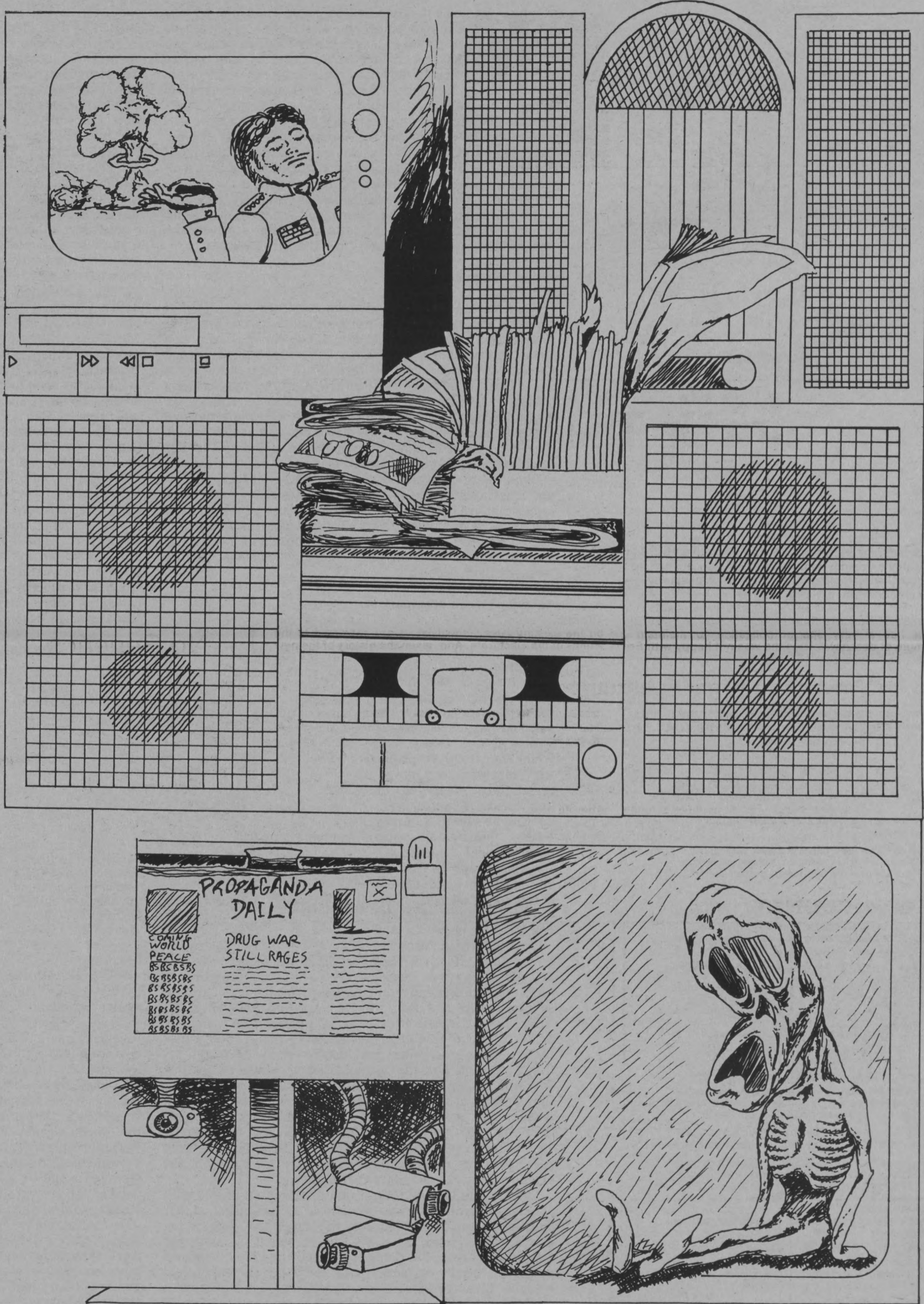


# Friday Magazine



*poor insignificant human beings overwhelmed by masses of media...*

# Media Manipulation and

Helen Meloy and John Egan

**M**edia manipulated drug hysteria. How and why is it happening, and what are its consequences in terms of social control? When people are frightened and hysterical, they don't think clearly and are vulnerable to control by others. Frequently, when people feel intense frustration along with fear over problems they can't control, they become disillusioned and begin to question their values and beliefs about what is right. Fear and frustration become aggression and may lead to social unrest if left unresolved. If the source of the problem causing frustration and fear isn't eliminated or brought under control, people may become mobilized to change the existing social order. By providing outlets for aggressions, the government and mass media can divert energy away from protests, and help to relieve the tensions that result from domestic and world affairs.

