitudes

Various excuses are made to justify use or tolerance of pornography. You must see the danger in these excuses if you are to be immune to the harm that can be wrought by this plague.

'Use of porn can enhance your married sex life.' The reverse—degeneration—has resulted for many. Some, feeding on porn, are no longer able to enjoy normal sex lives. Fantasizing with lurid magazines, one husband went from forcing perversions on his wife to bisexual affairs. His wife plaintively asks: "[Why can] my husband have sex with magazines but not with

me?" Another wife says that her husband stays up all night to watch TV porn, yet he 'has no interest in normal sexual relations.' In other cases, marriages disintegrated

"As New York Law School professor Ernest van den Haag has pointed out, 'Some argue that pornography has no actual influence. This seems unpersuasive. Literature—from the Bible to Karl Marx to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*—does influence people's attitudes and actions, as do all communications.'"—Family Circle magazine

when husbands insisted on practicing the perversions seen in movies or magazines.

'A little soft porn won't hurt anyone.' That is as deceptive as saying that 'a little use of soft drugs won't hurt anyone.' A clinical psychologist explains: "I find there is an escalation factor in which the person increasingly wants to see and be exposed to more and more deviant obscene material . . . more explicit material to give the person his 'kicks.'" Others agree, pointing to the present trend to more violent hard-core material.

'There are some well-written articles on interesting topics in some of the better-class sex magazines. As long as I just read those and only admire the excellent photography, it won't hurt me.' But why look through a garbage can for wholesome food? And do not forget the real danger to "everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her." (Matthew 5:28) As for the excellent photography, slick paper, and first-rate reproduction, remember, gold-plating a garbage can doesn't change the contents.

Breaking Free From Porn Addiction

But what if you have a strong attachment to porn and find it hard to give it up?

The psychologist quoted before also said: "I find that there is an addiction to pornography. The individual . . . gets 'hooked' . . . and comes back again and again for more."

Yet, as with other addictions, one can break free.

If you have the problem, an obvious first step is to stop feeding your mind on the filth itself, cutting off the source of contamination. (Matthew

5:29, 30) Yes, get rid of all the material that would be a temptation to resort to fantasizing. Would you tolerate an ancient phallic image in your home? Then why permit these modern expressions of sex worship there? Early Christians were quick to dispose of even costly items that posed a threat to their clean relationship with Jehovah.—Acts 19:19.

And, as with other addictions, to break free requires the addicted person humbly to admit that he has the problem, that he really wants to quit it, and then earnestly seek qualified help. The Christians just referred to were quite willing to seek help from mature believers of their time. (Acts 19:18) Your own sincere prayers and those of your spiritual brothers will provide a source of strength not available elsewhere.—James 5:13-16.

Flushing out the mind with clean waters of truth and keeping it filled with pure teaching that expresses the "perfect will of God" will make it possible for unhealthy mental images gradually to fade. In this way the circuits that would keep these mental images vivid and still infectious will be erased.—Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:17-24.

Genuine love for God and neighbor will

help you break the porn habit as well as protect you from ever again becoming involved with it. Pornography is the message of modern sex worship. It stands for everything that is opposed to God and righteousness. It must be rejected outright. Avoid it like the plague it is!

There are those who advocate ignoring it as a passing thing that will cure itself when people get filled or bored with it. But is that the way to handle life-threatening filth? We do not fix a leaking cesspool by ignoring it, allowing it to overflow, hoping it will somehow heal itself. *You* must take action!

What Will You Do?

It may be true that not all are affected alike by such material. However, if we admit that the *intent* of such material and the reasons why it is viewed are not wholesome, then we have a conscientious decision to make, just as we would have with any other threat to our well-being. This plague must be resisted.

Face the fact that the porn plague is a reflection of the declining morals of our times as foretold in the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:1-6) History and experience tell us that despite laws and regulations, people who want pornographic material will find a way to make, distribute, and consume it.

Thus there are feminists who vehemently deplore exploitation and maltreatment of women by pornographers and porn addicts but who nevertheless will, at the same time, express reservations about a total ban on smut. They speak favorably of "erotica" for their own use that portrays what these feminists call "sexual expression between two people who desire each other and who have entered this relationship with mutual agreement." Gay men also wish to reserve for themselves the

right to make and view their own "victimless" homosexual pornography.—2 Peter 2:18, 19.

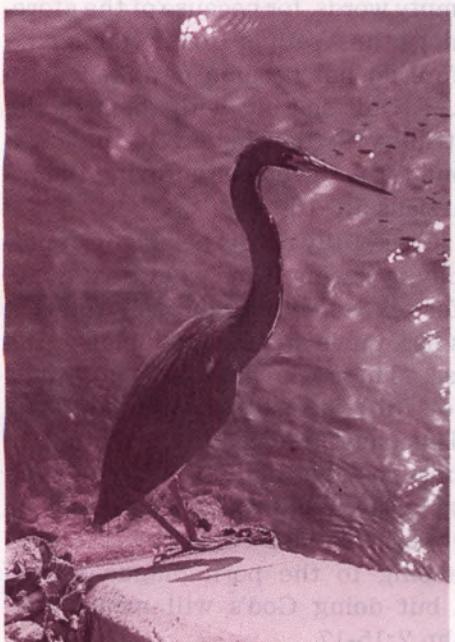
Obviously, if we listen to the self-serving excuses of these and others who are 'sowing with a view to the flesh,' we will soon get lost in a maze of hairsplitting philosophical arguments as to what is and what is not porn, erotica, and art. (Galatians 6:8) No matter what people call the material, when it displays for sexual arousal what the Bible calls unnatural and obscene —fornication, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, rape—then a Christian knows such is not fitting for him to view, since such should "not even be mentioned among" Christians.—Ephesians 5:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Leviticus 18:6-30.

From all the above, it should be clear that pornography must be included among those things "shameful even to relate." It animalizes sex. So, "let no man deceive you with empty words, for because of the aforesaid things the wrath of God is coming . . . Therefore do not become partakers with them . . . Quit sharing with them in the unfruitful works that belong to the darkness, but, rather, even be reproving them." —Ephesians 5:6-15.

Yes, successfully resist the plague of pornography by seeing it for what it is: a medium for sex worship. Vigorously reject it and its lies, uncleanness, and idolatry. Remember: "Those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom." True Christians have "impaled the flesh together with its passions and desires." So, "keep walking by spirit and you will carry out no fleshly desire at all." (Galatians 5:16-24) Succumbing to the porn plague means death, but doing God's will means life. —1 John 2:15-17.

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Are They "Intelligent"?



THE heron goes fishing with a lure in the tip of its bill. Sighting a fish in the stream, it drops the lure, a feather. As the fish comes up for the bait, swish, the heron has its dinner—lure fishing by a professional angler.

Is this evidence of intelligence? According to one report, scientists feel that intelligence is the "quality of being aware of oneself as an entity in one's environment, and of being able to acquire and retain knowledge, to learn and understand from experience, to solve problems and to respond successfully to constantly changing situations."

