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CHRIS HARTLOVE
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FEATURES
N0 stranger to the
complexities of race and
prejudice in his native land,
a black American sets out
to examine those issues in
Japan_and finds a culture
of bias very different from
our own
Byluan Williams
2,2 2%
.2 h V:
21:15, NJ!
How should you react
when a porn store opens
in your quiet, suburban
neighborhood? The answer
depends on what you think
a neighborhood is
By David F inkel
When the leaves are off the elm tree in his front yard, Art Carroll can see the Max Wonde
r adult store from his door.
DEPARTMENTS
20071
Mail call: Washingtone infant mortality
CRITIC AT LARGE/BY RICHARD COHEN
All is not lost
J STREET
Selected short subjects: Car knowledge
. Corps de ballet - Time and time again
LDNOO
ommc. /BY PHYLLIS c. RICHMAN
Old Glory makes waves
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WIT’S END/BY DAVE BARRY
The mussel boom and busts
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Mulionwmmkkpuzzleonpage24
2n the cover:
merwan anthropolzgist
john Russdl and his
Japanese wtfiz, Mie,
at home in Tokm
PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIPJONES GRIFFITHS/ MAGNUM
JANUARY 5, 1992
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MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH

INFANT MORTALITY IS ANOTHER UGLY word until I see facesenewborns, young mothers, doctors, nurses, everyday people who want to help I" tWhat Do You Think the Chances Are?',1 October 27). Drs. Assefa Gebreselassie and Yousuf Dawood do indeed "minister" to their tiny patients. Nurses Elena, Shirley, Sue, Pat, Mila and Macy hover like guardian angels around their charges. Thank God for these people, who are often the only human contact these little ones know during their brief and tragic lives.

F RAN THOMAS

F redeficksburg

I THINK WASHINGTON'S INFANT MORtality rate is not so much shocking as depressing, horrifying and outrageous. To me, it seems that the Bush administration is willing to tolerate the high cost of premature births and subsequent deaths because it is cheaper than paying for the welfare cases these children would turn out to be.

Since I believe this is the administrationls mind-set, I think it is disgusting that it does not have the moral courage to deal with the obvious: These poor infants should never have been conceived. A government that will not provide contraception education and services to people who are in these desperate circumstances is more than hypocritical and negligent; it is murderous.

ELOISE NEEDLEMAN

Annapolis

YOUR STORY ABOUT HIGH INFANT MORtality in the District was heart-rending, all the more so since some causes of this dreadful condition are preventable or remediable. One that you failed to mention 5 reduced access to obstetrical care be:ause of the medical liability situation in :he District. This is the only jurisdiction n the country that has never passed tort-eform legislation. As a result, high mal-)ractice insurance premiums have caused obstetricians to leave the city or retire early. This is particularly true in the poorer sections of town, where reimbursements for care are low and much care given is uncompensated.

DANIEL EIN

President, Medical Society of the District of Columbia

Washington

YOUR ARTICLE MENTIONED ECONOMICS as one reason a solution to the problem of infant mortality is not put forward. I suggest it is economic and health care ignorance on the part of those who dole out the money. There are over 200 nurse-midwives in the Washington area. F rom a health care standpoint, they have demonstrated their ability to obtain better outcomes than doctors with socially high-risk mothers and babies. From an economic standpoint, they can save millions of dollars for the DC. government as well as for insurance companies. But instead of supporting nurse-midwives, the latest

thing we read in The Post is that those who control malpractice insurance premiums for DC. obstetricians who back nurse-midwives are making it impossible for them to continue to do so. Go figure.
MAIRI BREEN SABLOSKY
Silver Spring
DAVID FINKEL'S ARTICLE ON INFANT mortality leaves the reader with the sense of futility often experienced by those who try to deal with this troubling problem. My own organizations efforts to assist seem to be either damned with faint praise or written off as well-meaning but inconsequential.
The coupon booklet that he mentions also contained a wealth of information on pregnancy and the importance of prenatal care. Surveys of some of the more than 100,000 women who requested one indicate a very positive response. Your readers should know that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of the National Capital Area also donated funds to purchase MOM Van II, another outreach program for addicted pregnant women.
RAYMOND D. FRESON
Blue Crass and Blue Shield
of the National Capital Area
Waxhington
Please address letters to: 20071, The Washington Post Magazine, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, DC. 20071. Letters must include name, address and daytime telephone number and are subject to editing. I

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CRITIC n LARGE
BY RICHARD COHEN
The Miracle of the Sock
HE OTHER DAY, MY SOCK CAME back. I lost it months ago, and so, as has happened maybe a million times before, I had just one sock left from this particular pair_ black with a little bit of red in it. Since I really don’t believe, the way some people do, that socks are inhabited by some sort of spirit and go off into a kind of nether world in the middle of the night, I held on to the remaining sock as I have done maybe a million times before, always to no avail. This time, though, for the very hrst time in my life, the errant sock came back. live got news for Hemingway: The earth moved.

