

Public Complaint
Presented to the Republic School Board
By Dr. Wes Scroggins
June 21, 2010

This document presents a brief explanation of a public complaint presented by Dr. Wes Scroggins to the Republic School Board. The essence of the complaint regards the content of textbooks and other curricula material used in classes. History and American Government textbooks present an inaccurate view of the American republican form of government and the United States Constitution. Texts and materials used in other courses present issues and principles that are immoral and violate the righteous, moral Law of God on which our Constitution and individual liberties rest.

The paper briefly addresses issues and content taught in several subjects:

- 1) History and American Government
- 2) English
- 3) Sex Education
- 4) Science

The paper is structured according to the four subjects listed above. Material and comments are presented first followed by requested actions from the Board for each subject.

History & American Government

Many of the History and American Government textbooks used in the Republic School District present an inaccurate view of the American form of government. This is done by presenting children with inaccuracies and untruths. Many untruths are found when conducting even a cursory review of several textbooks. Specifically, three of the major problems are discussed here:

- 1) Form of American government
- 2) Separation of church and state
- 3) Freedom of expression

Form of American Government

History and American Government textbooks primarily teach that the American form of government is a democracy. This is not true. The American form of government is a constitutional republic. The differences between the two forms of government are huge. They are based on totally different worldviews and assumptions and have little, if anything, in common. See an example of this untruth taught in the text "We The People," on page 8 in the appendix.

A constitutional republican form of government is based on the rule of Law. The American founding fathers established the Constitution based on Biblical principles as the Rule of Law in this country. The American republican form of government is based on the

assumption that certain liberties are God given. These rights are not granted by government, therefore, they cannot never be taken away by government. The Constitution exists to prevent government from taking away natural, God given rights. This form of government is based on a Biblical worldview. It assumes man's obligation to be obedient to God's Law as well as the sinful, corrupt nature of man.

A democracy is based on an atheistic, humanistic worldview. Individual liberties (and everything else) are determined by the majority. It is majority rule. Underlying assumptions are that there is no absolute right and wrong. Morality is determined by the majority, it is relative. Man is free to do as the majority wishes. The desire of the majority determines right and wrong. It assumes man's nature is good.

The difference between constitutional republicanism and democracy is so great that the founding fathers intentionally founded a republican form of government. They feared and hated democracy. They possessed a Biblical worldview and knew that democracy could never sustain individual liberty for very long. See their statements below.

- 1) At the close of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, a woman, Mrs. Powel of Philadelphia, asked **Benjamin Franklin**, "Well, Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?" With no hesitation, Franklin responded, "A republic, if you can keep it."
- 2) **George Washington** stated during his inaugural address on April 30, 1789, that he would dedicate himself to "the preservation ... of the republican model of government."
- 3) Democracy... while it lasts is more bloody than either aristocracy or monarchy. Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There is never a democracy that did not commit suicide. **John Adams, 2nd President**
- 4) A democracy is nothing more than mob rule, where fifty-one percent of the people may take away the rights of the other forty-nine. **Thomas Jefferson, 3rd President of the United States, author of the Bill of Rights**
- 5) Democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their death. **James Madison, 4th President of the United States, Father of the Constitution**
- 6) The experience of all former ages had shown that of all human governments, democracy was the most unstable, fluctuating and short-lived. **John Quincy Adams, 6th President of the United States**
- 7) Democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts and murders itself. There was never a democracy that did not commit suicide. **Samuel Adams**

- 8) Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote! **Benjamin Franklin**
- 9) We are a Republican Government. Real liberty is never found in despotism or in the extremes of Democracy... It has been observed that a pure democracy if it were practicable would be the most perfect government. Experience has proved that no position is more false than this. The ancient democracies in which the people themselves deliberated never possessed one good feature of government. Their very character was tyranny; their figure deformity. **Alexander Hamilton**
- 10) A democracy is a government by the passions of the multitude, or, no less correctly, according to the vices and ambitions of their leaders. Democracy's majority rule is one of the intermediate stages towards tyranny. Democracy, in its best state, is but the politics of Bedlam; while kept chained, its thoughts are frantic, but when it breaks loose, it kills the keeper, fires the building, and perishes. The framers of the Constitution intended our government should be a republic, which differs more widely from a democracy than a democracy from a despotism. **Fisher Ames, founding father and member of the first Congress**
- 11) Between a balanced republic and a democracy, the difference is like that between order and chaos. **John Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, 1801-1835**

It is obvious that the founding fathers knew there was a huge difference between a republic and a democracy. It should be noted that the Constitution they drafted does not mention "democracy," but does state in Article IV that "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government."

Even Marxist/Communist leaders know the truth about the evils of democracy. See the statements below:

Democracy is indispensable to Socialism. **V. I. Lenin**

Democracy is the road to Socialism. **Karl Marx**

The goal of Socialism is Communism. **V. I. Lenin**

Communism is Socialism in a hurry. **V.I. Lenin**

To state that constitutional republics and democracies are similar and compatible forms of government is inaccurate and mistaken. It is the duty of the Republic School District to teach the truth about our form of government. Dr. Minor, in his May 17, 2010 memorandum to the Board, states at the bottom of page 1 that "**these distinctions are made for our students during the course of their K-12 social studies experiences.**" However, Dr. Minor fails to provide any evidential basis that the teaching of these distinctions is actually occurring in Republic classrooms. Therefore, I ask the Board investigate the following:

- 1) How and to what degree is the distinction between the two forms of government being made in Republic classrooms?
- 2) Why not use textbooks that present the truth? Why use texts that present the untruth and fail to make the distinctions that then require teachers to clarify for students what those differences are?
- 3) What are the evidences (i.e., materials, lectures) that teachers are using to present the true distinctions between the two forms of government?

Separation of Church and State

Republic Schools American Government textbooks also teach the concept of the separation of church and state. One example is found in the textbook, “Magruder’s American Government,” that at one point, was used in high school American Government courses and may still be used as the primary text there (see page 9 in the appendix). In this example, the figure of the nativity scene is used to teach children that the separation of church and state is a constitutional principle and that this nativity scene is unconstitutional. The author uses several questions to provide an implied answer. However, this is a lie.