Apparently, the heron learned from experience and solved a problem. Therefore, by this definition, some would say it is "intelligent." And other examples may be cited.

The honeybee is another creature that seems to be "intelligent." In order to test its "intelligence," Dr. James Gould, a researcher of honeybee behavior at Princeton University, placed food for the bees but moved the food each time the bees flew back to the hive. Each movement of the food was one-and-a-quarter times the previous distance from the hive. Soon the bees outwitted the researcher. They were found circling around the spot where the food was next expected to be.

Dr. Gould believes, however, that most of the evidences of animal intelligence are instinctive. If so, can he explain how the bees came to a conclusion based on past events? "I can't," he replied, adding, "I wish they'd never done it!"

Whether animals act by "intelligence" or by instinct, the question remains: What is the source of their wisdom? Even though Dr. Gould admits he cannot explain it, his basic stand in this field is: "Evolution can program very complex behavior into very tiny brains." But would it not be more logical to conclude that such "intelligent" behavior must be the result of intelligent design rather than blind evolution? The Bible links the behavior of the winged creatures to the Creator and says: "Ask, please, the domestic animals; and they will instruct you; also the winged creatures of the heavens, and they will tell you. Who among all these does not well know that the hand of Jehovah itself has done this?"—Job 12:7, 9; see also Proverbs 30:24-28.

What will these creatures tell you? If they had the ability to speak, they would say: 'The Creator can program very complex behavior into very tiny brains.' While evolutionists may "wish they'd never done" such intriguing things, the Bible attributes the wisdom—whether learned or instinctive—of such creatures to their Maker, Jehovah God.—Genesis 1:20-22; Romans 1:20.

Young People Ask...

Should I Go In for Bodybuilding?

HEY, SKINNY!" Such a taunt merely confirms what you've already noticed in your mirror—you have just not 'filled out' the way some of your peers have. Or perhaps you are chided because of being a bit on the heavy side. In either event, you may seriously have considered taking up bodybuilding.

Nowadays many men—and a growing number of women—have gone in for bodybuilding. Granted, there is nothing wrong or unusual about wanting a better build. We all like to present a pleasing appearance. *Parents* magazine points out: "The image an adolescent holds about his body is not unimportant. Body image is part of self-image. It can affect a person's self-confidence and what he does and does not do in life." But is bodybuilding the answer for you?

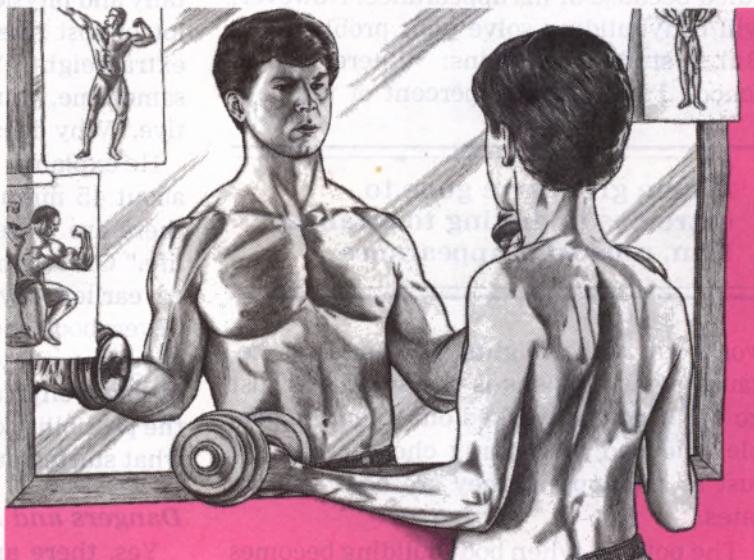
Things to Consider First

"What you see is not always what you get in regard to body image," says Dr. James P. Comer of Yale University's Child Study Center. In other words, we often tend to think of ourselves as taller or shorter,

or heavier or lighter, than we really are.

Could it be, then, that you have an incorrect view of your body and do not really need to bodybuild at all? Why not confide in your parents, a good friend, or even your family doctor, and get their opinion? And give yourself time! Some simply develop later than others. Besides, your real friends like you just as you are.

Though outward appearance is important, it isn't everything. A prophet of ancient Israel, sent by God to a family of many sons to anoint one of them as a king, thought he must surely have found the right man when he saw one son of striking physical form. "But Jehovah said to Samuel: 'Do not look at his appearance . . .



because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." (1 Samuel 16:7) It takes more than a fine physique to rule a nation well, doesn't it?

"But," you say, "I just want to look like others my age so I'll be accepted and not be made fun of." True, no one likes to be ridiculed because of his appearance. However, will bodybuilding solve your problem? As Bill, a student, explains: "Where I go to school, I'd say eighty percent of the boys

Some girls have gone to extremes in dieting to attain a lean, muscular appearance

work out with weights. It's pointless because what happens is the standards just go up. If no one worked out, then the people who had less manly chests would be just as unhappy as they are now. It escalates."

The point is, when bodybuilding becomes competitive, there will always be some who are more developed than others. Thus, you may spend a lot of time developing your body with weights and still end up being frustrated, trailing behind your peers. "But at least I'd be healthier," you say. "Fitness is a good thing."

"Beneficial for a Little"

While a Christian youth may see little value in bodybuilding, exercise that includes the use of weights can contribute to having a healthier body. For that reason, even the Bible acknowledges that "bodily training [training as a gymnast, or exercise] is beneficial." (1 Timothy 4:8) Some medical studies agree. So does Mike.

Mike admitted that he did some body-

building as a teenager "to be stronger and more manly" in appearance. However, at age 36 he began using weights again for a different reason. After six years at a desk job, and gaining 25 pounds (11 kg), he found working out with weights to be a great way to ease stress and help take off excess weight. "Now," he says, "I feel mentally and physically better, have regained a lot of lost strength and trimmed off the extra weight." Yet, he told *Awake!*: "At the same time, you have to keep it in perspective." Why does he say that?

He explains: "A *little* is good. I keep it to about 45 minutes twice a week. After all, there are more important things to do in life." On this need for balance, Bill, quoted earlier, says about his school chums: "Everybody spends an hour a day working out when they could be doing something far more enjoyable and useful." So, there is the possibility of getting carried away with what started out rather innocently.

Dangers and Risks

Yes, there are dangers and risks. In an article on weight lifting, *Changing Times* said: "Heading the list of risks is lower back strain caused by arching while you lift. Also common are tears in the cartilage of the knees." In addition, there are the risks of tendinitis and osteoarthritis, the latter particularly at the shoulder joint. According to the *Changing Times* article, these risks are "common in those who train with heavy weights, even if they are in their late teens or early twenties."

Additionally, girls will have to take into account the problem of impaired or abnormal menstrual function that can result from overexercising. Most girls have a hormonal and genetic makeup that does not tend to make them muscular. Thus, if their purpose in working out with weights

is to develop a muscular body, they have to work out longer than most males.