The sock came tumbling out of a laundry sack that contained some summer clothes. I stared at it, dumbfounded and fully aware of the importance of the moment. It was not just that my sock had come back, but that this could be the first time anyone’s sock had come back, an event so unprecedented and miraculous that, in another, simpler age, it might have been the basis of a new religion.

What filled me with intimations 0f either immortality or mortality was the fact that just a day before, while sitting on an airplane, the following phrase had occurred to me: "The things of my life are coming back." I know I was thinking such thoughts because in the previous days I had been going through old files, culling and sorting and, after some thought, throwing none of it away, on the chance-diminishing for sure, but not yet a mathematical impossibility-that such items will someday be placed in glass cases and fill room after cavernous room in a museum erected to my memory. Thus occupied, I kept coming across things-pictures, documents, bills, etc.-that I forgot I had and that triggered memories that, again, I forgot I had. (Ponder that paradox if you will.)

And I thought-I really did-of all the things of my life that I had lost or forgotten or misplaced and that I wished I still had, even though I could not remember what they were. Of course I can remember some things, like the baseball glove my father gave me, which was a Marty Marion model and which I left out in right field, the way you are supposed to, but then forgot to retrieve. I lost it, the glove I loved so much, the one my father had given me to replace the first baseman’s mitt I hated, and I never mentioned that loss to my father. ltC’mon, Richie, let’s have a catch," he would say, and I would make an excuse and brush him off and hurt his feelings. Even today, even now, it still tears me up.

I am thinking of those things, of course-the glove and the tricycle

and the watches of all sorts (one a Dick Tracy model) that were sheer junk in their time but would now fetch a fair amount of money at some nostalgia shop. I am thinking also of notebooks and books-the Hardy Boys and the Boy Allies; certain favorite pieces of clothing, like my leather jacket, which I wore until it aged and crinkled like the face of the Marlboro Man. I can mention other things as well, but what about those objects that are gone forever, that I can only sense? They are out there, these things, and I can intuit them and know that if I could come across them, I would recognize them in a rush, and smile, and then maybe have to fight a tear. It is these things I miss the most, and I dont even know what they are.

But they were mine, and they meant a lot to me once. They were carried in my pocket or they were kept in my room and they are associated with events that mattered greatly, only I cant remember them either. These things are like a weak sort of magnetic field, too weak to be measured. This field consists in part of the mementos others have of you, like their photographs with you in them. Only, if you have forgotten the people, you have forgotten the event that was photographed, and so a piece of you, a clue, a key to the past, is in someone else’s desk drawer. All this is in the magnetic field that you can hardly detect, but the field gets larger and more forceful the older you get, and it is this, finally, that pulls you into the grave. You die of undifferentiated nostalgia.

The other day, I came across a dogis choke-chain collar. It belonged to Max, and not to Duke, and Max was not my favorite dog, Duke was. But the chain made me think of Max and then of Duke and then of people who came along with Duke, who rode his memory train, hanging on like crewmen of old, waving their caps and signaling someone to do something. Carol brought Duke into my life (and then abandoned him and, oh yeah, me), and Ted and Cynthia kept Duke while I was in basic training, and Stewart lived with me before I went into the Army. He was a football star in high school and the brother of Arnie, who was shot and killed in a holdup, protecting a night deposit that wasn’t worth anyonels life. All this-all this and much, much more-from a chain of metal links that I did not know I had until I found it just the other day.