## Media Manipulation

The government and mass media can serve the purpose of selecting the 'cause' of our problems and focus our attention toward that source so people can release their tensions at a 'socially acceptable' target. In this way, repressed and unfocused anxiety can be directed as aggression at a scapegoat. John Stockwell, former CIA officer who regularly speaks at UCSB, calls this the "politics of paranoia." He explains that the government and CIA select internal and external targets at which we direct our aggression, which they have evoked through manipulation of the media. The selection of targets is important because it not only focuses public attention toward the labeled 'source' of fear, anxiety and frustration, but also takes our minds away from other issues that are problems in our society. Furthermore, public opinion is manipulated away from social and economic conditions that contribute to major problems facing our society as well as from government policies that further intensify those problems.

## Tactics of Media Manipulation

The media employs various tactics to evoke fear and direct aggression at a target. These include labelling, disinformation (lies, omissions, distortions of the facts), using words, images or pictures that portray the selected target enemy as bad, evil and frightening, while the group or people who represent our government are portrayed as kind and righteous. According to the U.S. Army Field Manual on psychological operations, "A photograph or picture can often insinuate a derogatory charge more effectively than words. The combination of words and photographs or pictures can be far more effective." News media describe the people who lay out its pages as designers who are actually experts in media psychology and manipulation. In the lay-out of a page, several tactics are used, among them juxtapositioning articles with pictures from other articles placed next to them in order to evoke emotional responses in the reader. Other tactics include headlines that don't correspond to the article's content, and the manipulation of language. In this way, the reader is predisposed to reacting a certain way to the content of the article. Media studies show that most people scan newspapers and magazines rather than read them. Through the tactics of juxtapositioning, an emotion, such as fear, created by a photograph in an adjacent column persists in the reader's mind long after the words of the article or editorial comment are forgotten.

An example of the tactic of juxtapositioning photos with articles in order to evoke emotions at the target of our aggression, can be illustrated by the front page spread in the *Los Angeles Times* (3/16/86). The president claimed that Sandinistas dressed in Contra uniforms and killed their own people in order to incriminate the Contras. No actual evidence exists to substantiate that claim. Note a photo of a woman praying and grieving over the graves of her family was placed exactly next to President Reagan's disinformation. The reader who scans the page feels sorrow for the victims and learns that we can't trust those Sandinistas, once again. It is disinformation and media manipulation like this which is presented on a daily basis week after week that eventually influences public opinion and influences

congressional decisions. We have mentioned the tactic of through labeling and misinformation examples to illustrate how it works. Labeled by President Reagan as a evidence has been offered by anyone support the charge against Nicaragua. Nicaragua has been exporting weapons has never been shown — no weapons captured en route from Nicaragua to any. In fact, it is the U.S. which is the largest and implements of torture to the Central America. (Fear of Nicaragua's important purpose, however, in general, is to pay *contras* to overthrow President Ortega.)