Women also have more body fat than men do. And some girls have gone to extremes in dieting to reduce this natural body fat in order to attain a lean, muscular appearance. However, improper dieting can pose a serious threat to good nutrition. Commenting on the appearance of one famous woman bodybuilder, *Newsweek* said: "For all her muscles, she looks drawn, tired and downright sickly."

Idolizing of Self

Bodybuilding has been called "a fanatical sport" by some involved in it. "What it's all about is pushing the limits, seeing how big you can get," says one bodybuilder. In an essay in *Time* magazine, Lance Morrow observed that dedicated bodybuilders, "male or female, tend to be zealots. So much self-torture in an essentially narcissistic cause demands, after a point, a kind of religious fanaticism."

Narcissism is an idolizing of self and of the bodily form. Easily, bodybuilding can become just that, an idolizing of self. Yet the Bible counsels: "Flee from idolatry [of any kind]."—1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 John 2:15-17.

What Will You Do?

So, then, consider the matter seriously. What you finally do must be your own decision, made with the knowledge and approval of your parents. (Ephesians 6:1-3) In particular, do not overlook the importance of honestly analyzing your motives. One definition of "bodybuilding" is: "The developing of the physique for competitive exhibition." Is that perhaps your secret desire?—Romans 12:1, 2.

If you do decide to exercise with weights, don't forget the need for balance—both in

the time and in the effort you devote to it. Remember, "severe treatment of the body" is not spoken of favorably in the Bible. (Colossians 2:23) Besides, excesses cause injuries.

For certain weight-lifting routines, *never* work out alone! Serious injury or death can and have occurred when some have foolishly violated this rule. Likewise, any exercise involving the use of weights should not be done without consulting a physician if you or your parents have any concerns about your physical condition.

It is also vital to watch your associations. (1 Corinthians 15:33) Don't let yourself be talked into using so-called harmless drugs to speed up your body development. By 'not thinking too highly of yourself,' you can curb the inclination to want to become a famous "body."—Romans 12:3.

Either way—bodybuilding or not—what about the importance of giving time and effort to *mind* building? Why not devote some of your time to developing a healthy, well-trained mind and heart that will have the favor of God and men? When young, you have a mind just waiting to be exercised to robust proportions. After all, "'Tis the mind that makes the body rich," said Shakespeare.

In Our Next Issue

● Terrorism

—A Scourge Forever?

● Does God Have Time for Me?

● A Closer Look at Full-Color Printing

Exploring Earth's Last Great Frontier

I WAS working as a deep-sea diver when we got the call. A large catamaran sailboat had flipped over while sailing in rough seas off the coast of Florida. Our job? To salvage the boat and return it to its owner.

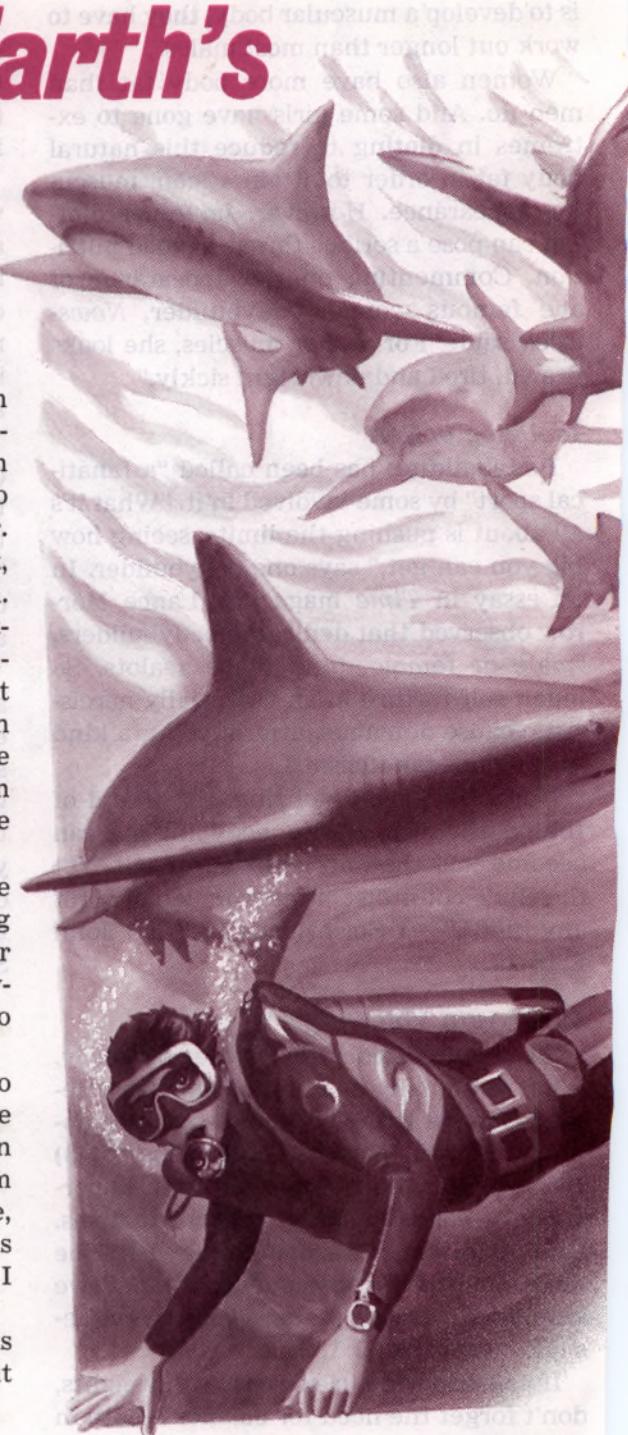
We arrived on the scene, off Mayport, Florida, about two o'clock in the afternoon. There was the sailboat, upside down, floating low in the water. The ocean had a gentle, four-foot swell that lifted the sailboat up and down as it slowly moved north in the current of the Gulf Stream.* But the wind and seas were slowly building, and on the way out our other diver had got a little seasick.