Nativity scenes do not violate the separation of church and state. The reason for this is that the separation of church and state is a myth. It is not even mentioned in the Constitution. The phrase “separation of church and state” is only found in one sentence in one letter written by Thomas Jefferson on January 1, 1802 to the Danbury Baptist Association in Danbury, Connecticut. In this one sentence, Jefferson used the phrase to assure the Danbury Baptists that since the Constitution built a wall of separation that prohibited the state from establishing an official religion, they did not have to worry about the government meddling in their religious affairs. He assured them that America was not like England, where the government controlled the church. However, in the 1940s, a liberal U.S. Supreme Court perverted this phrase and interpreted it to mean that the state could no longer acknowledge God. Since then it has been used to eliminate Christianity from all spheres of public life.

To teach children that a nativity scene, or anything else, violates the First Amendment principle of the separation of church and state is nothing more than a lie. It is the moral duty of this school district to teach the truth of this issue: that the separation of church and state is a myth and is not found in the Constitution. It is impossible to violate something that does not exist.

Freedom of Expression

The argument against teaching the constitutional principle of freedom of expression is much the same as the argument against the separation of church and state. The concept of freedom of expression does not exist in the Constitution. Yet textbooks such as “We The People” teaches that the Constitution protects the freedom of expression (see page 10 in the appendix). The concept of freedom of expression was created in the

1940s by the liberal U.S. Supreme Court and has been used since to justify many perversions in our society in the name of an individual's right of freedom of expression, including the evils of abortion, homosexuality, and pornography. It is also interesting to note that the textbook excludes the establishment clause and free exercise of religion from the First Amendment freedom of expression concept. However, the founding fathers began the First Amendment with the establishment clause and free exercise of religion.

Requested Action from the Board

The Republic School Board should take the following actions:

- 1) Review all History and American Government textbooks across all grades to determine whether they contain the above lies and inaccuracies.
- 2) Immediately discontinue the use of any and all textbooks that do not present the truth of the issues discussed above.
- 3) Investigate how teachers are making the constitutional republic–democracy distinction in the classrooms given that the textbooks fail to do so. Collect materials that teachers are using to highlight and teach children the differences.

English

The High School English I (and possibly English II) curriculum contains materials that are immoral, offensive, and vulgar. "Slaughterhouse Five" is required reading in either the English I or English II course. It contains very vulgar language throughout the book and covers topics such as sex outside of marriage and homosexuality. See pages 12-15 in the appendix for excerpts from the book.

In the English I course, students are required to read the book "Speak" and also watch the movie. "Speak" also contains much offensive material, including two rape scenes, drunken teenage parties, and teenage pre-marital sex. See pages 16-21 in the appendix for excerpts from the book.

Books such as "Twenty Boy Summer" are also listed as recommended reading on the Republic School library website. This book glorifies drunken teenage parties and teen pre-marital sex. See pages 22-27 for excerpts from the book.

Children in these classes and others are also exposed to R-rated movies. In English class, children watch "The Breakfast Club." In other classes such as history, they watch "Saving Private Ryan." Both these movies and others like them have offensive (and violent) content that justifies the R rating. It is interesting to note that while these children are not old enough to go to the movie theatre and see these movies, they are exposed to them at school by the teachers in the district.

Requiring children to be exposed to this content at school is immoral. It is an abomination to God to expose children to this material and this content will never be part of a moral education. It is difficult to understand how a school board and school

administration that claims to be Christian and profess Jesus Christ can expose children to such immoral and vulgar material.

Requested Action from the Board

The Republic School Board should take the following actions:

- 1) Remove the above mentioned books from the English curriculum.
- 2) Identify and remove any other books that teach similar content.
- 3) Remove all R-rated movies from the curricula in all subjects.

Sex Education

A cursory review of 8th grade sex education materials indicate that children are being exposed to immorality in this class. Materials such as “What Do You Know About HIV?” and “HIV and AIDS- Facts For Young People” introduce children to concepts such as homosexuality, bisexuality, oral and anal sex, and the use of condoms. See pages 28-29 for excerpts from the “HIV and AIDS- Facts For Young People” booklet.

Materials such as this introduce children to abominations (Lev. 18:22; 1 Cor. 6:9; Eph. 5:5; Gal. 5:19-21) according to God and equip them with the knowledge to have pre-marital sex, which is also sinful (Matt. 15:19; 1 Cor. 6:18; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Cor. 5:9-11).

Requested Action from the Board

The Republic School Board should take the following actions:

- 1) Remove all teaching of sex education from the district.

Science and Evolution

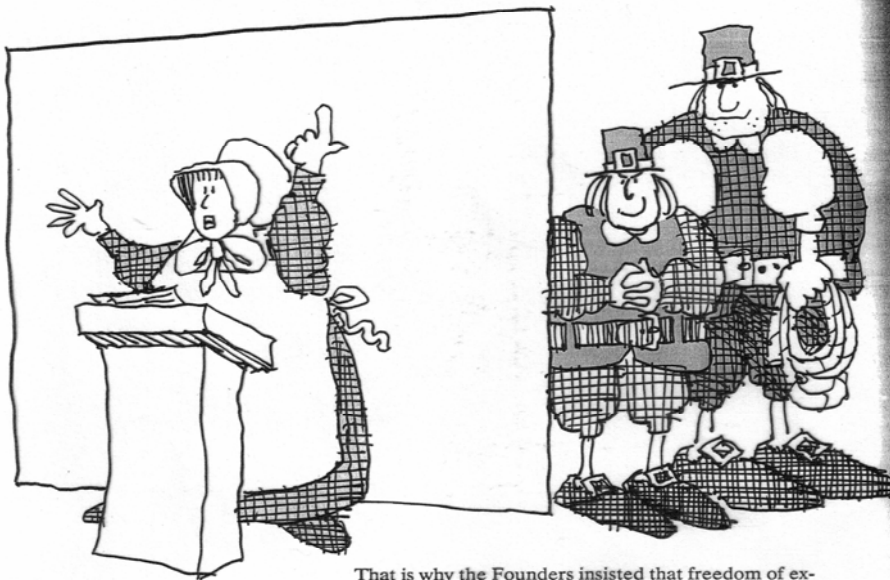
Although science and biology textbooks have not been reviewed at this point, the teaching of evolution in these texts is with doubt. The teaching of evolution is contrary to the Word of God concerning the origins of the universe and man’s relationship with God (see Genesis 1 & 2). Evolution teaches that there is no God, that there is no higher authority that man must be obedient to, and that truth is whatever man decides it to be. It rejects that absolute truth and authority of God over man.