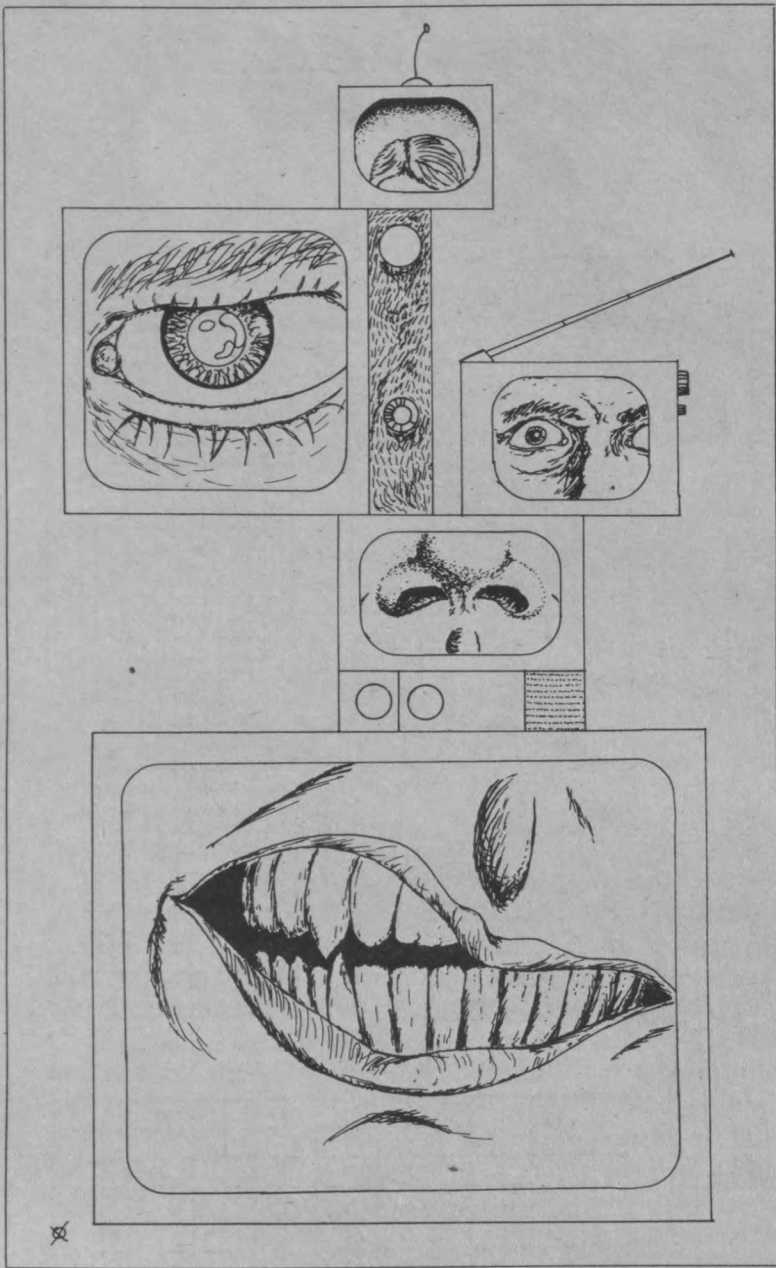
When contrasting the facts with evidence with the opposing message many discrepancies arise. For example, armed death squads in El Salvador have their own people in a "war of extermination" against a defenseless civilian population. Bishop Rivera y Damas of El Salvador is international. At the same time, Guatemalans which were trained by the CIA were killed people. Neither of these countries are "Terrorist States," but are rather poor being on the road to democracy. Why are they labeled terrorist states by our government? mass media? One reason is that the aggression against defenseless civilians in these countries fought with U.S.-made weapons. This is the corporate arms merchants (the CIA) receive over half of general tax revenue from the federal budget. So while the president talks about a return to traditional American values, the problem is something quite different.

This is only one illustration of how complex within the context of U.S. policy to transfer the wealth of the country from the rich, a process now being furthered by a so-called tax reform passed in Congress. This has also been accomplished through dollar pentagon programs for private enterprise. While the social fabric of

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attention. It is true that the press will sometimes be manipulated by our government. The recent misinformation against Khadafi exposed in the media that not everyone in the media is manipulated. However, much of the current press is manipulated. The disclaimers by Reagan, Shultz, and the administration who are attempting to justify the bombing are also important to note that the following made it to the mainstream press. A CIA Intelligence, the famed telephone-intelligence, the Berlin disco-bombing apparent Berlin intelligence has only suspicion involvement, also suspecting neo-Nazi involvement from Syria and Iran. Remember that was used as the pretext for U.S. bombing of Libya. Reagan said on April 14, "Our evidence is irrefutable." Contrast that with the report from Manfred Ganschow, chief of the CIA, on April 28, who is investigating the Berlin bombing. "We have no more evidence that Libya was involved in the act. Which is none." This information is not in the mainstream U.S. media, but was in the journal, *Stars and Stripes*.

