

Many thanks for the excellent series of articles on the inherent dangers of day care (May/June). Through the years, I have repeatedly observed that children who are raised by their mothers are well-adjusted and happy, while children who are left to day care programs can often be neurotic and whiny. Instinct alone should tell people that children need their parents as much as possible, especially in the early years.

Every article of *TAE* reaffirms my gratitude to my parents. Your Gen X articles (January/February) caused me to call them and thank them for the way they raised us. Now I need to call my mother and thank her both for staying home with us and for teaching me that fulfillment is not related to a paycheck.

Emily Goodey
Pflugerville, Texas

You are to be commended for daring each year to re-examine the issues of child rearing and education. After reading the variety of reports on day care, my thoughts returned to Barbara Dafoe Whitehead's essay ("Lost in Work," Sept./Oct. '95). How powerful is her warning about the current competition between having a career and raising a family. The workplace is bidding for and acquiring time once pledged to children, and the children have no way to make a reasonable counter offer.

After acknowledging the self-delusion involved in accepting day care and extended school day arrangements, I returned two years ago from a wonderful career, ceased warehousing my children, and began a homeschooling life with my working wife's blessing. The only drawback to our decision has been a loss of income that can be overlooked. With

tradeoffs like these, isn't it astounding staying-at-home parenting isn't the norm in America?

Thomas J. Wiswell
Jacksonville, Florida

I commend *TAE* for a refreshing perspective on day care. Iris Krasnow's article, "Discovering Motherhood," was powerful, insightful, and unashamed. As a pastor in California, I have for some time shared with many people how my esteem for my wife (a school teacher) was amplified immeasurably with the sacrificial delivery and subsequent nurturing of our children. Momentary selfish tantrums of my own dissolve easily when either of my young daughters draws one of those school pictures of our very happy family. Your day care issue highlighted why family arrangements are so important to our society.

Steven Reyes
Christian Life International Bible College

Thank you for the issue on day care. I had my first child at age 36, just 17 months ago. While I was not completely prepared for the isolation of motherhood, the marginalization by society has been one of the toughest things I've ever experienced. Reading your feature articles helped me to feel justified in my role and even a bit ashamed that I ever questioned my decision to spend as much time as possible with my son. Who cares what anyone else thinks of me when his well-being is at stake. I thank you for putting our thoughts and experiences into words.

Susan Mahan
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

The recent day care issue is the best I have seen on the topic, definitely a must

read for parents and parents-to-be.

One of my colleagues became very defensive about having his children enrolled in day care so he and his wife could work and "survive" on two salaries. Of course, surviving includes a brand new sport utility vehicle and a weekend on South Miami Beach.

Ray Wisner
Cape Coral, Florida

As a resident of the Northeast and a Manhattan-based employee, I read your American Boomtowns issue (March/April) and felt that those of us in the Northeast owe those in the rest of the country an apology for our acts against them throughout the years. But then I thought otherwise when I remembered that the rest of the country has hated us for years and probably wouldn't accept an apology anyway.

The article did make some valid points about us. Everyone knows we are mostly arrogant, provincial, smug, and domineering. We're governed in many cases by regulation-happy, tax-wild, union-influenced, status-quo-loving legislators. We are paying for those sins by having an economy that's lagging while the rest of the country thrives. Is that the reason to pick on us? We've made our own bed, and we'll lie in it until someone decides to buy us a new bed.

The article by Kotkin and Friedman ("The Clueless Media") made some good points, but I was puzzled by an oversight on their part. Yes, *Fortune* recently picked New York as the number-one city for business. But if your authors had bothered to read this article, they would have found out that New York was also picked as North America's "most improved" city.

If the rest of the country is doing so

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much better than we, what is the point of devoting an issue to disparaging us? Just ignore us if you don't like us; you're doing just fine anyway. We must be doing something right. Ten years ago, when I travelled, people pitied me when I told them I worked in Manhattan. Now, they usually envy me.

Michael Henderson
East Windsor, New Jersey

Blake Hurst is a living testimonial that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. His disparaging comments about truck drivers tell only half the story about what those within the profession face every day. (IN REAL LIFE, May/June).

As someone who makes his living providing truck transport service, I don't want to be seen as an apologist for incompetent and indifferent truck drivers. The carrier who provided service to Hurst's business was either trying to accommodate a customer or hadn't been given the full details about where he would be taking his delivery. Readers should know that truck drivers don't usually determine what freight goes into their trailers.

People rarely stop to consider the tedious hours truck drivers encounter while on the job. What are truck drivers doing while you are having dinner with your family, or when you turn out the lights and crawl into bed?

Rate deregulation and unrestricted entry have driven the cost of transportation down for users of the system, but new regulations and compliance enforcement have pushed costs up for operators. These same factors have driven thousands of highly experienced drivers out of the industry. While Hurst's complaint insinuates that he has been singled out by an industry run amok, he is simply describing re-regulatory backlash in which carriers struggle to attract a very small number of qualified drivers and often end up accepting less qualified ones.