Requested Action from the Board

The Republic School Board should take the following actions:

- 1) Discontinue the use of all textbooks and materials that teach evolution and exclude God as the creator of the universe and mankind.

Appendix



What do you think the Founders learned from the experiences of people like Mary Dyer?

That is why the Founders insisted that freedom of expression be protected in the Constitution.

Should freedom of expression ever be limited?

As you have learned, our democracy depends on freedom of expression. However, sometimes it is fair to limit freedom of expression to protect other rights. For example, you may not cry "Fire!" in a crowded theater when there is no fire, just to frighten people. Someone might be hurt rushing to get out.

benefit handicapped children in a tight-knit community of Hasidic Jews.

In the most recent case, from Louisiana, *Mitchell v. Helms*, 2000, the Supreme Court upheld a federal law under which some material and equipment, including computer hardware and software, are loaned to public and private schools. Two facts were key to the Court's ruling: that those items (1) are loaned, not given to parochial schools, and (2) can be used only in "secular, neutral, and nonideological" programs.

Other Establishment Clause Cases

Beyond the realm of education, the Supreme Court has ruled on many other important aspects of freedom of religious expression.

Seasonal Displays

Many public organizations sponsor celebrations of the holiday season with street decorations, programs in public schools, and the like. Can these publicly sponsored observances properly include expressions of religious belief?



▲ This Christian nativity scene was displayed in front of the Massachusetts State House. *Critical Thinking* Does this seasonal display violate the separation of church and state? How might it be relocated or changed to avoid coming into conflict with the First Amendment?

In *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 1984, the Court held that the city of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, could include the Christian nativity scene in its holiday display, which also featured nonreligious objects such as candy canes and Santa's sleigh and reindeer. That ruling, however, left open this question: What about a public display made up *only* of a religious symbol?

The Court faced that question in 1989. In *County of Allegheny v. ACLU*, it held that the county's seasonal display "endorsed Christian doctrine," and so violated the 1st and 14th amendments. The county had placed a large display celebrating the birth of Jesus on the grand stairway in the county courthouse, with a banner proclaiming "Glory to God in the Highest."

At the same time, the Court upheld another holiday display in *Pittsburgh v. ACLU*. The city's display consisted of a large Christmas tree, an 18-foot menorah, and a sign declaring the city's dedication to freedom.

Chaplains

Daily sessions of both houses of Congress and most of the State legislatures begin with prayer. In Congress, and in many States, a chaplain paid with public funds offers the opening prayer.

The Supreme Court has ruled that this practice, unlike prayers in the public schools, is constitutionally permissible. The ruling was made in a case involving Nebraska's one-house legislature, *Marsh v. Chamber*, 1983.

The Court rested its distinction between school prayers and legislative prayers on two points. First, prayers have been offered in the nation's legislative bodies "from colonial times through the founding of the Republic and ever since." Second, legislators, unlike schoolchildren, are not "susceptible to religious indoctrination or peer pressure."

The Free Exercise Clause

The second part of the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom is set out in the Constitution's **Free Exercise Clause**, which guarantees to each person the right to believe whatever he or she chooses to believe in matters of religion. No law and no other action by government can violate that absolute constitutional right. It is protected by the 1st and the 14th amendments.

LESSON 16

How does the Constitution protect your freedom of expression?

Purpose of Lesson

In this lesson, you will learn why freedom of expression was important to the Founders. You also will learn why it is so important today, both to you and to our nation. When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to explain the benefits of freedom of expression. You should also be able to explain when it might be reasonable to limit this freedom.

What is freedom of expression?

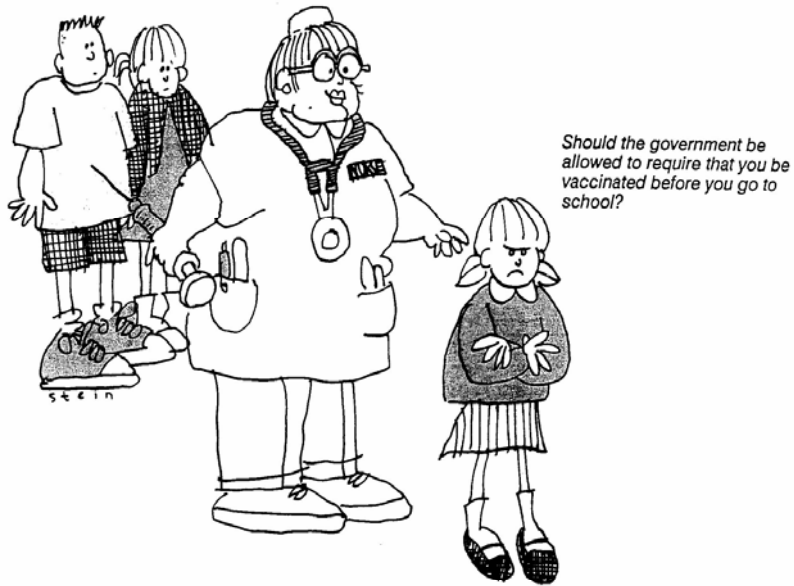
Suppose someone asked you to make a list of some of the freedoms you think are very important. Most Americans would say they think it is important to have freedom of:

- **speech** - the right to say whatever they wish to say
- **press** - the right to read and write whatever they wish
- **assembly** - the right to meet with others to talk about whatever they wish
- **petition** - the right to ask the government to correct things that they think are wrong

These rights—freedom of **speech**, **press**, **assembly**, and **petition**—are part of the right to **freedom of expression**. Our right to freedom of expression is protected by the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights.