That chain, these things, I had thought of as gone. No, that’s not right. I had not thought of them at all. Now, though, the memory of their memory is returning, a hint of them, a trace_and I can sense that out there is a certain blanket, a certain toy six-shooter, a certain person who once meant a lot to me but whom I now (can you believe it?) cannot even remember. These things, these countless things

of infinite importance, are really just over the horizon of knowing, and they can return. The sock did, and such a thing had never happened before. The things of my life are coming back.
I shall be at home, receiving. I

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elcome to General
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part carnival. A place cars
come to die so that others may
be reborn.
Out front, a moonlighting
Prince Georges County cop
Seer Suckers
Here’s the Futurist mag-
azine again, trumpeting
its "Outlook ’92" with such
teasers as ltGiant Asteroid Ex-
pected to Collide With Earth."
(And these are serious Big Pic-
ture Thinkers, so don’t even
ask what the National Enquirer
is predicting.) We’d be worried,
but we don’t believe everything
we read. For one thing, the F u-
turist is the magazine that said
buffalo is going to be the "in"
meat of the 903 (though, to be
fair, that was before "Dances
With Wolves"). For another, we
remember these predictions
from about this time last year:
0 "In the twenty-first century,
multipurpose intelligent robots
will replace virtually the entire
U.S. work force, and people i
directs traffic while a
deejay lures custom-
ers with gospel mu-
sic cranked so loud
that the two four-
foot speakers are
trembling. Inside,
customers paw
through boxes of
brake drums, rear-
view mirrors, control
arms, coil springs
and carburetors. The
Hemingway African
Methodist Episcopal
Church women are
selling hot dogs, half-
smokes and hambur-
gers from a stand in
the middle of the
yard. Owner Richard
Smith, in sneakers and a jog-
ging suit, strolls the aisles,
handing out lollipops to adults
and children alike. There’s
free popcorn too_just help
yourself. Two red bucket seats
are among the days specials,
priced to move at $25 each.
"A lot of these people are
will receive a salary to enjoy
life."_The Futurist again,
"Outlook ’91" (emphasis ours).
0 The economy "will return to a
good, strong level sometime in
1991."-Treasury Secretary
Nicholas Brady, on "Meet the
Press," Dec. 16, 1990.
0 "Saddam Hussein will begin
withdrawing his troops from

Kuwait 0n the late evening of
January the 17th or the early
morning of the 18th."_Pundit
i John McLaughlin, on "The Mc-
Laughlin Group,"Jan. 12, 1991.
0 ul believe it ithe recessionl
will be relatively short and that
the worst quarter of the de-
cline was probably in the quar-
ter just completed Monday?-
Michael Boskin, chairman of
the presidents Council of Eco-
nomic Advisers, on N BCls "To-
day,"Jan. 2, 1991.
biangouti
W721 / ii ;
unemployed or working menial
jobs," says Smith of the men
who've come to the Kenil-
worth Avenue yard. "They
have to fix their cars them-
selves. They can't afford to
pay 600 bucks for a new wind-
shield welll sell them for
$49.95. When the economy
gets bad, our business gets
better."
General has mounted an
aggressive growth campaign,
in part by breaking the unwrit-
ten rules of junkdom: offering a
six-month guarantee on parts,
giving cash refunds on re-
turned parts and letting cus-
tomers go at the 400 or so
wrecks out back with their i
own tools. Men in jumpsuits
are scattered all over the yard,
standing on fenders and twist-
ing under the hoods, tugging at
the hearts of the old machines.
An employee on the roof with
a walkie-talkie keeps an eye
out, lest anybody try to sneak
a part over the fence.
The soul of the operation is
0 "He said . . . Iraq will win the
admiration of the world with
their fighting prowess."_CN N
reporter Peter Arnett, report-
ing on his interview with Sad-
dam Hussein, Jan. 28, 1991.
o HWe will get this recession
behind us and return to growth
soon."_George Bush, State of
i the Union, Jan. 29, 1991.
o "Sink hole near Pentagon and
general manager Cecil Shif-
flett, at left. Junk runs in his
family; his father ran an auto-
motive scrap yard outside Bal-
timore, so Shifflett grew up in
the business-as did his three
sons, who now work here.
ltAfter 35 years in the busi-
ness I still call myself a junk-
man, not an automotive recy-
cling engineer," he says.
But he knows the value of
his work, and he knows how to
teach it. Showing a new em-