Les Taylor
Baltimore, Maryland

Bill Kauffman's jingoistic call to arms because Americans are being perverted by soccer is unduly alarmist (FLASHBACK, May/June).

Sports is big business in America—the

stores selling jock straps far outnumber the stores selling books. Michael Jordan in Chicago is probably more widely known than the mayor, and certainly more popular. Football, the all-American sport so worshipped by Kauffman, takes a large portion of each week's viewing as we males bond together to watch the games and second-guess the coaches.

How is it that we've become such passive sports enthusiasts? Simply put, most of us are too sedentary to participate. We have grown up as sports watchers, not players. Why? Because, I suspect, Americans only admire success. If you are big enough to cream the opposition, you win. But failing to win, we become watchers.

In high school, I was the last chosen to play basketball—I'm vertically challenged and can't get the ball near the hoop. I wasn't even considered for football—one smack from the line and I'd be creamed shrimp headed for the hospital. My singular athletic ability consisted of being able to run without tiring. Luckily, I discovered soccer through a fellow who organized two teams to play in the public park. Did we learn soccer? I suppose so. Were we any good? Probably not. But for two summers we ran to our heart's ability to pump oxygen. We kicked the ball, we scooped it, we bounced it.

Kauffman's gloriously disorganized playgrounds for *real* football, baseball, and basketball never existed for most of us. But soccer was real, tiring, and fun. I dare say Kauffman has never experienced not being chosen in any of his "American sports." Well, to a boy, each of us soccer players had. But in our sport, we could out-run, out-kick, and out-score the *real* Americans.

I don't think the World Cup '94 was the disaster Kauffman proclaims. It showed the world a playing field in which intelligence played as much a part as massive brawn. And the games were fun to watch—which can't always be said for "Monday Night Football."

William Weaver
Oak Park, Illinois

Michael Barone's article in the May/June issue ("From Beneficiary to Investor") should be distributed to all who don't understand what personal investing can do

for the average American. Social Security and Medicare were good temporary solutions to economic problems at one point in time. Today these ideas are entirely outdated. It is obvious these programs are going nowhere and it is now up to the people to take matters into their own hands.

We should look back into the history of our great nation and revisit the self-made man. We often forget this ideal made our country so prosperous. Government never has and never will cure us of our ills.

Sean M. Wallentine
Sacramento, California

In the May/June issue, Eli Lehrer incorrectly states that the Saturn-bound *Cassini* spacecraft contained a nuclear reactor (SCAN). Nothing could be further from the truth. *Cassini* carried plutonium, but not a nuclear reactor. The plutonium fueled a thermal generator that powered instruments through the heat of radioactive decay.

Linda Seebach
Denver, Colorado

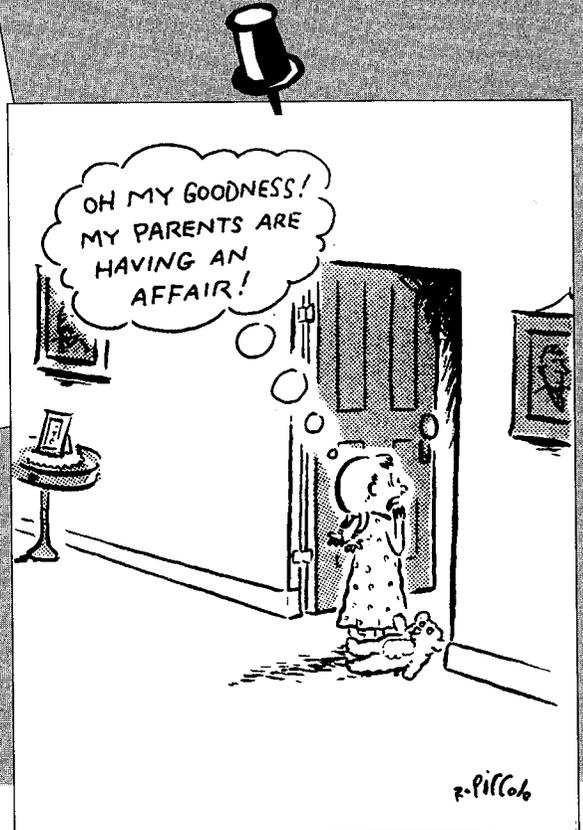
John Meroney's article on Peggy Noonan (SCAN, May/June) caught my attention. Our current President has indeed treated the office as a "lite Presidency."

The *Iowa Gazette* recently reported that a group of high school students working as pages in the State Senate posed for a group photograph near the Senate President's chair, where a portrait of Bill Clinton hung in the background. A majority voted to remove the portrait for the photograph. One page said President Clinton "isn't the best role model for young people."

We should follow the example set by these students. As difficult as it is to have the President impeached, it is not difficult for each of us to impeach the President as the role model for our children.

We parents have a responsibility for damage control and to train our children in the way they should go. That's one thing big bureaucracy hasn't taken away from us yet. But watch out, unsuspecting parents, government child care is on its way.

Richard Obcena
Cadott, Wisconsin



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