How does the Bill of Rights protect freedom of speech?



Should the government be allowed to require that you be vaccinated before you go to school?



Does freedom of religion allow you to shout your views in the middle of the night?

Slaughterhouse Five

SEVEN

Billy Pilgrim got onto a chartered airplane in Hium twenty-five years after that He knew it was going to crash, but he didn't want to make a fool of himself by saying so. It was supposed to carry Billy and twenty-eight other optometrists to a convention in Montreal.

His wife, Valencia, was outside, and his father-in-law, Lionel Merble, was strapped to the seat beside him.

Lionel Merble was a machine. Tralfamadorians, of course, say that every creature and plant in the Universe is a machine. It amuses them that so many Earthlings are offended by the idea of being machines.

Outside the plane, the machine named Valencia Merble Pilgrim was eating a Peter Paul Mound Bar and waving bye-bye.

The plane took off without incident. The moment was structured that way. There was a barbershop quartet on board. They were optometrists, too. They

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called themselves "The Febs," which was an acronym for "Four-eyed Bastards."

When the plane was safely aloft, the machine that was Billy's father-in-law asked the quartet to sing his favorite song. They knew what song he meant, and they sang it, and it went like this:

*" In my prison cell I sit,

With my britches full of shit,

And my balls are bouncing gently on the floor.

And I see the bloody snag

When she bit me in the bag.

Oh, I'll never fuck a Polack any more.

Billy's father-in-law laughed and laughed at that, and he begged the quartet to sing the other Polish song he liked so much. So they sang a song from the Pennsylvania coal mines that began:

Me and Mike, ve vork in mine. Holy shit, ve have good time. Vunce a veek ve get our pay.

Holy shit, no vork next day.

Speaking of people from Poland: Billy Pilgrim accidentally saw a Pole hanged in public, about three days after Billy got to Dresden. Billy just happened to be walking to work with some others shortly after sunrise, and they came to a gallows and a small crowd in front of a soccer stadium. The Pole was a farm laborer who

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having hurt an innocent bystander. "Nobody ever got it from Lazzaro," he said, "who didn't have it coming."

Poor old Edgar Derby, the high school teacher, got into the conversation now. He asked Lazzaro if he planned to feed the Blue Fairy Godmother clock springs and steak.

"Shit," said Lazzaro.

"He's a pretty big man," said Derby, who, of course, was a pretty big man himself.

"Size don't mean a thing."

"You're going to *shoot* him?"

"I'm gonna *have h'n* shot," said Lazzaro. "He'll get home after the war. He'll be a big hero. The dames'll be climbing all over him. He'll settle down. A couple of years!! go by. And then one day there'll be a knock on his door. He'll answer the door, and there'll be a stranger out there. The stranger!! ask him if he's so-and-so. When he says he is, the stranger!! say, Taul Lazzaro sent me.' And he'll pull out a gun and shoot his pecker off. The stranger!! let him think a couple of seconds about who Paul Lazzaro is and what life's gonna be like without a pecker. Then he'll shoot him once in the guts and walk away." So it goes.

Lazzaro said that he could have anybody in the world killed for a thousand dollars plus traveling expenses. He had a list in his head, he said.

Derby asked him who all was on the list, and Lazzaro said, "Just make fucking sure you don't get

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on it. Just don't cross me, that's all." There was a silence, and then he added, "And don't cross my friends."

"You have *friends*?" Derby wanted to know. "In the tear?" said Lazzaro. "Yeah—I had a friend in the war. He's dead." So it goes. "That's too bad."

Lazzaro's eyes were twinkling again. "Yeah. He was my buddy on the boxcar. His name was Roland Weary. He died in my arms." Now he pointed to Billy with his one mobile hand. "He died on account of this silly cocksucker here. So I promised him I'd have this silly cocksucker shot after the war."

Lazzaro erased with his hand anything Billy Pil might be about to say. "Just forget about it, kid," said. "Enjoy Me while you can. Nothing's gonna happen for maybe five, ten, fifteen, twenty years. But lemme give you a piece of advice: Whenever the doorbell rings, have somebody else answer the door."

Billy Pilgrim says now that this really is the way he *is* going to die, too. As a time-traveler, he has seen his own death many times, has described it to a tape recorder. The tape is locked up with his will and some other valuables in his safe-deposit box at the Ilium Merchants National Bank and Trust, he says. *I, Bitty Pilgrim*, the tape begins, *will die, have died, and always will die on February thirteenth, 1976.*

At the time of his death, he says, he is in Chicago to address a large crowd on the subject of flying saucers and the true nature of time. His home is still in Ilium.

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But it was too early in the evening for programs that allowed people with peculiar opinions 'to speak out. It was only a little after eight o'clock, so all the shows were about silliness or murder. So it goes.

Billy left his room, went down the slow elevator, walked over to Times Square, looked into the window of a tawdry bookstore. In the window were hundreds of books about fucking and buggery and murder, and a street guide to New York City, and a model of the Statue of Liberty with a thermometer on it. Also in the window, speckled with soot and fly shit, were four paperback novels by Billy's friend, Kilgore Trout

The news of the day, meanwhile, was being written in a ribbon of lights on a building to Billy's back. The window reflected the news. It was about power and sports and anger and death. So it goes.

Billy went into the bookstore.

A sign in there said that adults only were allowed in the back. There were peep shows in the back that showed movies of young women and men with no clothes on. It cost a quarter to look into a machine for one minute. There were still photographs of naked young people for sale back there, too. You could take those home. The stills were a lot more Tralfamadorian than the movies, since you could look at them whenever you wanted to, and they wouldn't change. Twenty years in the future, those girls would still be young, would still be smiling or smoldering or simply looking stupid, with their legs wide open. Some of them were

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eating lollipops or bananas. They would still be eating those. And the peckers of the young men would still be semierect, and their muscles would be bulging like cannonballs.

