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**Speak Out**

**Drowning in the gene pool**

TO THE EDITOR:

Zero Population Growth is an organization that has been around for many years now and has put forth all of the points Marty Davis made ["You Say You Want a Revolution?" Jan. 17].

If you look at a time-population graph, you will find that it took until around World War II for Earth's population to reach 1 billion. The time difference between each succeeding billion has been shorter and shorter, and now the world's population is approaching 7 billion.

Both in the 80 percent of the world's population that is Third World and in the "people of color" races in the United States, the birth rate would make a hutch of rabbits blush. The people with the best genes, the best education, the best family backgrounds and the best environment usually contain their children to two or fewer. It says a lot about the respective gene pools when those who have the most to give to society at large have the least amount of kids and those who, for the most part, are a constant drag and contribute little, if anything, of value pollute decent society with endless swarms of litters.

The book *The Bell Curve* gave massive amounts of evidence of genes vs. probable outcome. Unfortunately, 99 percent of those who shouldn't be allowed to breed also are those who hardly read at all, if they even know how to read.

The lineage of intelligence is intelligence. The lineage of inbred stupidity and violence is more stupidity and violence, as our prison make-up amply can demonstrate.

JOHN BOYNTON  
Vancouver, Wash.

**Get the picture?**

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing to thank you for your article about intersex ["Is It a Boy or a Girl?" Jan. 17].

With five children each day in the United States having their healthy genitals cut on without their consent, raising awareness with articles like this is crucial. I hope readers who are new to this topic will take the information you presented to heart, support the Intersex Society of North America and start talking about intersex with parents, friends, teachers, doctors, lovers and more.

I have one concern about your otherwise excellent piece. I feel the photograph that headed the article (a naked intersex child held down and exposed) was dehumanizing to the child pictured and frankly nauseating in its graphic violence.

I am not intersex, and I have not been abused in this way, but I literally could not read the story until I covered the picture. I only can imagine the effect it might have had on survivors of procedures like these.

I know the picture was chosen with good intentions. I know you wanted to communicate the horrific violence perpetrated against intersex individuals by doctors. I completely support you in that intention, but I feel you would have achieved that goal without the picture.

You clearly communicated the devastating effects of these "standard medical procedures" of mutilation, medical display, shaming and abuse with the words of intersex activists and intersex genital mutilation survivors. I hope you will continue talking about intersex while responding to the concerns of the community about how that communication hap-

pens. Thank you for the article, and please keep up the good work!

FRANCIE NEVILL  
Portland

**Bee prepared**

TO THE EDITOR:

Where to begin in response to Eric Norberg's ignorant rant?! ["Bee Stings," Jan. 17] Others likely will point out his many errors of logic and fact, so I will focus on what he missed, and what nearly always is missing when talking about the Boy Scouts—the boys.

The BSA's official national policy is that gay people are not moral by definition. Although this scorn unjustifiably has been focused on adult Scout leaders, it applies as well to boys who are or would be Scouts, including the ones who might be gay.

Few people have shown concern for what harm this might be doing to these boys. They deserve far better.

Boys who have done nothing to deserve this judgment fall victim to a contemptible blend of hypocrisy and stupidity. When I was a Cub Scout years ago I was no less moral than my peers, but I knew even then that I was gay; I just didn't know the word for it.

While railing against Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey for voting "against free speech," Norberg would have gay boys "keep their orientation to themselves." Boys who believe they are gay need trustworthy people with whom they can open up, not people who would have them suppress their feelings, a recipe for harm.

Rojo has provided courageous leadership in seeing that Multnomah County complies with its own nondiscrimination rules. She also is helping ensure that no boy is harmed by being judged by a bigot or a fool. What possibly could make more sense?

JIM CLAY  
Portland

**New York state of mind**

TO THE EDITOR:

I was saddened to see a television news interview with three New Yorkers visiting Portland during the peace rally Jan. 18. They said it felt like a slap in the face to New Yorkers who lost so much in the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

I wish I could invite them to sit down over a cup of coffee and tell them: Because we want peaceful resolution does not mean we condone what happened Sept. 11. Marching for peace does not demean the lives lost in those terrorist attacks; on the contrary, we all lost a great deal that day and in the days since. We want to ensure that terrorism does not become a way of life for the planet.

I also would tell them: Iraq is not al-Qaeda. There is no evidence that Iraq was involved in that event. Invading Iraq in response to the al-Qaeda attacks on the United States is like wiping out all the jackrabbits because they inhabit the same area as the rattlesnake that bit you. Yes, Saddam Hussein should be removed, but not at the cost of innocent Iraqi lives.

If New Yorkers need to direct their anger at someone, look to President Bush. He is exploiting the Sept. 11 attacks to justify his agenda for controlling oil interests in the Middle East, creating the illusion of the "axis of evil" to appeal to our fears while robbing us of civil rights and other needed protections here in our own back yard.

TERRI GRAYUM  
Portland