When another country is labeled as a terrorist, it is an example of selecting our aggressions. Internal targets are selected to attract attention and serve the purposes



## Poems by June Jordan Nightline: September 20, 1982

"I know it's an unfortunate way to say it, but do you think you can put this massacre on the back burner now?"

### Poem Towards a Final Solution

In a press conference this afternoon the Secretary of Space Development confirmed earlier reports of a comprehensive plan nearing completion in his Office.

Scheduled to meet with the President later this week, Mr. Samuel B. Fierce the Third jokingly termed the forthcoming package of proposals "A Doozie".

The following represents a news team summary of his remarks:

His Office will issue findings of a joint survey of all National Parks conducted in cooperation with the Department of the Interior in an effort to delimit unnecessary vegetation.

His Office will recommend installation of nuclear reactors inside low-growth residential areas of American cities in order to encourage voluntary citizen relocation at estimated savings to the Federal Government of more than 2 billion dollars, yearly.

At the same time, Mr. Fierce suggested that he will recommend quick phasing out of Federal programs for land reclamation described by the Secretary at one particularly light-hearted moment during the press conference as "Neanderthal nostalgia for the little flowers that grow."

In addition, the Secretary indicated he will call for the computation of food stamps as income so that, for example, a legitimate Welfare recipient in Mississippi will have exactly \$8 a month as disposable cash.

Finally, Mr. Fierce alluded to a companion proposal that will raise the rent for subsidized housing by 20 percent.

These various initiatives can be trusted to contribute significantly to the President's economic goals and to the development of more space, coast to coast. They will furthermore establish the Office of Space Development as an increasingly powerful factor in budget-conscious policymaking.

An unidentified reporter then queried the Secretary as to whether this plan could fairly be translated as take down the trees, tear-up the earth, evacuate the urban poor, and let the people hang, generally speaking.

Mr. Fierce dismissed the question as a clear-cut attempt at misleading and alarmist language deliberately obtuse to the main objective of economic recovery for the nation.

Pending official release of his recommendations to the President, the Secretary refused to comment on the snow falling on the stones of the cities everywhere.

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# and the Politics of Paranoia

ctic of manipulating emotions  
nformation. Here are some  
t works. Nicaragua has been  
as a 'terrorist state,' yet no  
anyone in our government to  
Nicaragua. The idea that  
g weapons to other countries  
weapons have ever been cap-  
a to any neighboring countries.  
he largest exporter of weapons  
to the military dictatorships of  
Nicaragua has served an im-  
generating the funding of \$100  
rthrow democratically elected

ets which are supported by  
essage of media manipulation,  
or example, U.S.-trained and -  
rador have killed some 50,000  
of extermination and genocide  
an population," according to  
El Salvador and Amnesty In-  
ne, Guatemalan death squads  
were killing 70,000 of their own  
countries have been labeled  
her portrayed in the media as  
y. Why aren't these countries  
ur government and corporate  
at the air-war going on in those  
civilian populations is being  
ns. This means big profits for  
s (the defense industries) who  
l tax revenues of America's  
president waves the flag and  
onal American values, the real  
ferent.

of how the military-industrial  
of U.S. foreign policy helps to  
ntry from the middle classes to  
g further advanced by the so-  
ngress. The transfer of wealth  
through public subsidy of tax  
or private profit called 'free  
abric of our society approaches  
collapse with deficits in the  
trillions, corporate arms  
merchants continue to  
receive massive public  
subsidy in return for \$600  
toilet seats, \$400 socket  
wrenches, \$426 hammers,  
\$6,000 coffee makers and 12  
cent hex wrenches for  
\$9,609, courtesy of General  
Dynamics. Don't expect  
corporate mass media to  
dwell on these problems —  
to do so might threaten the  
profits of their corporate  
shareholders. Instead,  
expect the mass media to  
concentrate on other topics  
guaranteed to divert our

sometimes reveal the lies told  
ent misinformation campaign  
he mass media clearly shows  
dia is manipulating the news.  
t press coverage is focused on  
Shultz, and others in the ad-  
ing to justify why they lied. It is  
he following information never  
ress. According to West Berlin  
one-intercepts linking Libya to  
pparently do not exist. West  
suspicious about Libyan in-  
eo-Nazi groups, and individuals  
ber that the disco-bombing was  
ombing Libya, when President  
evidence is direct, it is precise,  
that quote with the statement  
ef of the Berlin Staatschutz on  
g the Berlin disco-bombing: "I  
t Libya was connected to the  
a first called me two days after  
s information never made it to  
but was found in U.S. Army

labeled as the cause of our  
selecting an external target for  
gets are also used to divert our  
purposes of the government/