But Billy Pilgrim wasn't beguiled by the back of the store. He was thrilled by the Kilgore Trout novels in the front. The titles were all new to him, or he thought they were. Now he opened one. It seemed all right for him to do that. Everybody else in the store was pawing things. The name of the book was *The Big Board*. He got a few paragraphs into it, and then he realized that he *had* read it before—years ago, in the veterans* hospital. It was about an Earthling man and woman who were kidnapped by extra-terrestrials. They were put on display in a zoo on *a* planet called Zircon-212.

These fictitious people in the zoo had a big board supposedly showing stock market quotations and commodity prices along one wall of their habitat, and a news ticker, and a telephone that was supposedly connected to a brokerage on Earth. The creatures on Zircon-212 told their captives that they had invested a million dollars for them back on Earth, and that was up to the captives to manage it *so* that they wo

be fabulously wealthy when they were returned to Earth.

The telephone and the big board and the ticker were

all fakes, of course. They were simply stimulants to

make the Earthlings perform vividly for the crowds

at the zoo—to make them jump up and down and

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Then poor old Derby made a speech. He thanked the Englishman for his good advice, said he meant to follow it exactly. He said he was sure that all the other Americans would do the same. He said that his primary responsibility now was to make damn well sure that everybody got home safely.

"Go take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut," murmured Paul Lazzaro in his azure nest "Go take a flying fuck at the moon."

The temperature climbed startUngly that day. The noontime was balmy. The Germans brought soup and bread in two-wheeled carts which were pulled by Russians, The Englishman sent over real coffee and sugar and marmalade and cigarettes and cigars, and the doors of the theater were left open, so the warmth could get in.

The Americans began to feel much better, were able to hold

their food. And then it was time to go to Dresden. The

Americans marched fairly stylishly out of the British

compound. Billy Pilgrim again led the parade. He had silver boots now, and a mufi, and a piece of azure curtain which he wore Lice a toga. Billy still had a beard. So did poor old Edgar Derby, who was beside him. Derby was imagining letters to home, his lips working tremulously:

Dear Margaret—We are leaving for Dresden today. Don't worry. It witt never be bombed. It is an open city. There was an election at noon, and guess what? And so on.

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"About as happy as I was on Earth," said Billy Pilgrim, which was true.

There were five sexes on Tralfamadore, each of them performing a step necessary in the creation of a new individual. They looked identical to Billy—because their sex differences were all in the fourth dimension.

One of the biggest moral bombshells handed to Billy by the Tralfamadorians, incidentally, had to do with sex on Earth. They said their flying-saucer crews had identified no fewer than *seven* sexes on Earth, each essential to reproduction. Again: Billy couldn't possibly imagine what five of those seven sexes had to do with the making of a baby, since they were sexually active only in the fourth dimension.

The Tralfamadorians tried to give Billy clues that would help him imagine sex in the invisible dimension. They told him that there could be no Earthling babies without male homosexuals. There *could* be babies without female homosexuals. There couldn't be babies without women over sixty-five years old. There *could* be babies without men over sixty-five. There couldn't be babies without other babies who had lived an hour or less after birth. And so on.

It was gibberish to Billy.

There was a lot that Billy said that was gibberish to the Tralfamadorians, too. They couldn't imagine what time looked like to him. Billy had given up on explaining that The guide outside had to explain as best he could.

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Speak

A block of ice freezes our section of the bleachers. Heads snap in my direction with the sound of a hundred paparazzi cameras. I can't feel my fingers. I shake my head. Another girl chimes in. "My brother got arrested at that party. He got fired because of the arrest. I can't believe you did that. Asshole." You don't understand, my head voice answers. Too bad she can't hear it. My throat squeezes shut, as if two hands of black fingernails are clamped on my windpipe. I have worked so hard to forget every second of that stupid party, and here I am in the middle of a hostile crowd that hates me for what I had to do. I can't tell them what really happened. I can't even look at that part myself. An animal noise rustles in my stomach.

Heather moves to pat my pom-pom, but pulls her hand back. For a minute she looks like she'll defend me. No, no, she won't. It might interfere with her Plan. I close my eyes. Breathe breathe breathe. Don't say anything. Breathe. The cheerleaders cartwheel into the gym and bellow. The crowd stomps the bleachers and roars back. I put my head in my hands and scream to let out the animal noise and some of that night. No one hears. They are all quite spirited.

The band staggers through a song and the cheerleaders bounce. The Blue Devil mascot earns a standing ovation by back-flipping right into the principal. Principal Principal smiles and awshucks us. It has only been six weeks since the beginning of school. He still has a sense of humor. Finally, our own Devils hulk into the gym. The same boys who got detention in elementary school for beating the crap

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out of people are now rewarded for it. They call it football. The coach introduces the team. I can't tell them apart. Coach Disaster holds the microphone too close to his lips, so all we hear is the sound of his spitting and breathing. The girl behind me jams her knees into my back. They are as sharp as her fingernails. I inch forward in my seat and stare intently at the team. The girl with the arrested brother leans forward. As Heather shakes her pom-poms, the girl yanks my hair. I almost climb up the back of the kid in front of me. He turns and gives me a dirty look. The coach finally hands the wet microphone back to the principal, who introduces us to our very own cheerleaders. They slide into synchronized splits and the crowd goes nuts. Our cheerleaders are much better at scoring than the football team is.

CHEERLEADERS

There are twelve of them: Jennie, Jen, Jenna, Ashley, Aubrey, Amber, Colleen, Kaitlin, Marcie, Donner, Blitzen, and Raven. Raven is the captain. Blondest of the blondes.

My parents didn't raise me to be religious. The closest we come to worship is the Trinity of Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. I think the Merryweather cheerleaders confuse me because I missed out on Sunday School. It has to be a miracle. There is no other explanation. How else could they sleep with the football team on Saturday night and be reincarnated as virginal goddesses on Monday? It's as if they

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operate in two realities simultaneously. In one universe, they are gorgeous, straight-teethed, long-legged, wrapped in designer fashions, and given sports cars on their sixteenth birthdays. Teachers smile at them and grade them on the curve. They know the first names of the staff. They are the Pride of the Trojans. Oops—I mean Pride of the Blue Devils.

In Universe #2, they throw parties wild enough to attract college students. They worship the stink of Eau de Jockey. They rent beach houses in Cancun during Spring Break and get group-rate abortions before the prom.