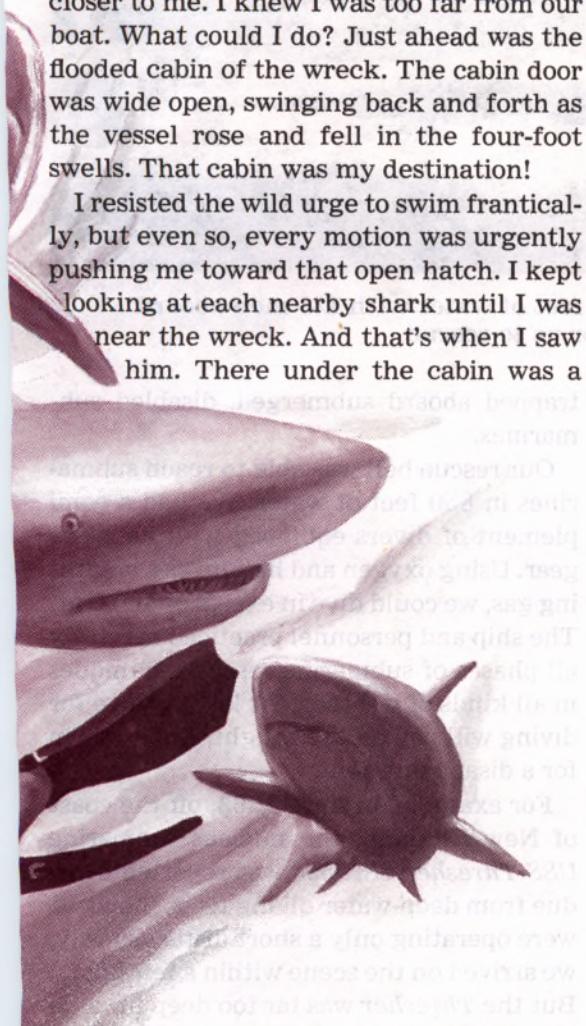
So I had to go in alone. I swam to the sailboat with my scuba gear on and no tag line (diver's signal line). The plan was for me to free all rigging, sails, and mast, leaving only the hulls and cabin. Then I was to surface and hook up a towing line.

After entering the water, I eased down to about ten feet and swam easily toward the sailboat. What a sight! The sails fluttered in the current, and hundreds of fish swam about them. Far below, barely discernible, was the ocean floor. Somehow all of this captured my attention. But very soon I snapped back to reality!

I was not alone. At least a dozen sharks were on both sides of me! They were about

* 1 ft = 0.3 m.





20 to 30 feet away, moving slowly but ever closer to me. I knew I was too far from our boat. What could I do? Just ahead was the flooded cabin of the wreck. The cabin door was wide open, swinging back and forth as the vessel rose and fell in the four-foot swells. That cabin was my destination!

I resisted the wild urge to swim frantically, but even so, every motion was urgently pushing me toward that open hatch. I kept looking at each nearby shark until I was near the wreck. And that's when I saw him. There under the cabin was a

huge shark, about 14 feet long! Why, this fellow could easily have eaten one of those other sharks—and me too!

But there was no stopping now. For some reason he didn't move as I approached, and quickly I was in the cabin and had the door closed. I slid the handle of a pair of pliers through the hasp and settled back to see what would happen. The sharks all came up to within four or five feet of the wreck and stayed. So there I was, locked in the upside-down wreck of the sailboat, 70 miles (113 km) from shore, wishing I were somewhere else. *Anywhere else!*

While inside the wreck, I inspected both hulls and the cabin area. She had a lot of air trapped in her molded hulls, and that was what I breathed. After about an hour, I went back to the door. The sharks had moved away, almost out of sight. The skipper of our boat was nervously circling above. But what about the big shark?

I opened the door and looked under. Sure enough, he was still there—we were eye to eye! I pulled back into the cabin, and a few seconds later the shark slipped out from under the boat and stopped right under the door. Maybe he wanted me to stick myself back under his nose again. But I wasn't about to give him another chance! I felt very fortunate that he was in such a lethargic state.

As I watched and waited from inside the cabin, the sharks, including the big one, finally drifted away. Was I relieved! That was one of the more exciting diving expeditions I've been on in the more than 20 years I have spent exploring earth's last great frontier—the deep sea.

A Deep-Sea-Diving Career

I began scuba diving in south Florida in 1957, spending hours in the ocean with

**At least a dozen
sharks were on both
sides of me!**



U.S. Navy photo

**The *Thresher*, later crippled in 8,400 feet of water with 129 men aboard
—far too deep for us to rescue**

fins, face mask, and snorkel. At that time the inshore reefs teemed with life—hundreds of barracuda hung over the coral, lobsters were everywhere, and there were thousands of pretty fish with brilliant colors.

Then, in the summer of 1958, while I was skin diving off the coast of Florida with two friends, we found the remains of a Spanish ship; the site was relatively untouched. The wreck lay on a coral reef. In fact, the ship's anchor was where it had fallen, encrusted in coral. A cannon lay close by, also pieces of muskets and other artifacts. In time, fascination with such things led me into a lifelong career of commercial deep-sea diving.

Searching for Disabled Submarines

After several years of free-lance diving, I joined the U.S. Navy, and in 1960 I attended the Navy diving school in Key West, Florida. Upon completing my training period, I was ordered to report to New London, Connecticut, to serve on one of the Navy's submarine rescue vessels. The ship was called the *USS Sunbird ASR-15*. We sailed as far north as Newfoundland and as far south as Bermuda. We also periodically made a tour of the Mediterranean Sea. Ships like ours were to rescue personnel

trapped aboard submerged, disabled submarines.

Our rescue bell was able to reach submarines in 850 feet of water. We had a complement of divers equipped with deep-sea gear. Using oxygen and helium as a breathing gas, we could dive in excess of 400 feet. The ship and personnel practiced carefully all phases of submarine rescue techniques in all kinds of weather. 'At last my love for diving will pay off!' I thought. But I was in for a disappointment.

For example, in April 1963, off the coast of New England, the nuclear submarine *USS Thresher SSN-593* was reported overdue from deep-water diving tests. Since we were operating only a short distance away, we arrived on the scene within a few hours. But the *Thresher* was far too deep for anything we had—she was lost in 8,400 feet of water. The ocean was unusually calm when a low-flying aircraft dropped a flower wreath. This was all we could do for the 129 souls lost in the sea below. I felt so helpless.

Prayers were said for these men, giving me reason for thought. I realized from what had happened that nuclear submarines were diving too deep for our rescue system to work. So, in November 1963,

feeling frustrated and disappointed, I left the Navy.

The Sea Gave Up Those Dead'

I began working as a commercial diver for a small diving company in Jacksonville, Florida. There was always diving work to do. Railroad bridges required inspections by divers. Communications cables had to be laid in a trench cut with water jets wherever cables crossed navigable waterways. There were underwater jobs that required cutting and welding steel.

Especially interesting was underwater salvage work, which included lifting sunken barges, tugs, and various small vessels. We would tunnel through the mud under the sunken vessel, sling huge cables around the hull, and then lift the vessel with a heavy crane.

It was while I was on a long trip inspecting submarine pipelines that I learned something that greatly appealed to my love of the sea and my feelings for those who had died at sea. I met one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and soon my wife and I agreed to a study of the Bible.

I was so relieved to learn that this beautiful earth and its oceans would not be burned up with fire, as I had been taught as a Baptist. (Psalm 104:5; Ecclesiastes 1:4) I was fascinated with the thought that the dead, *even the dead in the sea*, would be resurrected. Such scriptures as Revelation 20:13 really touched my heart: "And the sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades gave up those dead in them." I wanted to live forever on a paradise earth. Not long thereafter, my wife and I were baptized, on September 4, 1966.

Diving Innovations

Diving has undergone big changes since I started in the late 1950's. For the sport

diver, scuba diving has opened up the ocean frontiers. However, it takes a lot of training to enjoy this sport safely.