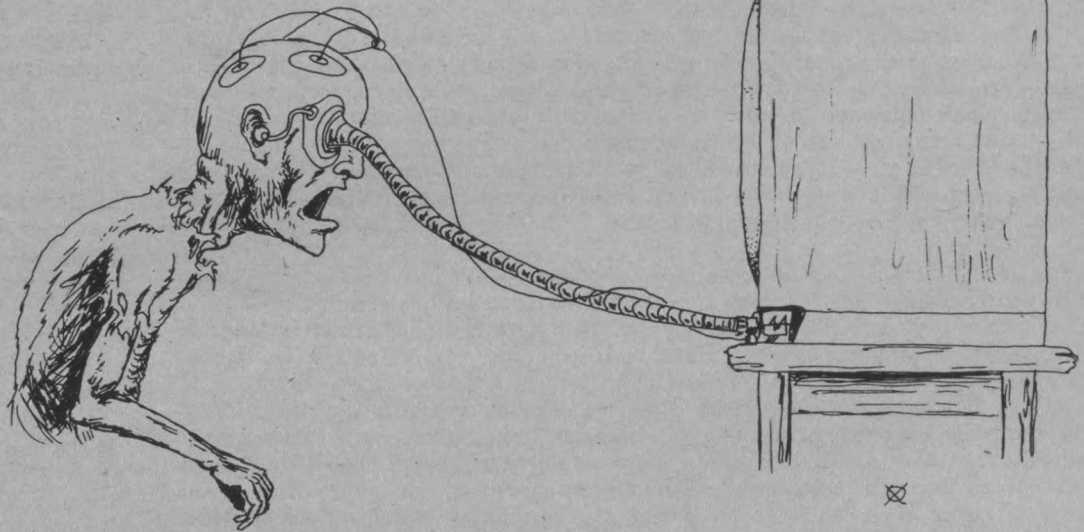
corporate media  
manipulation. The most  
recent example — the  
"DRUG EPIDEMIC" in the  
U.S. — has evoked mass  
hysteria among people in  
our country. Drug users are  
now the supposed cause of  
the breakdown of our  
society's moral character  
and the source of our  
problems. According to an  
opinion poll in *Time*  
Magazine (September  
1986), nearly 75 percent of  
the respondents said that  
drug use is a most serious  
problem in our country  
today, and 70 percent said  
that they would favor drug  
testing in their company.  
The reality and statistical  
evidence presented by the National Institute of Drug Abuse  
shows something quite different than the opinion polls and  
the media's portrayal of the problem. Over the last six years,  
from 1979 to 1985, the use of cocaine among high school  
seniors increased by one percent (from 5.7 percent to 6.7  
percent). Statistics also show that the number of students in  
both high school and college who use marijuana has  
decreased over the past five years.

While President Reagan talked a hard line against drugs,  
he has reduced funding for drug treatment centers by \$200  
million in 1982, and another reduction of \$126 million in 1985.  
If he was so concerned about the drug epidemic (which  
peaked, by the way, in the middle 1970s), why has President  
Reagan cut funding for treatment of drug abuse among the  
people of our country, only now to have such a big media  
splash with Ron and Nancy on TV and headlines across the  
nation? Why the mass hysteria about drug use and why  
should the media cooperate in this, since the common belief  
in a free society is that the media question the government's  
policies and practices?