But they are so cute. And they cheer on our boys, inciting them to violence and, we hope, victory. These are our role models—the Girls Who Have It All. I bet none of them ever stutter or screw up or feel like their brains are dissolving into marshmallow fluff. They all have beautiful lips, carefully outlined in red and polished to a shine.

When the pep rally ends, I am accidentally knocked down three rows of bleachers. If I ever form my own clan, we'll be the Anti-Cheerleaders. We will not sit in the bleachers. We will wander underneath them and commit mild acts of mayhem.

THE OPPOSITE OF INSPIRATION IS . . . EXPIRATION?

For a solid week, ever since the pep rally, I've been painting watercolors of trees that have been hit by lightning. I try to

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

I can't sleep after the game. Again. I spend a couple hours tuning AM radio to the weird bounces of night. I listen to jabber-jabber from Quebec, a farm report from Minnesota, and a country station in Nashville. I crawl out my window onto the porch roof and wrap myself in all my blankets.

A fat white seed sleeps in the sky.

Slush is frozen over. People say that winter lasts forever, but it's because they obsess over the thermometer. North in the mountains, the maple syrup is trickling. Brave geese punch through the thin ice left on the lake. Underground, pale seeds roll over in their sleep. Starting to get restless. Starting to dream green.

The moon looked closer back in August.

Rachel got us to the end-of-summer party, a cheerleader party, with beer and seniors and music. She blackmailed her brother, Jimmy, to drive us. We were all sleeping over at Rachel's house. Her mother thought Jimmy was taking us roller-skating.

It was at a farm a couple of miles from our development. The kegs were in the barn where the speakers were set up. Most people hung at the edge of the lights. They looked like models

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in a blue-jeans ad, thinthinthin, big lips, big earrings, white smiles. I felt like such a little kid.

Rachel found a way to fit in, of course. She knew a lot of people because of Jimmy. I tasted a beer. It was worse than cough medicine. I gulped it down. Another beer and one more, then I worried I would throw up. I walked out of the crowd, toward the woods. The moon shone on the leaves. I could see the lights, like stars strung in the pines. Somebody giggled, hidden beyond the dark, quiet boygirl whispers. I couldn't see them.

A step behind me. A senior. And then he was talking to me, flirting with me. This gorgeous cover-model guy. His hair was way better than mine, his every inch a tanned muscle, and he had straight white teeth. Flirting with me! Where was Rachel—she had to see this!

Greek God: "Where did you come from? You're too beautiful to hide in the dark. Come dance with me."

He took my hand and pulled me close to him. I breathed in cologne and beer and something I couldn't identify. I fit in against his body perfectly, my head level with his shoulder. I was a little dizzy—I laid my cheek on his chest. He wrapped one arm around my back. His other hand slid down to my butt. I thought that was a little

rude, but my tongue was thick with beer and I couldn't figure out how to tell him to slow down. The music was sweet. This was what high school was supposed to feel like. Where was Rachel? She had to see

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He tilted my face up to his. He kissed me, man kiss, hard sweet and deep. Nearly knocked me off my feet, that kiss. And I thought for just a minute there that I had a boyfriend, I would start high school with a boyfriend, older and stronger and ready to watch out for me. He kissed me again. His teeth ground hard against my lips. It was hard to breathe.

A cloud cloaked the moon. Shadows looked like photo negatives.

"Do you want to?" he asked.

What did he say? I didn't answer. I didn't know. I didn't speak.

We were on the ground. When did that happen? "No." No I did not like this. I was on the ground and he was on top of me. My lips mumble something about leaving, about a friend who needs me, about my parents worrying. I can hear myself—I'm mumbling like a deranged drunk. His lips lock on mine and I can't say anything. I twist my head away. He is so heavy. There is a boulder on me. I open my mouth to breathe, to scream, and his hand covers it. In my head, my voice is as clear as a bell: "NO I DON'T WANT TO!" But I can't spit it out. I'm trying to remember how we got on the ground and where the moon went and wham! shirt up, shorts down, and the ground smells wet and dark and NO!—I'm not really here, I'm definitely back at Rachel's, crimping my hair and gluing on fake nails, and he smells like beer and mean and he hurts me hurts me hurts me and gets up

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I don't know what to do with the comforter. It's really too ratty to take home. I should have gone to my locker first and gotten my backpack—I forgot about the books that are in here. I fold the comforter and set it on the floor, turn out the light, and head out the door for my locker. Somebody slams into my chest and knocks me back into the closet. The light flicks on and the door closes.

I am trapped with Andy Evans.

He stares at me without talking. He is not as tall as my memories, but is still loathsome. The lightbulb throws shadows under his eyes. He is made out of slabs of stone and gives off a smell that makes me afraid I'll wet my pants. He cracks his knuckles. His hands are enormous.

Andy Beast: "You have a big mouth, you know it? Rachel blew me off at the prom, giving me some bullshit story about how I raped you. You know that's a lie. I never raped anybody. I don't have to. You wanted it just as bad as I did. But your feelings got hurt, so you started spreading lies, and now every girl in school is talking about me like I'm some kind of pervert. You've been spreading that bullshit story for weeks. What's wrong, ugly, you jealous? Can't get a date?"

The words fall like nails on the floor, hard, pointed. I try to walk around him. He blocks my way. "Oh, no. You're not going anywhere. You really screwed things up for me." He reaches behind and locks the door. Click.

Me:

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"You are one strange bitch, know that? A freak. I can't believe anyone listened to you." He grabs my wrists. I try to pull them back and he squeezes so tight it feels like my bones are splintering. He pins me against the closed door. Maya An-gelou looks at me. She tells me to make some noise. I open my mouth and take a deep breath.

Beast: "You're not going to scream. You didn't scream before. You liked it. You're jealous that I took out your friend and not you. I think I know what you want."

His mouth is on my face. I twist my head. His lips are wet, his teeth knock against my cheekbone. I pull my arms again and he slams his body against mine. I have no legs. My heart wobbles. His teeth are on my neck. The only sound I can make is a whimper. He fumbles to hold both my wrists in one hand. He wants a free hand. I remember I remember. Metal hands, hot knife hands.