ployee around the yard, Shif-
flett will walk him past an axle
lying in the mud and then,
seemingly unaware, let a $100
bill flutter out of his pocket and
onto the ground. The new guy
invariably picks it up and says,
ttMan, you just dropped a hun-
dred bucks."
til thank him," says Shifflett,
uand then I tell him, You just
did the same thing when you
passed up that $100 axle.’
liAfter that, they don’t pass
up many good parts."
_BILL HEAVEY
Crystal City."-Hazel Cassell,
minister medium at St. Mi-
chaells Psychic Science
Church on P Street, making
her annual predictions.
0 "In order to reduce the soar-
ing deficit, the federal govern-
ment will sell the Washington
9 monuments to Matsushita."_
Howard McCurdy, American
University professor. (Okay,
maybe he was kidding. Hey!
i Maybe those other guys were
kidding tool)
0 "So now, we begin a new
time; a new season of coming
y together. A season where the
international city, the federal
city, the many neighborhoods,
1 the many constituents, become
one."-Mayor Sharon Pratt
i (then) Dixon, delivering her in-
i augural address,Jan. 2, 1991.
Maybe this year.
)HOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS HARTLOVE; ILLUSTRATION BY J. ()TTO SEIBOLI)

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nThe Swimming Pool People"
10 THE WASHINGTON POST MAGAZINE
Tutu Marvelous
F ifty years ago, on her honeymoon in Atlantic City, Debbie Greenbaum bought her first ballerina, a girl in a high-necked leotard with chunky thighs bending over to tie her slipper.
01 wasn’t even dancing then, but she started the collection," Greenbaum remembers.
Now she has dozens of ballerinas, grouped in a wooden etagere, each shelf looking like a mini-stage, the mismatched figures poised to begin dancing.
Unless you look really closely.
1A lot of the people who make these statues don’t know how a ballerina stands," Greenbaum points out. She selects a figurine with the right leg partially extended and the toe pointing inward. Classical ballet demands the foot be turned outward, toe pointed and heel visible in the front.
uOr the poses are fake," she adds, pointing to a coquettish ballerina with her arms in a jazz dance position.
There are other things to learn.
For one, uyou can see the evolution of costumes," says Greenbaum, pointing out a vanilla-colored plastic dancer from the Soviet Union wearing an old-fashioned tutu with the ruffle angled low on the hips. The modern tutu, she says, flares near the waist.
This is one lady who knows her taps from her tutus. She studied classical dance locally with Marian Venable during the U105, and jazz dance with Roberta Fera, the woman who taught Goldie Hawn when she was a girl in Silver Spring. These days, Greenbaum taps with the Notables, a small group of musicians and dancers who perform at nursing homes, churches and synagogues.
Her ballerina collection ranges from classical (Giselle in porcelain) to popular (a pink china likeness of the hippo ballerina in Disney,s ttFantasia.")
There’s even one little ballerina who dressed hastily. Greenbaum offers a bronze figure in a full split, old-fashioned skirt billowing over the legs.
"Turn it over," she commands. uShe forgot her undies." -L. FEAT O’NElL
Attention, junior birdmen (and women, of course): Forget about day-old bread; here’s your chance to move into bird-feeding’s big leagues.
The Smithsonian Environmental Research Center is having a winter birdseed sale to publicixe environmental concerns and raise some cash to support its programs. We’re talking quality thistle. sunflower (ttboth oil and striped varieties"), regular wild bird mix, special wild bird mix ("contains 1/3 sunflower seed and peanut hearts") and fancy finch seed. Also Maine Manna Suet Cakes and your standard cracked corn.
You pick up the seed Saturday or Sunday. January 25 or 26, at the center’s 2,600-acre grounds in Edgewater, Md.
, but you have to order by noon January 15. Call 301-261-4190 and ask for Linda Chick.
PHOTOGRAPH HY CRAIG DANIELS; ILLI’STRATION HYJANE FLYNN

sign 0ft/9e time;
Why Time Flies
E very New Yearts resolution comes down to one thing: You want to make better use of your time. You've got 168 precious hours in a week and you think you spend too many of them eating, working, or just plain couch-potating in front of the TV. Well, as it turns out, Americans have a bad sense of their own timing. We're actually not the workaholic TV hounds and antisocial creatures that we (and the media) claim we are. John Robinson, a sociology profes- sor at the University of Maryland, heads the Americans' Use of Time Project, which has 5,000 people of all ages across the country keeping ob- sessively detailed diaries about what they do with every minute of their day. The latest results show that Americans have MORE free time and spend MORE time exercising and LESS time eating than they did in 1965. This gap between perception and reality grows even larger when we try to guess how many hours we work each week. Americans tend to over- estimate-by a good four to five hours. Diary-keepers 0f 20 years ago didnlt suffer from this self-delusion, which seems to indicate that our in- ternal time clocks have become- well, warped.
Time-saving devices are the cul- prit. We used to expect photos from the developer in a week; now we want them in an hour. We used to dial a phone number in 10 seconds; now we punch the touch-tone in two. We used to allow several days for a report to get through the mail; now we just fax it the moment it's ready.
We'vedone such an effective job of speeding everything up that when things happen in 001d time" it takes forever. _MARY COLLINS

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Prejudice in Japan is not a simple matter of black and white. To illustrate, let me tell you a story.