The media are part of the corporate-government system.  
Through interlocking directorates, the major mass media  
have the same people on their boards of directors as those  
sitting on other boards of large multinational corporations.  
Those board members cannot be objective in presenting the  
news, since their major interests are the sales, profits and  
power of the corporations they represent. For example, the  
*S.B. News-Press* is a subsidiary of the N.Y. Times Cor-  
poration which receives most of its income in the form of  
advertising from major corporate giants such as insurance  
corporations, most of whom are larger in assets than any  
U.S. banking corporations. Advertisers also include tobacco,  
alcohol, pharmaceutical corporations who stand to gain  
much from the recent media manipulated drug hysteria.  
Vice President George Bush's family is heavily invested in  
Eli Lilly, a firm which produces legal narcotics, as opposed  
to the illegal drugs which are the focus of the anti-drug  
legislation and government control. Since most of revenue in  
mass media advertising comes from corporations such as the  
alcohol and tobacco industries and since they stand to lose  
much from the legalization of illegal drugs, media will  
present issues favorable to the interests of those corporations  
which provide most of their revenue. Note, for example, the  
full page alcohol and tobacco ads which regularly appear in  
*Time* and *Newsweek* magazines. These ads represent  
millions of dollars in profits for those newsmagazines each  
year.

## Consequences of Media Manipulation

What are the con-  
sequences of media  
manipulation and the  
politics of paranoia? Who  
benefits from this process  
of evoking fear and  
creating a target who is  
supposedly the cause of  
the problem? First, the  
politicians benefit by joining the anti-drug bandwagon as the  
1986 elections draw near. It is not surprising that Ron and  
Nancy have selected 1986 as the year of saying 'no' to drugs,  
while people have been saying 'no' to drugs for a long time,  
without any help from them. Politicians who are labeled soft  
on drugs are similar to being labeled 'soft on crime' in terms  
of their election chances. The public is encouraged by the  
media to vote on the basis of their fear of the 'drug epidemic'  
or should we say, drug — 'non-epidemic'. Now, Congress  
funds money for drug problems which peaked five years ago,  
just as elections are getting close.



Secondly, the government benefits by taking out attention  
away from the real problems of our society such as poverty,  
pollution, unemployment, defense contractor corruption,  
U.S. violation of the World Court, to name just a few. Media  
then directs our attention toward the 'drug problems of our  
youth,' pointing the finger at them as a source of our  
problems.

More ominously, it must be remembered that totalitarian  
states gain control when the people voluntarily surrender  
their civil liberties to the government. This happened in the  
1930s in Nazi Germany, when people voluntarily gave up  
their personal freedoms under the threat of domestic  
terrorism which was, in reality, manufactured by the  
government. The Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution  
protects us from unreasonable searches and seizures.  
However, if the people of our country voluntarily give em-  
ployers and/or government officials the right to randomly  
enter and search our bodies without due cause, because they  
believe that it serves the interests of protecting our citizens  
from the "drug epidemic," then we are forfeiting our rights  
to our Constitutionally guaranteed personal freedoms. This is  
just a small step away from all employers or prospective  
employers requiring random urine tests, blood tests, and lie  
detector tests without just cause. This is clearly giving up our  
personal freedom just in order to have a job. This is BIG  
GOVERNMENT at its worst ... and for what purpose? Where  
is the drug crisis except as a way to create more fear and  
control over the people? For surely the government is not  
interested in drug treatment, when more than half of the  
money which Congress allocated for the 'Drug-Free  
America' is designated for increased law-enforcement, and  
another \$100 million is shifted away from aid to college  
students and directed toward anti-drug programs in the  
nation's schools.