No. A sound explodes from me. "NNNOOO!!!"

I follow the sound, pushing off the wall, pushing Andy Evans off-balance, stumbling into the broken sink. He curses and turns, his fist coming, coming. An explosion in my head and blood in my mouth. He hit me. I scream, scream. Why aren't the walls falling? I'm screaming loud enough to make the whole school crumble. I grab for anything, my potpourri

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bowl—I throw it at him, it bounces to the floor. My books. He swears again. The door is locked the door is locked. He grabs me, pulls me away from the door, one hand over my mouth, one hand around my throat. He leans me against the sink. My fists mean nothing to him, little rabbit paws thumping harmlessly. His body crushes me.

My fingers wave overhead, looking for a branch, a limb, something to hang on to. A block of wood—the base of my turkey-bone sculpture. I slam it against Maya's poster. I hear a crunch. IT doesn't hear. IT breathes like a dragon. ITs hand leaves my throat, attacks my body. I hit the wood against the poster, and the mirror under it, again.

Shards of glass slip down the wall and into the sink. IT pulls away from me, puzzled. I reach in and wrap my fingers around a triangle of glass. I hold it to Andy Evans's neck. He freezes. I push just hard enough to raise one drop of blood. He raises his arms over his head. My hand quivers. I want to insert the glass all the way through his throat, I want to hear him scream. I look up. I see the stubble on his chin, a fleck of white in the corner of his mouth. His lips are paralyzed. He cannot speak. That's good enough.

Me: "I said no."

He nods. Someone is pounding on the door. I unlock it, and the door swings open. Nicole is there, along with the lacrosse team—sweaty, angry, their sticks held high. Someone peels off and runs for help.

Twenty Boy Summer

200 * Sarah Ockler

Jake calls for Eddie to join him at the helm of the side door, which is now flat and horizontal atop two barstools, six red cups arranged in triangles at each end.

"Girls rule!" She raises her hand up for a high five. I slap her palm and take a chug of beer.

"You two are about to get housed," Jake says, but not before coming back to our side of the door to kiss Frankie one last time before the big game, eliciting a cacophony of catcalls from the fans on the sidelines.

Jake returns to home field and bounces a ball in Frankie's direction, missing completely, finishing out his turn with an overdrawn pout.

Frankie returns, surprising me as she sinks her first shot in the lead cup right in front of Eddie. He dips his fingers in to remove the ball and downs the beer.

I turn to her and stare, unable to hide my shock. "Practice, or magic?" I ask.

"I've played a few times, Anna. Remember the parties?"

"Not exactly." I must have been in the bathroom during that part of the nonexistent parties, hiding out from the vomiting hot girl while Frankie completed her beer pong apprenticeship.

The game lasts about ten minutes. Thanks to a strange combination of Frankie's dead-on skill at sinking Ping-Pong balls into cups of beer and Jake's distraction over Frankie's boobs bubbling out the top of her camisole, we win.

Unfortunately, the celebration is short-lived. Our championship title is yanked ruthlessly from beneath our overconfident feet during round two. Jake and Eddie sink every ball, forcing us to chug in record time.

"Anna, you're up," Frankie says.

"Sorry, guys." Sam takes the beer from my hand and sets it on the table. "I'm kidnapping your MVP. She needs a time-out."

I smile and wave to Frankie as she disappears into another match. Sam navigates us through the mob in the house, which has become even more tangled in the last hour. Lots of people are still dancing, while others are strewn across various couches and floor space, some laughing, others making out, a web of arms and legs and pedicured toes with tiny silver rings.

We make our way outside, past the pool, and across the lawn. The backyard is packed but not as noisy. Surprisingly, no one is on the steps that lead down to the beach, and no one seems to be *on* the beach, either.

We sit on the bottom step listening to the ocean, my legs outstretched and draped over Sam's. In the dark, reflected only by the near-full moon overhead, the water is black and frothy like licorice soup. As we sit in silence, the party noise fades behind us and I start to regain some of the brain cells I sacrificed during beer pong.

"It's weird," Sam finally says, one hand rubbing my bare (and thankfully shaved) leg. "I've lived here my whole life, but I never stop being amazed at how different the water looks at night."

I squint and try to see beyond the immediate shoreline, past where the waves crest and foam and crash against the sand. Everything is black. If I try to walk in the water beyond the moon's sheen on the surface, I'll drop right off the earth into outer space.

"I know what you mean," I say. "I've only been here a couple weeks and already I can't imagine not waking up to this."

It's the first time I've allowed myself to go beyond the happy bubble of our vacation, beyond our lazy days on the beach and se-

around another girl, both in bikini tops and shorts, interviewing her companion for the camera about the loss of her clothing.

"Heyyyyyy," she says when she sees me, stumbling from her perch in front of the door-slash-table. "Look who's back!"

"Frankie, where's your shirt?" I ask.

"I lost it in strip beer pong." She speaks slowly, making an exaggerated frown.

"Sounds like this game went downhill fast," Sam says, coming in behind me.

"Hey, look who showed up!" Jake comes in from one of the mysterious corridors of the house with a bottle of Jagermeister. "Who wants to do a belly shot?"

"Off your hairy gut?" Sam asks. "No thanks."

"No, silly!" Frankie hops off the stool and nearly drags down the other beer pong shirt-loser in the process. "Me and Lisa — I mean Leah — are the shot glasses."

"Right," Sam says. "Anyway, no thanks."

"More for us!" Jake pulls Frankie back to her spot on the table next to Lisa/Leah, who still hasn't said more than two words but releases a dopey giggle whenever Frankie speaks or moves and, for the record, looks like she's about Katie's age — not that it matters to Jake.

I don't know how long it will take us to get to the Vista or how long we'll hang out, so I tell Frankie not to wait up. After confirming that Jake is planning to stay the night with her, I hug her goodbye and ask her not to drink any more unless she wants to spend the whole next day throwing up.

"Don't worry, *Mom*," she says, leaning her whole body against mine from her position in front of the door-slash-table. "I won't."