Once a week last summer, I walked to a public onsen, or hot spring bath, with John Danaher, a doctor from Stanford who was visiting Japan on the same fellowship that brought me there. The ritual of sitting in tile baths of hot water, brown with sulfur and minerals, was intensely relaxing.

One Saturday afternoon we sought out a highly recommended bath, one with a steam room and massage chairs and tables, even a restaurant. The entrance was at the top of a dark flight of stairs. When we arrived, people eating in the restaurant paused to gawk at the two foreigners_one black and one white. But the proprietor, a middle-aged Japanese man, smiled and said "hello" in English. He then took our money, gave us soap and small towels and walked us back to the steam room and bath.

The next week, Danaher and I were joined by a friend, a St. Louis doctor in town for a convention. As we got to the top of the stairs this time, the proprietor’s congenial glance of recognition quickly turned to a look of terror. Scowling at the man from St. Louis, he asked us to leave. We sidestepped him and put our money on the glass counter. He moved behind the counter, snatched the money angrily, handed us the soap and towels and turned his back.

In the locker room were three Japanese men. On seeing the man from St. Louis, they began talking in angry tones and pointing at him. Then they hurriedly started dressing. When we walked into the bath area, several men in the hot water simultaneously got up and walked out.

No one else came in even though it was Saturday afternoon and prime time for the onsen. After finishing our bath alone, we got ready to leave. The proprietor was still frowning. Just then an American college student

BYJUANWILLIAMS

P/Jo/agra/J/H By Philip JUIIUJ (;l’l’./i/lill/)(1

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walked up the stairs. The owner leaped in front of the door and began shouting, in English, No, no more." Waving his arms frantically, he said, "Closed, closed, no more gaijin Iforeignersl."

The three of us walked away shaking our heads and laughing. All of that fuss just because the man from St. Louis_ who is white_has a beard and thick, dark hair on his chest and arms.

AS A BLACK AMERICAN WHO IS IN-trigued by the way other countries deal with racial and ethnic issues, I jumped at the chance when I was offered a fellow-ship by the Japan Society Inc., an Amer-ican organization that aims to improve relation! between the United States and Japan. I had never visited Asia before; I knew about contemporary Japan only

through reading and reports from friends. Like most Americans, I was impressed by Japanis economic strength. Every day, it seemed, I read about Japanese companies making further inroads in the American financial landscape_buying Rockefeller Center, Pebble Beach Golf Course and a host of other properties in between, in-cluding MCA, Columbia Pictures and F irestone Tire and Rubber. I also remem-bered then-Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone saying that blacks and His-panics drag down the collective intelli-gence of the United States. I knew that Michio Watanabe, then a member of the Japanese Diet, had said that black Amer-icans hurt the American economy by not paying their debts. And I recalled that a justice minister recently had said that blacks, like prostitutes, cause white horneowners to flee when they move into nelghborhoods. But I wasn’t sure what the context for these statements was, or howrepresentative they were of Japanese sentiments. I know how complicated race 15.111 America. It seemed fair to assume it might be equally complicated in Japan.

From. the day I arrived, I received strong Slgnals that the Japanese were not pleased by the prospect of a foreign re-porter poking around in their tangle of nationalistic and racial attitudes. The head of the Foreign Press Center, which was. supposed to function as my host or-ganizatlon, told me during our first meet-1ngthat-when it comes to discussing mi-norities 1n Japan, tIYou IAmericansl have a saying: Words are silver and silence is goldenf "

In my 10 weeks there, however, I

found many others who were open to the kind of cross-cultural exploration I was attempting. Using an interpreter when necessary, I was able to speak to a wide variety of people. Through conversations with blacks and whites, Asians who are not from Japan and Japanese minority groups, a portrait of the Japanesehand the way most of them relate to people who are not Japanese-began to emerge.

UYES, THERE IS RACISM HERE, BUT IT IS a different kind," says John Russell, 34, a black American anthropologist who is working as a research associate at Chiba College of Health Science. "Ignorance motivates it . . . But the kind of racial hate you feel in the US. is very rare here."