## What Can Be Done?

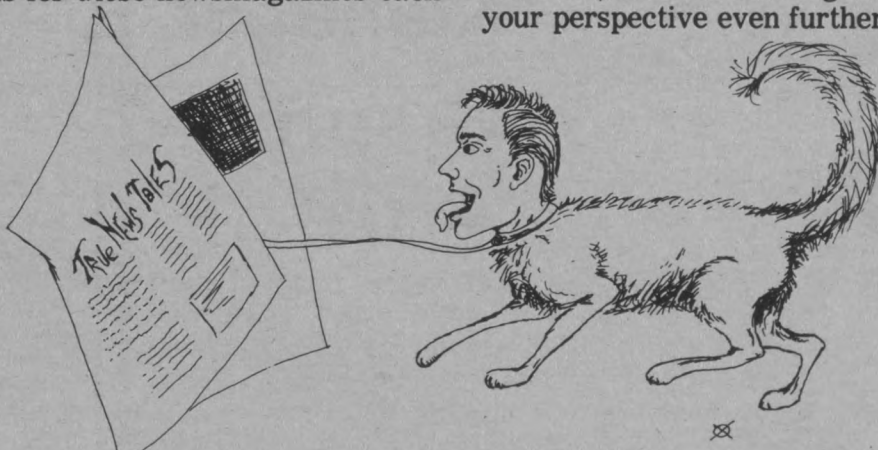
If you are intrigued by the discussion about the politics of  
paranoia and media manipulation, you may begin to read the  
printed mass media with a more critical eye. Being aware of  
the tactics of manipulation gives us power to read beyond the  
propaganda. Expanding our sources of knowledge can help to  
alleviate our fear. You may wish to seek out alternative press  
which are not controlled by the multinational corporations.  
Read books on the subject of mass media, and attend the  
talks on social issues, given by the university, Associated  
Students, and student organizations on campus to expand  
your perspective even further. Knowledge is power, and we

can expand our power by  
being more informed.  
Ultimately, the final  
analysis is your analysis.  
Don't let the government/  
multinational cor-  
porations coerce your  
analysis through mass  
hysteria about the 'drug  
epidemic.'

It has been suggested by  
people who are protesting  
the wave of random drug

tests that Halloween, 1986, be the day people all over the  
country anonymously send their urine sample to Ron and  
Nancy for testing. Make your analysis count. Previous  
protests changed the course of history in 1964, people had 'sit-  
ins' to protest racial discrimination; in 1969, there were 'love-  
in's' in the 1980s there were 'die-ins.' So, on Oct. 31, 1986,  
protest against random voluntary-mandatory drug tests by  
participating in a 'UR-INE,' and send your urine sample to  
the White House. A MEDIA SPLASH!

Show your concern for personal freedom and piss on the  
government.



# Demeaning Two Sexes Is Better Than One?

**"A**nything goes with eggs..." reads the billboard depicting an egg cradled on the multi-colored spandex suited curve of a woman's lower back. Such images in advertising are so common place that many of us don't stop to ask, "Hey, what do eggs have to do with women's bodies?"

What image of women are we buying into when we succumb to the psychological manipulation of such advertising tactics? And it's not just eggs. Stop, think. Open a magazine, turn on the television. Women's bodies are used to sell everything from tampons to the latest in sport cars. No one denies the power of media to influence our perceptions of the world we live in, certainly not the multitude of various industries that dump millions of dollars annually into marketing and promotional accounts. The time has come for us to acknowledge the important role such media plays in shaping our perceptions of ourselves and each other as well as its ability to create and reinforce the stereotypes we must exist with daily.

"While advertisements appear to be photographing male and female human beings what they are actually photographing is a depiction of masculinity and femininity that is fitted in such a way as to make it function socially," says Erving Goffman in his book *Gender Advertisements*. These depictions most commonly reinforce the traditional stereotypes of male and female. For example, women are most often portrayed as homemaker: dusting, mopping, buying groceries, cooking and attending to children. When a man plays the role of homemaker it is because "mommy is away" — the situation is deemed unusual or special. If a woman plays an active role outside the home, the ad focuses on her pantyhose, deodorant, feminine protection or make-up; all of which enhance her appearance and "help her through her busy day." Selling serious products such as cars, stereos, computers, insurance or the image of a bank is a job reserved for an authoritative male narrator. Typically, women are portrayed passively lounging, day-dreaming or waiting. Men, however, are portrayed in an active role: crushing beer cans, participating in sports, or running a business. The woman is an ornament to her surroundings, the man is a participant in his.

Not only do traditional images of the ways in which women and men should behave and act persist in today's advertising, but power relations between the sexes are arranged to reflect familiar sexual stereotypes. In many magazine ads, a power relationship is implied by the arrangement of the characters. The images can be subtle but they reinforce the same roles that we have been taught since childhood. Even when the couple appears to stand side by side, his shoulder may block hers. "Often the man stands in front of the woman or leans over her, whether the setting is one of family, business or leisure," Goffman points out. There are exceptions, but the new Obsession perfume ads illustrate perfectly how the industry tailors an implied power relation to its target audience. The controversial layout has been done in several variations, all of which contain a couple (and sometimes a third partner) in the midst of a vague sexual scene. In woman's magazines the woman's body is arranged above the man's dominating him. In men's magazines the opposite arrangement is employed. Such blatant usage suggests that implied power relationships are no accident, but rather an important part of the picture and its intended appeal.

