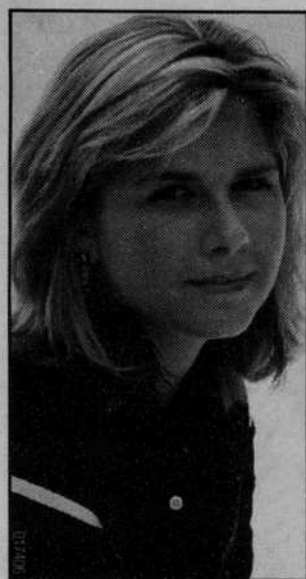




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fathering OPPRESSION



Aaron Shakra
Out of range

In a 1992 essay "Men in Feminist Struggle - The Necessary Movement," bell hooks writes, "There are no books that adequately serve as maps explaining what patriarchy is, how it works, and why they should be committed to a feminist movement that opposes sexism and sexist oppression."

Due to my relative unfamiliarity with feminist literature, I wonder, some 12 years after hooks' article, if any such book exists. hooks notes in the same essay that the "earliest writings of the men's movement expressed far more concern with dismantling patriarchy and eradicating male domination of women and children than more recent work."

Given what hooks says, and regardless of any books that have been published since, there seems to be a task at hand for correction. First, I think a definition of the word "patriarchy" might be helpful. A good starting place would be the dictionary, which (according to Merriam-Webster Online) broadly defines patriarchy as "control by men of a disproportionately large share of power." I'll add to this, and say such control equals domination over anything considered "less" than male — this includes women, nature and children.

The point of this discussion is not to go digging in the past, or to

pigeonhole a large portion of the population, but rather to show the historical basis for patriarchy's existence, which often allows oppression to pass by unchecked or unseen. While many of the more blatant forms of oppression no longer exist, it is the latent, or invisible, oppression that is continually cultivated by institutions and even ourselves. And this unseen oppression is just as worrisome as any overt patriarchal oppression. Unfortunately, patriarchy is continually propagated as the perverted norm. Now add to this the concept of compulsive heterosexuality.

In Barrie Thorne and Zella Luria's "Sexuality and Gender in Children's Daily Worlds," they write, "In our culture, gender and sexuality are deeply intertwined, especially for adults; 'woman/man,' and especially 'femininity/masculinity' are categories

loaded with heterosexual meanings." Thorne and Luria note that "the gender-divided social worlds of children are not totally asexual," and that from the ages nine to 11 they are "largely defined as children, but they are on the verge of sexual maturity, cultural adolescence, and a gender system organized around the institution of heterosexuality."

A child's typical experience in elementary school establishes and solidifies a patriarchal attitude towards the world. This experience, of course, affects boys and girls, women and men, and everyone in between. Thorne and Luria note that gender segregation, while not total, is central to the daily life and organization of an elementary school. This segregation exists in the forms of gendered spaces, friendships, and spatial separation between boys and girls — with boys typically controlling areas such as large playing fields, and girls controlling smaller enclaves like hopscotch. Examples like these solidify the gendered orientation for each group.

Of course, there are exceptions to all of the aforementioned. But the point is, our sexual identities are formed through our gendered activities, and gender segregation between

Turn to **SHAKRA**, page 11

Free format brews variation

If for some accursed reason you happen to wake up at 4 a.m. on a Friday, you might be interested in turning the dial on your radio to our esteemed campus broadcasting station, KWVA 88.1 FM. If you do, you might hear a voice that is tired yet fast-paced, like a speed freak about to crash after a 48-hour Benzedrine trip. High on punk, free jazz and a self-deluded perception of his own cleverness, this DJ has been dutifully playing one of the most awful shifts on the station's schedule, without pay, for more than two years.

This DJ is, of course, myself. I can't really explain why, in terms that make sense to anyone, I do the show at the time I do. I took it at first because it was the only slot available, but I've never taken any opportunity to switch. At this point, it has been simply compulsory.

The time slot does have its



Ryan Nyburg
Budget rack

advantages though, such as the unmitigated freedom to play whatever I feel like. I could spend two hours vomiting onto the microphone and it wouldn't change the show's listenership by any significant amount. As it is, I play mostly rock.

Working at a free format radio station is an eye-opening experience. It really brings to light the stifling control of normal, everyday corporate radio. Sticking to a well-regulated playlist, the larger stations cater

exclusively to popular tastes. Which is fine, of course — good luck to them and all. The problem is that not everyone prescribes to the popular tastes of the time, meaning a lot of people are left out in the dark. And trying to get a large station to play what you like by making requests is about as effective as attacking a Sherman tank with a spork.

Requests don't make much difference anyway, since DJs at larger stations have little, if any, say about what gets played. While even the largest corporate broadcast companies create playlists at a semi-local level, these lists reflect more of what is popular nationally than locally. Requesting a song that isn't on the list will yield little success.

All formats of corporate radio stations work the same way, with heavy emphasis on popularity but little attention paid to quality. Of course this makes sense from a business perspective, playing it safe and all, but it makes for pretty bland entertainment. This is the real issue at hand for all the anti-corporate rhetoric out there, which is why smaller stations exist. As long as there are people out there

Turn to **NYBURG**, page 11

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