It's the commercial diver, though, who has really seen the changes. When I started, we could go down to 150 feet, using compressed air as a breathing gas. But today there are fine-looking deep-diving hats made with fiberglass and neoprene, and divers breathe a gas that permits them to operate easily at depths in excess of 1,000 feet in salt water! Divers carry with them all kinds of special tools, such as underwater television cameras that send pictures to surface monitors in full color. What the camera sees under water, the monitor instantly records on a video/audio tape ready for instant playback.

Divers working in deep water stay down so long that their body systems become saturated with nitrogen. Once this happens, their decompression time is the same no matter how much longer they stay down at the same depth. They can live and work for a week or even more at great depths. As they return to the surface, their diving systems or habitat serve as a decompression chamber, and they complete their decompression on the surface.

In my opinion, no other place on earth has the mystery of the deep sea. Out beyond the shallow coral reefs, where the water runs deep and blue, lie millions of square miles of ocean that still hide tremendous treasures of natural resources for man. Shipwrecks from past and present dot its bottom. Most of them serve as undersea mansions for countless fish. How those wrecks stir my imagination!

Indeed, the oceans are a wonderful gift from God! Perhaps in his righteous new system we can truly explore the seas and forever enjoy them as a part of God's beautiful earth.—*As told by Oscar Sam Miller.*

Are New Year's Celebrations for Christians?

IN Chinese communities, firecrackers explode all night long. In Japan, gongs of Buddhist temples reverberate in the air 108 times. In the United States, bells, automobile horns, and whistles break forth at the stroke of midnight. All on New Year's Eve.

Did you know that all this hullabaloo, though taking various forms, was originally done for one basic reason: to ward off demons and purify people for the coming year? Most people consider the din and racket of New Year's Eve to be merriment accompanied by elaborate New Year's celebrations. But what is your view of New Year's celebrations? Does it agree with the Bible?

Overdrinking and Overeating

Mircea Eliade, an internationally known professor of religious history, describes the rite associated with New Year's Eve as "an interlude of Carnival, Saturnalia, reversal of normal order, 'orgy.'" So, in many lands, drunken revelries usually result.

In Japan, for example, businessmen use *bonenkai* (parties to forget the old year) as an excuse to overdrink. These are followed by *shinnenkai* (New Year's parties) where more food and drink are served. As a result, "tigers" rage on the late trains during this time of the year. In Japanese, the expression "tigers" alludes to drunkards who are tolerated in this season.

Does not acting in such a manner or even tolerating such disgrace degrade human dignity? The apostle Paul admonished Christians in Rome: "As in the daytime let us walk decently, not in revelries and drunken bouts . . . But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not be planning ahead for the desires of the flesh." (Romans 13:13, 14) Can you imagine Jesus organizing a party featuring overdrinking and overeating for his disciples? Hardly!

Perhaps Paul's reference to "revelries and drunken bouts" included New Year's festivities. Why? The book *Christmas Traditions*, by William M. Auld, states: "From the time of Julius Cæsar [46 B.C.E.] January 1 marked the beginning of the civil year and was a holiday season." In addition, Auld reveals that "for at least three days feasting and merriment prevailed."

Is It Greed?

In the Orient, people observe the custom of giving special monetary gifts to children during the New Year's holiday. The Chinese use red packets of money. They believe that the color red will not only bring good luck and prosperity but also exorcise evil. The Japanese, though, use small white envelopes with auspicious signs on them. What do such practices promote?

"I used to look forward to the New Year's holiday," recalls a Japanese man, "and my

main concern was how much *otoshidama* (New Year's monetary gift) I would get that year." Could this custom affect children? Yes, answers the column *Vox Populi, Vox Dei* in the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun*, which states: "Children secretly rank adults in the order of the amount of '*otoshidama*' received from them." The amount of money given has kept going up, reaching about 20,000 yen (\$130, U.S.) per child in 1985.

Would not this custom promote greed? The adults are eager to have more prestige and the children more money. This is precisely how *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* defines the word "greedy" found in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, namely, "(eager) to have more."

What sort of parent would stir up greed in his offspring and let them cultivate "the love of money"? The Bible warns that "the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things."—1 Timothy 6:10.

But there are even more reasons to be concerned about New Year's celebrations.

Unsavory Origin?

Suppose you discover a creek with sparkling water, tempting you to drink of it. When you go up the stream, however, you find campers washing their dirty mess-tins and soiled clothes in that water. Would you still want to drink the water and risk contracting a disease? The same can be said of the customs of New Year's celebrations. Though some celebrations may seem innocent to men, Jehovah, the God of the Bible, has seen their source.

Well, where do we find the earliest record of a New Year's celebration? "The earliest description of a New Year festival

known to us comes from ancient Mesopotamia," answers Theodor Gaster in his book *New Year—Its History, Customs and Superstitions*. The clay tablets describing the New Year festival record "a program of ceremonies performed at Babylon since the remote days of the second millennium B.C."

The Babylonian year started about the vernal equinox—in the month of March.

Though some celebrations may seem innocent to men, Jehovah God has seen their source

The celebration lasted 11 days and was centered around the worship of Marduk, the city god of Babylon. The vestiges of the New Year festival of Babylon, such as mummers' plays and fertility rites, are still observed during New Year's celebrations around the world. The mummers' parade in the city of Philadelphia (U.S.A.) on New Year's Day and the fertility festival held in Akita City (Japan) on the 17th of January are but two examples of such relics.

God sees the religious practices originating in Babylon as polluted. He refers to the world empire of false religion, with its customs rooted in ancient Babylon, as "Babylon the Great" and warns: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues." (Revelation 18: 2, 4) Therefore, since the features of New Year's celebrations betray their pagan origins, people wanting to heed the Bible will steer clear of such festivities.

Divine Peace in a Troubled World

AFTER sporting events, newspapers have sometimes featured such headlines as "Death at the Stadium." In recent years, spectator violence resulting in injuries and deaths has occurred in Peru, Turkey, Argentina, the Soviet Union, Mexico, China, Egypt, Belgium, Britain, and India—to name a few of the countries involved.

This stadium violence in countries of

the East and the West is just further proof that we are living in a troubled world.

Stadium authorities spend large sums of money to install safety barriers to keep spectators away from players and umpires. They must also protect supporters of one team from those supporting the other team. All of this is necessary because of the violent activity of what the



ROSSEL and CIE, S.A., Brussels

Stadiums are often the scene of violence

French newsmagazine *Le spectacle du monde* called "The Stadium Wreckers."

However, once a year stadium officials in many countries are very happy to rent their facilities to a group with whom they have no fear of trouble—Jehovah's Witnesses. Appropriately, the district conventions of the Witnesses in 1986 were based on the theme "Divine Peace."

