

ernor, along with deep-pocketed corporations, labor unions, and national civil rights groups.

For their part, I-200 proponents remain confident. "We will prevail by telling the truth," says I-200 Chairman John Carlson, "because a majority of people believes that governments shouldn't discriminate."

Addicted to Psychobabble

By Michael W. Lynch

The notoriously jaded members of the mainstream media would surely be skeptical of anyone who earned a living by offering alcoholism counseling in a bar. How, then, can you explain the glowing coverage given "cyberpsychologist" Kimberly Young, who offers to treat the affliction of "online addiction" by charging a buck a minute for sessions over the Internet?

Young, who also moonlights as an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, has created a cottage industry. Identifying "various types of Internet addiction such as cybersex, ... cyberporn, on-line relationships, and information overload," she founded the Center for On-Line Addiction (www.netaddiction.com) in 1996.

Neither Young nor her Web site offers a definition of online addiction, except to say that work-related Internet use isn't covered. But she does say those afflicted with the disorder appear to suffer from the same problems that haunt compulsive gamblers, alcoholics, drug abusers, and persons with eating disorders. And while not suggesting how

DATA

Pruning Profits

By Nick Gillespie

If a tree falls in a forest, it may or may not make a sound. But this much is certain: If it falls in a forest managed by the federal government, it will generate significantly less revenue than if it falls in one managed by a state government. Between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, the feds oversee about 20 percent of the nation's land mass, including massive timber resources they sell to private interests. Between 1994 and 1996, however, Forest Service- and BLM-administered land annually lost about \$290 million on such ventures. The agencies also rang up annual deficits of \$66 million on grazing fees and \$355 million on recreational activities.

A new study from PERC, a market-oriented environmental think tank based in Montana, finds that such losses run counter to the experience of state land management agencies. Researcher Holly Lippke Fretwell compared the federal agencies' performance to that of 10 Western state "trusts" that operate similar public lands and sell similar rights to help fund public education. In the period between 1994 and 1996, the states earned an average \$5.56 for every dollar spent managing public lands.

Fretwell says the trusts are more efficient because they must pay operating expenses out of their own revenue and because they have specific beneficiaries who, "similar to stockholders...have a claim on 'profits.'" The federal agencies, in contrast, rely on Congress for annual budgets and turn over all revenue to the general treasury. There is virtually "no connection between money spent and money earned," Fretwell notes. The predictable result: red ink.

Land Management: Federal vs. State, 1994-96

	Revenue (in \$ millions)	Expense (in \$ millions)	Revenue per \$ spent
Forest Service	914	3,010	0.30
BLM	1,232	1,308	0.94
State Trusts	65	12	5.56

Note: Rounding affects numbers slightly.
Source: PERC

widespread this disorder may be, she cites the explosion of Internet use and sees "a potential epidemic."

Young offers two counseling options—one-on-one by e-mail or group counseling



through online chat groups. She also conducts seminars and gives expert testimony and forensic evaluations in both civil and criminal court cases. She bills her book *Caught in the Net* as the "first and only available recovery book on Internet addiction."

Not everyone is a believer. Malcolm Parks, a communications professor at the University of Washington who researches the social implications of the Internet, accuses Young of making "breathless state-

ments" based on skewed surveys.

"I'd argue that this is as much about marketing and business as it is about a social problem," Parks told the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. Nonetheless, Young's breathless statements make for good copy and sound bites. More than 360 news outlets have covered her crusade. She might want to look into a recovery program for academics addicted to media coverage and the money that flows from it. ▶

SOURCES

"By 1994, it was apparent that Japan was girding itself for a new leap forward with the help of powerful Keynesian economic stimulation via increased public spending....While American observers continued to dwell on the illusory gloom of the past few years, the Japanese were focusing on a bright future."

—Former *Forbes* and *Financial Times* editor Eamonn Fingleton in his 1995 book *Blindside: Why Japan Is Still on Track to Overtake the U.S. by the Year 2000*. Read this and dozens of other howlers in a Cato Institute study, "Revisiting the Revisionists: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese Economic Model," by Brink Lindsey and Aaron Lukas (www.freetrade.org/pubs/pas/tpa-003.html).

The Angus Reid Group, a Toronto-based market research firm, has conducted surveys for *The Economist* each of the last two years, attempting to measure attitudes about the future in 29 countries. Respondents are asked their predictions on the state of the world in one year, 10 years, and the next generation. Optimism may well be an indicator of future success, as *The Economist* notes, since people who think the future will be better tend to "do the things that will make it better, such as working hard, saving and taking risks."

This year's Hope Index (available at www.angusreid.com/studies/econpoll.html) finds five of the eight most optimistic nations are in Asia (Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand, China, and Taiwan). The U.S. finishes in a tie for fourth. But the least optimistic people are the Japanese, who are even more bummed about the future than residents of Russia, Germany, and France.

Chip Bok



TV Worth Selling

By Adam Clayton Powell III

Are public television stations quietly being privatized?

Without much attention, several have been and more may be on the way. Many date the privatization of public stations to the 1995 sale of WNYC-TV, a PBS affiliate owned by the city of New York. Dow Jones paid the city more than \$200 million for the station and promptly converted it to a business-news format. Today, the station serves as the East Coast flagship of Paxson TV, the seventh national commercial television network, which began broadcasting in August.

A few weeks before the Paxson network's debut, PBS stations in Buffalo and Albany were bought by Sinclair Broadcasting, which already owned 54 commercial television stations, for \$56 million. If the federal govern-

ment approves the sale, Sinclair will convert both stations from public to commercial programming. And yet another transfer, of a PBS station in Pittsburgh, is awaiting federal approval.

One might think PBS is bemoaning the loss of stations in four Eastern markets, but one would be wrong: Public television officials note that even if all of these sales are approved, there will still be one PBS station left in each city. And that is the concept: one PBS station to a city.

PBS says there are still 22 cities which have two or more public television sta-

tions, and the network would be quite happy to concentrate its resources on just one station in each market. But those extra PBS stations have become more valuable to commercial owners.

Decades ago, there were just the ABC, CBS, and NBC networks. Most broadcasters believed television could sustain only three or four stations in each city, so they gave away "surplus" stations for a song—or less. Now, with Fox, WB, UPN, Paxson, and, coming soon, Barry Diller's new network, there is a demand for eight commercial network affiliates in each city, so the hunt is on to find new stations.

The U.S. public television system, built over the last 30 years by billions of dollars in taxpayer funds, has discovered it can reap tens, perhaps hundreds, of millions of dollars per city by downsizing. This trend may give the concept of the public television fund-raising drive an entirely new meaning. ♦