Sam, whose wild green eyes are on me like his hands, searching and finding, hot and intense.

Sam, whose skin tastes like salt and summer.

Sam, whose last name is — a total mystery.

"Wait!" I pull away from him as he fumbles with the ties on my bikini top. "I just realized that we don't know each other's last names. Mine's Reiley." I look at him with a sense of urgency, as though this new piece of information will sway the forward momentum of this crazy night.

He laughs. "Macintosh."

"Like the apple?" I ask.

"Like the computer."

"Same thing, right?"

"Um, Anna?"

"Yeah?"

"No more talking." He smiles.

"Okay," I whisper, running my fingers along his lower lip. My mind is racing faster than my heart, but I'm not sure how to stop it. I don't want to stop it. I want to devour everything about him. I want to taste his mouth and smell his shampoo and then die with this memory, immediate and swift, before anything can take it away.

He moves close to kiss me again, but I push my hand against his chest. "Sam, I mean, it's *okay*. Do you have something?" I wait for the glimmer of recognition to rise on his face.

"Yeah," he says, nodding and reaching for his sweatshirt beside me. I hear the crinkling of paper as he tears open the condom.

"Are you sure?" he asks.

"Yes."

Sam kisses me hard, breathing through his nose as he unzips, unties, unbuttons, and pulls our clothes down, kissing my stomach as he goes. His mouth moves slowly back to my lips, murmuring softly as I wrap my legs around him and pull him inside.

It doesn't hurt exactly — it's just kind of — *strange*. At first I hold my breath, my shorts and bikini bottoms clinging limply around one of my ankles like they didn't run off in time and now have to sit through the whole act without making any noise, lest they be discovered.

Sam tangles his hands up in my hair, pushing back and forth against my body like the waves in front of us. I sense his rhythm and relax as my shoulders and hips dig trenches in the sand beneath our blanket. Through the silk of his hair, I watch the low, orange moon, tasting the salt of his skin on my mouth, breathing hard, waiting for the stars to fall down around us.

But they don't fall.

They just fade, looking on in silence, lingering over the rushing waves until Sam disentangles from my body and I sit up, pulling my clothes back on.

The sparkle of the night sky pales with the receding tide, evaporating in the pink dawn along with the albatross I've at long last abandoned.

Somehow, I don't feel any different than I felt in front of the mirror back at the party. I'm not older. I'm not smarter. Nothing in the murky waters of my life has been suddenly clarified or demystified now that I'm a member of the secret club.

Sam lies with his eyes closed, arms crossed over his chest. "Stay

with me, Anna Reiley," he whispers sleepily, smiling. I reach down and touch his stomach with light fingers.

"I'm just going to rinse my feet off. I'll be right back." I hook my flip-flops through one finger and walk barefoot to the edge of the water, my unbuttoned jean shorts slung loose over my bikini bottoms. Clumped with sand, the fringe clings to my thighs like wet spiderwebs.

I let the water lick my feet and wait for a sign that I'll be okay, that what I did is okay, that *everything* is okay. I look out over the licorice-soup ocean and wait.

The waves whisper against the shore as they have all night, knowing and ancient and unchanged.

The sand and the vanishing moon and the hotel beach umbrellas closed like flowers at dusk sit still, unaltered, unaffected.

The sea surges forward over my toes, only to recede, her opalescent slick on the sand evaporating instantly.


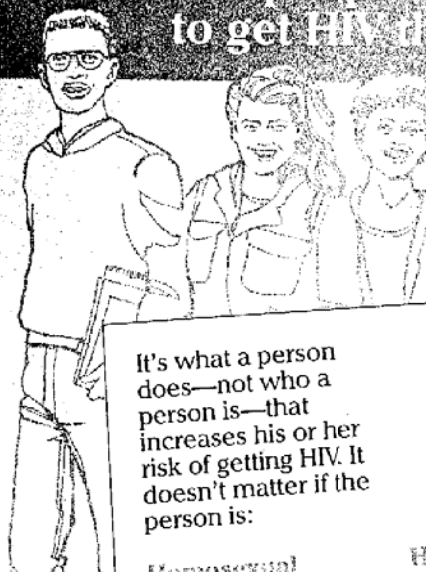
I took the magic pill, and now it's done.

I rinse my hands in the water and turn back toward Sam. It must be after five. He's sitting up now, watching me with his hazy green eyes, shivering and smiling.

"What?" I ask, digging in the sand with my toe, hiding my own smile.

"Don't move, Anna Reiley," he says. "Right now, everything is perfect."

Are some people more likely to get HIV than others?



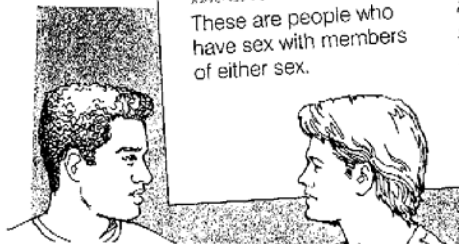
It's what a person does—not who a person is—that increases his or her risk of getting HIV. It doesn't matter if the person is:

Homosexual (gay)
These are people who have sex only with members of the same sex.

Heterosexual (straight)
These are people who have sex only with members of the opposite sex.

Bisexual
These are people who have sex with members of either sex.

HIV can infect anyone who has sex or shares syringes or needles with someone who is infected.



Yes! When used properly, a latex condom helps protect both partners.



- Read the label and instructions carefully. They should say the condom helps protect against STDs. Check the expiration date.
- Handle the condom carefully. Don't use damaged or expired condoms.
- Put it on as soon as the penis is hard and before any vaginal, anal or oral contact.
- Gently squeeze out any air from the tip of the condom, leaving space for semen. Unroll it to the base of the penis.
- Use a water-based lubricant, such as K-Y® Brand Jelly, for vaginal and anal sex. Don't use latex condoms with products that have oil. These include petroleum jelly, massage oils, body lotions and vaginal products that have oil. The oil can make latex condoms break.
- Pull out right after coming. Hold on to the base of the condom as you do.
- Throw away the used condom. Never reuse condoms.



Store condoms in a cool, dry place away from sunlight.