Stadium Improvers

Far from being "stadium wreckers," Jehovah's Witnesses have built up a solid reputation as stadium improvers. For example, in Cork City, Ireland, the management of Neptune Stadium was delighted to see 60 volunteer Witnesses of both sexes clean up the stadium garden. An official praised them, saying: "What you did on Saturday

was unbelievable. Everybody is talking about it. You've put us to shame. . . . You came along and just got on with the job. . . . It's fantastic."

One of the 15 conventions in Britain was held at the Manchester City football ground, where a member of the staff commented: "It's lovely to have you back to give the place a good clean. I hope that all your good work won't be undone by the crowds at the rock concert next week."

In Valencia, Spain, a stadium official exclaimed: "Your cleanliness is unbelievable! If our club wasn't in so much need of funds, we would let you use the stadium free of charge."

When the Witnesses leave "their assembly grounds," observed an editorial in the



Jehovah's Witnesses transform stadiums into havens of peace

Norwegian newspaper *Troms Folkeblad*, "the facilities are turned over to the owners in almost better condition than when the Witnesses rented them. And all the work they do on such occasions is based on what they call 'voluntary service.' Yes, it is awe-inspiring indeed."

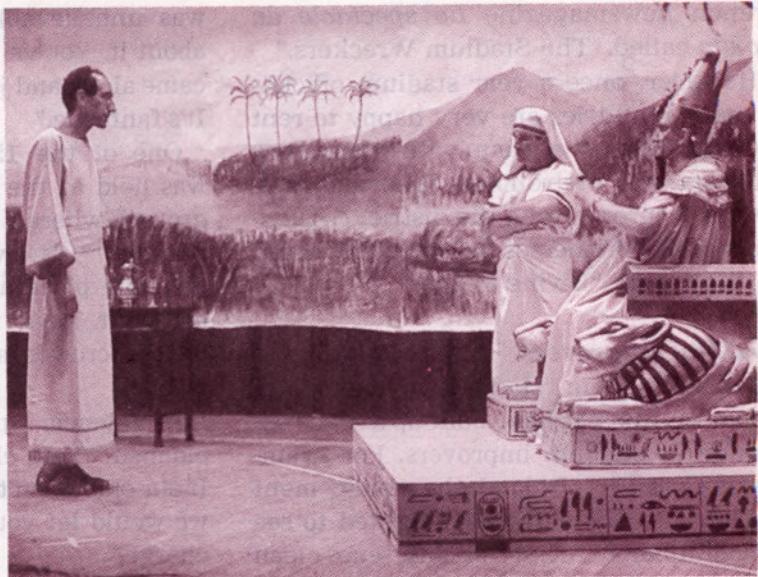
In view of their reputation as peaceful, orderly conventioners, Jehovah's Witnesses are being welcomed in many places where people

were prejudiced against them for religious or other reasons. For instance, in Tomar, central Portugal, a town councillor told one of the organizers of the "Divine Peace" convention there: "You can use all the Municipal Stadium facilities we have. We know you will turn everything over in good condition. It is a pleasure to have you in our community, and we appreciate that you are exemplary, law-abiding citizens."

Peace and Good Order

Yes, people notice the contrast between the conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses and the gatherings of others. "There won't be liquor, drugs, cigarettes or rock music," noted *The News Tribune* of Tacoma, Washington.

Continuing its report on the "Divine Peace" convention there, the newspaper said: "At the yearly conventions, which are held worldwide, children attend the day-



Joseph before Pharaoh in the Bible drama *Preserving Life in Time of Famine* as presented at the Spanish convention in Switzerland

long sessions along with their parents. Officials say they have few problems with discipline because parents teach children to respect them and to behave."

Wherever Jehovah's Witnesses hold conventions, they also endeavor to cooperate with local authorities and residents. For example, in Leeds, northern England, the Witnesses were concerned that the arrival and departure of convention delegates at the local football ground might cause some inconvenience to the workers at a factory nearby. So the convention office wrote the company, advising the management of the convention dates and the program schedule.

After the convention was over, the secretary for Pullmax, the company involved, wrote Jehovah's Witnesses: "May we congratulate you, your colleagues and delegates on their orderly behaviour. To our knowledge there was little disruption or inconvenience experienced over the period of

the convention proving that people can meet in large numbers without creating havoc if principles and attitudes are maintained."

What prompts the cooperative spirit manifested by Jehovah's Witnesses? A reporter covering the "Divine Peace" convention in Marseilles, France, pointed to the answer in the newspaper *Le Provençal*. "Living as a Jehovah's Witness," he wrote, "involves accepting certain principles, whether in the field of education, family life, or marriage, and these principles are drawn from the Bible.... The Word of God governs their entire life."

Allowing Bible principles to guide their lives indeed yields peaceable fruitage, as the daily *Stampa Sera* notes in its comments on the "Divine Peace" convention held in Turin, Italy. "In the local stadium," the paper said, "that great crowd gave, as

always, an example of rigor, seriousness, and professionalism, together with prayer and a warm welcome to anyone who came near."

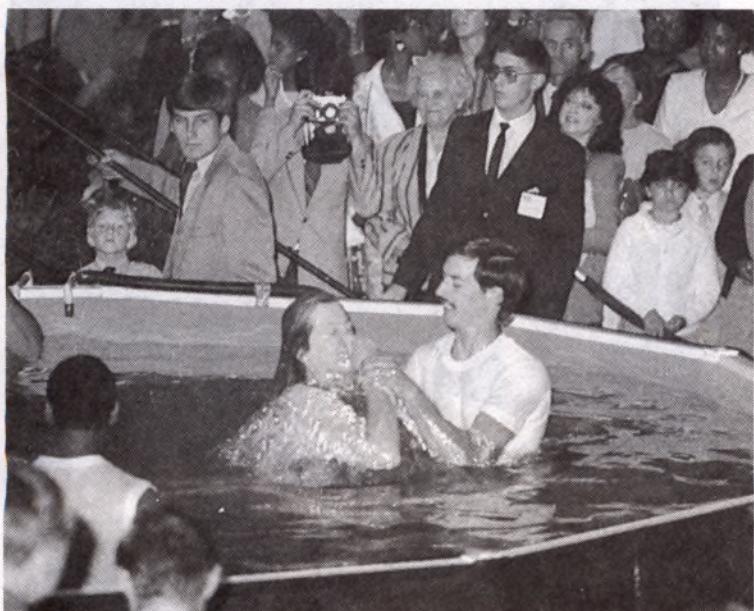
Peaceful Relations With Others

A Bible psalmist wrote: "Abundant peace belongs to those loving your law, and for them there is no stumbling block." (Psalm 119:165) An example of how the application of God's law can prevent trouble was seen at the convention in Dortmund, Federal Republic of Germany. There, some 24,000 Witnesses had to line up for their meal in wind and heavy rain. Did they complain?

The German newspaper *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* commented: "Thousands of umbrellas formed an almost compact roof over their heads. Faithful to the assembly motto 'Divine Peace,' there was no grumbling, no unrest."