More than ten years ago the advertising industry began to acknowledge the role that it played in the objectification of women, but throughout the years it has done little to change its practices. In 1975 the National Advertising Review Board published a report on their study of media images of women. The panel came to the consensus that "there is an important difference between portraying a woman as a sexual being and portraying a woman as a sex object." Objectification involves reducing a person to no more than a passive mannequin by using no more than the outer shell of her body to sell a product. The



woman thus possesses no individuality or qualities of her own in the portrayal. The panel also found that "many women resent the use of female body parts as decoration or as an attention-getting device." But whether or not the link between objectification and violence against women is a tangible one has yet to become a concern of the advertising industry.

The differences between a dehumanized, objectified image of a woman and a more natural or human image are easily distinguishable in two ads currently on the market. Both promote clothing. One, designed by ESPRIT appeals to the viewer with the vibrancy of the model's unique character and personality. Another, designed by SATISFACTION to promote a bathing suit sale, stresses the model's passivity. She pouts as she stands, vulnerable (less than half dressed), with a somewhat confused expression of fright on her face. This ad is one up on many though — it includes her face.



Especially cheapening, many agree, is if the product for promotion is totally unrelated to the female body such as when bodies are used to sell cars, beer or after-shave lotion. Many women and men also resent advertisements with the implication of a female body as a reward for an incentive to buy a product (such is the case in the current Solana Tanning Bed Advertisement).

Despite the concerns of the National Advertising Review Board eleven years ago, the usage of female body parts as objects has persisted with the tenacity of the cockroach, while other gimmicks have come and gone. It is unfortunate, because scholars have determined a link between objectification of women in the media and the growing rate of violence against women in society. Organizations such as Media Watch and Citizens for Media Responsibility Without Law claim that in order for a rapist to violate a woman's personal sovereignty he must first conceptualize her as an object and as public property. Both of which the advertising industry does for him every day. In other words, some men and women believe that promoting women as passive sex-objects rather than as powerful individuals reinforces their victim status, and creates an atmosphere of acceptance and tolerance toward violence against women.

Rather than working to bring an end to female exploitation, the trend of the eighties has been to objectify men, suggesting simple-mindedly that two sexes exploited is better than one. Ads for Calvin Klein underwear display a scantily-clad, reclining male body. Soloflex offers an attractive baby-faced male who peers submissively at the viewer. Interestingly, the model for Soloflex was asked to remove his shirt by the female host. He was most offended and refused on the grounds that he was not a piece of meat. The male objectification should not be considered a piece of meat. The male objectification should not be considered a step forward for women, but as a step backwards for human dignity.

All in all, the differences between men and women can be summed up in one universal given. A man's image, overwhelmingly is still determined by what he does and how he effects the world. A woman's image is still a reflection of how she looks to others. She must carry about an inner mirror, continually asking herself, "what does the world see when it looks at me?"

— Rebecca Lester

Friday's focus is changing. What was formerly a free forum for student, faculty and community art, literature and poetry is becoming a theme magazine that will focus on critical issues and current trends. I will still incorporate the works of various artists and writers but we will now ask that their work reflect the issue at hand. Each FM will center on a specific topic and the work within the magazine will in some way

relate to that topic. I am forever in search of talented, creative and energetic input. The upcoming themes are the Occult and Graffiti. Deadlines are October 16 and October 30 respectively. If you're interested in submitting work, come to the Nexus office and leave a message in the FM mailbox and I will contact you.

Susanne Van Cleave,  
Editor Friday Magazine

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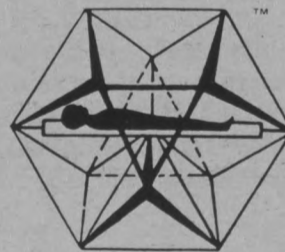


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