The peaceful relations Jehovah's Witnesses enjoy with others is shown by the confidence placed in them. For example, in Denmark at the stadium in Århus, the keys of all the buildings were given to the Witnesses. "The whole staff was sent on vacation," the convention committee reports. "That is how much they trusted Jehovah's Witnesses."

In Switzerland one of the "Divine Peace"



One of the 39,313 persons who were baptized at 421 "Divine Peace" conventions held in the Northern Hemisphere

conventions was held in the Hallenstadion, Zurich. The first morning, the men in charge of the parking lot arrived too late to collect the parking fee. By that time many Witnesses had already parked their cars and had made their way to the stadium without paying. An announcement was made to the conventioners regarding the matter. Some found unbelievable what happened the next day.

"Impossible! Impossible!" a parking official exclaimed. "Never in my life have I met people who parked their cars one day and came back voluntarily the following day offering to pay. If people all over the world were as honest as that, many problems would be solved."

Grateful for Divine Peace

Yes, the "impossible" becomes possible among those who follow God's principles outlined in the Bible. The entire four-day program of the "Divine Peace" conventions held throughout the world by Jehovah's Witnesses in 1986 was designed to help them maintain peace with Jehovah and with their neighbor. To this end, Bible-based discourses, Scriptural dramas, and real-life reports were presented. Also, new Bible study aids, such as the book *Worldwide Security Under the "Prince of Peace,"* were released in several languages, much to the joy of the conventioners.

The fact that exactly the same program was presented at all the conventions, whatever the land or the language, did much to underline the worldwide peace and unity of Jehovah's people.

Many were the expressions of gratitude for these assemblies. In the Netherlands a conventioner contrasted the peaceful atmosphere at the convention he attended with the troubled world around him. He put it this way: "Now that I am at the convention, I feel like someone traveling through a desert who suddenly finds himself at an oasis." After attending the convention in Cardiff, Wales, a Witness wrote: "Where else but in Jehovah's organization would anyone find true peace and have such upbuilding talks, exhortation, and guidance?"

Non-Witnesses also expressed their appreciation. In Finland a maintenance man



Martin and Gertrud Poetzinger examining the German convention releases

Some "Divine Peace" Conventions in the Northern Hemisphere

Country	Number	Peak Attendance	Baptism
Austria	4	25,227	257
Bahamas	2	2,047	55
Barbados	4	5,330	82
Belgium	6	30,411	271
Belize	2	2,506	32
Britain	15	152,501	1,052
Canada	29	139,893	1,640
Colombia	11	67,046	1,424
Cyprus	2	1,523	25
Denmark	5	22,952	147
Dominican Republic	2	19,666	267
Finland	6	25,502	326
France	11	126,946	2,263
Germany	18	150,705	1,157
Greece	5	29,979	358
Guadeloupe	1	12,507	197
Guyana	1	3,112	31
Haiti	2	10,942	212
Hong Kong	3	2,493	96
Ireland	2	3,949	51
Italy	27	196,840	4,921
Ivory Coast	4	6,185	139
Jamaica	3	18,068	248
Japan	27	220,054	3,709
Korea	7	73,469	1,655
Leeward Islands	3	1,587	34
Luxembourg	1	1,460	21
Malaysia	2	1,640	17
Martinique	2	5,837	117
Netherlands	7	42,886	169
Netherlands Antilles	3	3,940	82
Norway	4	12,604	156
Panama	6	3,919	126
Poland	9	111,508	4,000
Portugal	10	54,623	995
Puerto Rico	6	42,102	350
Spain	15	96,627	1,871
Suriname	3	2,860	35
Sweden	10	29,039	315
Switzerland	5	20,092	218
Taiwan	1	2,058	52
Trinidad	1	10,053	151
United States	135	1,276,578	12,603
Venezuela	8	79,839	1,386
TOTAL	430	3,149,105	43,313

at the Helsinki Ice Hall used for the convention enjoyed the songs of praise to Jehovah that were sung before, during, and after the sessions. He said: "Your music is beautiful, and the words of your

songs are positive and meaningful."

In Sweden a senior university lecturer was greatly impressed by the happiness and harmony so evident at the Norrköping "Divine Peace" convention. She stated: "I am used to attending conferences that last several days. The form of education presented here surpasses everything I have experienced. I am delighted with the content, the methods, and the high quality throughout."

Yes, the fine upbuilding program of the "Divine Peace" District Conventions was appreciated by all those who seek "the peace of God." (Philippians 4:7) In 17 countries of Europe alone, a total of 1,022,343 persons attended these conventions and 14,548 were baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah, "the God who gives peace." (Romans 16:20) In the United States and Canada, an additional 1,416,471 persons attended the "Divine Peace" conventions and 14,243 were baptized.

All these conventioners, as well as millions of others who have attended or will be attending the "Divine Peace" conventions in Central and South America, Australia, the

islands of the seas, Asia, and Africa, are happy and grateful to have the hope of soon living in a righteous new system of things and to have found divine peace in a troubled world.

From Our Readers

Overcoming Drug Abuse

Thank you for your article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Recover From Drug Abuse?" (July 8, 1986) It made me realize why I felt as I did when I stopped abusing drugs. I had used them for ten years or so, starting at 14. I am now 27 and have just got over my problem thanks very much to Jehovah. I had been through psychologists, counselors, drug programs, loss of friends, even nine years in prison because of them, and I still couldn't stop. It was only when I replaced the evil with the good, when I started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, that I was able to stop.

J. T., Jr., United States

The article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Recover From Drug Abuse?" shows that you understand drug-dependent persons and that you are interested in helping them. I, too, was dependent upon drugs and was under a doctor's care. Wanting to live comes from learning how to live. And knowing how to live is taught by having a close relationship with Jehovah.

P. O., Federal Republic of Germany

Latchkey Children

I am writing concerning your article "Young People Ask . . . Why Isn't Mom Here When I Get Home?" (June 22, 1986) Sadly, in our area some parents are leaving children eight years old and under alone while they work. But here in Indiana it's illegal to leave a child under age ten alone for any period of time. Did you want readers to feel that being a latchkey child is ok at any age?

L. S., United States

The article did not recommend that young children be left home alone at all. It merely acknowledged that latchkey children are a

fact of life and showed young people how to cope with the situation. All the examples we gave dealt with children of 12 years of age or older. We think that working parents should consider the individual need and ability of any child they will leave alone for a period of time, as well as the need to conform to any local legal age requirements.—ED.

The Mystery Behind the Occult

I was interested in reading your article on the occult and notice that you give a lot of space to negative subjects. (August 22, 1986) I feel you could give more to the Risen Savior and the good news.

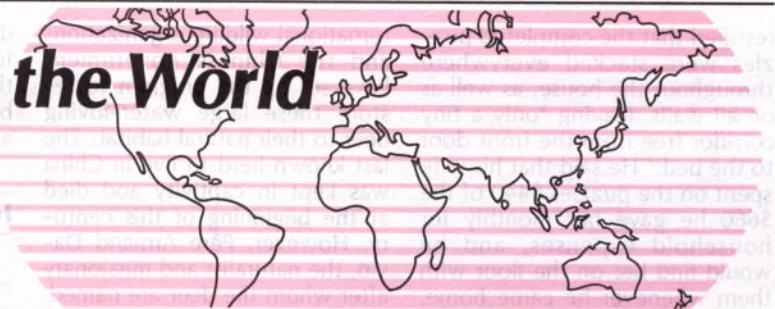
J. H., Australia

We also devote much space to telling our readers about the good news of God's Kingdom under Christ and the positive benefits of following God's laws in our lives. At the same time, we feel the need to take up serious problems facing people today and to show how these will be resolved. Further, there are many dangers in the world, such as occultism, and we believe that it is positive to warn our readers about these dangers and show how they can gain protection from them.—ED.

I want to let you know how much I appreciate the article "The Demons Controlled Me." (August 22, 1986) Before my baptism I was under the same influence. I just didn't know what was taking control over me. Many people felt that it was a way God used to let me know the future. It wasn't until I started to study with Jehovah's Witnesses that I learned the truth on the matter. At times I still dream of events that are to happen, but I pray to Jehovah to help me not to pay any attention to the dreams. I just wish I had known what it was that I was getting into back then.

B. T., United States

Watching the World



Accident Aftermath

Last year Japan reported the worst single-plane crash in aviation history. That tragedy took the lives of 520 people. Since then, what has happened to relatives of the victims? About 270 bereaved families formed an association, and on the first anniversary of the accident, *The Daily Yomiuri* reported how their lives had been affected. Since the crash, 67 families and relatives of the victims have relocated; seven family businesses have gone bankrupt; there have been nine deaths among victims' families, including one suicide. One father, apparently because of shock over the loss of his son and daughter-in-law, left home and disappeared. Among some family members, disputes have developed over the distribution of compensation money. Migraine headaches and insomnia, as well as a variety of health problems, continue to plague others. One widow reports that bereaved family members are blaming her for her husband's death because she purchased his ticket for the fatal flight. Thus, emotional problems from the accident persist.

Dead Silence

How is it possible that the remains of a dead man could lie

undiscovered in his own home for five years? After finding the skeleton of a 56-year-old man in London's East Dulwich, the question is still being debated. The brother of the deceased reported that he had tried to trace him but that his inquiries had come to nothing. Meanwhile, electricity and gas supplies to the house were cut off, and mail dating from December 1981 had piled up behind the locked front door. "It's extraordinary that such a thing can occur in a civilised town like London," noted the coroner.

White Lion Cubs

According to legend, white lions have always roamed Africa's



plains. The first recorded sighting of the animal, though, was in South Africa's Kruger National Park in 1928. More recently, in the neighboring Timbavati Nature Reserve, two white cubs were detected in a litter of five. This year a litter of three white

male cubs was born in the Johannesburg Zoo. "As far as can be established, [this is] the first litter of exclusively white lions," reports the magazine *South African Panorama*. "Since the birth of the white lions, the zoo has been inundated with telephone calls from all parts of the world."

Hard to Swallow

Seeking to cash in on the holiday spirit, one enterprising candy manufacturer in West Germany has announced the Christmas sale of fruit-flavored candy figures of Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus, reported *The Express*, a Pennsylvania newspaper. The proposed sale of these items has sparked criticism from Roman Catholic church officials. However, defending their production of such Biblical-theme candies, one spokesman for the firm noted that "many companies produce candy angel figurines and other such products." A representative for the West German Catholic bishops described the enterprise as "a crass business venture . . . on the wrong side of good taste."

"Puzzling Divorce"

A man in Switzerland filed for divorce because his wife was addicted to jigsaw puzzles. As reported in *The Japan Times*, he

testified that the completed puzzles were stacked everywhere throughout the house, as well as on all walls, leaving "only a tiny corridor free from the front door to the bed." He said that his wife spent on the puzzles \$440 of the \$660 he gave her monthly for household expenses, and he would find her on the floor with them whenever he came home. "It's been going on for six years," complained the husband, "but lately it's become worse. For the past two years I was even forbidden to go into the living room." Retorted the wife: "It's only a hobby and anyway, for years I had to put up with the stench of his cigars."

TV and Your Children

"Parents should take control of their televisions and cut down on the time they and their children view them," states the *Centre Daily Times*, reporting on a three-day symposium on family relationships held at Pennsylvania State College. One expert said that even two hours a day in front of the TV is too much. If such time is cut down or eliminated, she added, families will have an easier time with discipline, can talk to one another and do more things together, and can spend more time reading and improving their social skills. Not all television is bad, she noted, but excessive watching can become a barrier to communication between parents and children.

Deer Repatriate

After 3,000 years, a strange species of Asiatic deer, called Père David's, is coming home to roam wild again in China. *The Times* of London reports that in-

ternational wildlife organizations and the Chinese government have set up the program to restore these large water-loving deer to their natural habitat. The last known herd to live in China was kept in captivity and died at the beginning of this century. However, Père Armand David, the naturalist and missionary after whom the deer are named, had shipped 16 of the deer to the West shortly after he discovered them in 1865. There they survived and prospered and now number some 1,500 worldwide. Forty descendants of the original emigrants, collected from zoos all over Britain, will be returned to their original home in the marshlands of China's coastal Jiangsu province.

'Happy Childhood Denied'

"Grim facts to shock us all," headlined Liverpool's *Daily Post*



over reports from Britain's National Children's Home. The home found that the problems children face mirror closely those of adults. For example, annually about 160,000 children experience family breakups as their parents divorce. But the scope of the problem is far greater. The account notes that "many families collapse without there ever being an officially recorded divorce." Another problem: Among youths under 21 years of age, reported cases of drug addiction, representing only a fraction of the real

drug menace, have skyrocketed fourfold. It is little wonder that the article claims that children are being "denied their basic right of a happy childhood."

Hoofprint Planting

Animal hooves do more than make prints in the soil. They also create new grassland and are a simple but effective answer to the topsoil crisis, reports *The Times* of London. Hoofprints form niches that act as natural containers for rainwater in which plants can root and thrive. That observation helped scientists to come up with a technique called land imprinting. While sowing seed, a rolling cylinder forces hooflike indentations into the stripped soil. When the soil is watered, new grasslands appear that prevent the soil from turning into a dust bowl. Land imprinting, says the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, is a "classic example" of man's growing understanding of nature's balance. It is expected to be especially useful in Third World countries.

Earlier Wrinkles

Everyone gets wrinkles eventually. The ultraviolet radiation in sunlight, sedentary living, and poor diet are some of the causes. Carlotta Jacobson, beauty editor of *Harper's Bazaar*, identifies one cause of premature wrinkling: "Smoker's skin wrinkles up to 10 years sooner than that of non-smokers." Why? According to the *New York Times* article, nicotine constricts blood vessels near the skin's surface. This makes it difficult for the blood to do its job of bringing nourishment to the skin cells and carrying away wastes.

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