Russell and I are seated in a Korean restaurant in Tokyo. A hot coal fire is burning in the middle of the table, as strips of raw beef are brought out for us to cook. We are talking about the way the Japanese relate to blacks.

Born in Harlem, educated at Amherst and Harvard, Russell is married to a Japanese woman. At Chiba College he is translating a 1966 Japanese text in which the writer blames South African apartheid on blacksl smelling bad.

"You will hear from very liberal Japanese the claim that foreigners smell? says Russell. tlThey used to say batakusai-smell like butter." But he thinks that most foreigners-black or white or Asian-run into similar problems. He says it’s hard for foreigners to find apartments to rent in Tokyo. The Japanese say foreigners wear their shoes in the house, play music too loud or have a language problem," Russell says. "It is hard to get an academic position here. But it could be that I’m a foreigner; thatls the problem with this issue. It is hard to differentiate."

Russell, a thin man with a gentle manner, shows me a passbook. It’s called an alien registration card, and all non-Japanese who stay longer than three months must carry the leather-encased document at all times. Information in the passbook includes a persons name, place of residence, physical description and the print of the left forefinger.

In Russell’s book, the blue Ministry of Justice seal covers his fingerprint.

"ItIs as if it didnt happen."

tlThose who have lived here a long time are ambivalent about Japan, but not negative," he says.

IlThere is the feeling in the US. of Why go to Japan? They hate us.’ But in reality it is not like that. Western papers sensationalize it."

CARRIE AKRIDGE ECHOES

John Russell. The Japanese occasionally

stare at her, she says, but its tthard to determine if they are staring at me as a person, as a gaijin or as a black person."
Carrie and her husband, Bai, have been in Japan a little more than three years. Bai works for IBM, directing the company's philanthropic efforts in Southeast Asia, and Carrie takes care of the kids. They are about to return to the United States; Bai has a new IBM assignment in Stamford, Conn.
The Akridges and I are shoeless and seated on the floor in a private room of a Japanese restaurant. The waitress, in kimono and white slippers, kneels near the table, awaiting our decision as we look over the menu. After we order, the beer comes and the Akridges insist we serve it in the Japanese manner-pouring for each other. ltKampai/ "we exclaim. Cheers! ltOverall it has been a very positive ex-

K E N Z O

Tomonaga wilh burakumin Children in Osaka, opposite page. While he is not a burakumin himseM he has been "keen on discriminalory issues since I was a child. " Below: Keith Ki/dron in Sludebaker's All-American Diner and Bar. He says. "I know what it '5 like 10 be discriminated against now. "

perience," says Bai, a tall, reserved black man. IlPart of it depends on how thin your skin is, your sensitivities. It doesn't bother me to be stared at now and then. Typically it is innocent curiosity. What is true about Japan is that the images they have of darker people_Africans, African Americans, Southeast Asians-on the whole are negative.
"African Americans are depicted as drug dealers, criminally oriented," Bai says. ltBut, you know, that image is not created by the Japanese. They are using feeds from the US. media. When you crawl back into the negative image the Japanese have of black Americans, it is not based on their personal experiences."
On the plus side, he notes, "The Japanese donlt confuse race with business. What their social perception of me might be is irrelevant, which unfortunately is something Americans have never learned to do. They go to whatever means necessary to deal with me as lBMis repre-

sentative."
Our waitress slides open a white paper door and sets a tray of sashimi on our "cm," i, il
i table.
uIn Japanf’ Carrie says, uwe have gotten away from the race issue as an everyday issue. I turned on CNN the other day and they were bellyaching about some civil rights bill."
She says her husband is accepted by Japanese businessmen because he is perceived to be competent as an IBM representative.
"We do feel free of racefl says Bai. "Americans are fixated on race, and it hurts our country in a global sense."
The Japanese, Bai explains, are less a racially oriented society than a hierarchical one. ltThey want to know where a person stands, how low to bow, are you the general manager or president."
He says this attitude also extends into the international arena. Bai believes that in some ways the Japanese still view Europeans and Americans as superior. "Next comes the Japanese, aspiring, struggling for equality, possibly displacing Europe on the status ladder," he says. HAnd underneath them is everyone else. At the bottom are people of African descent because they are looking for aid, looking for help and not in a position to give assistance?

AFTER DINNER WE WALK
to a karaoke bar near Roppongi Crossing. The Roppongi district, with its bars and restaurants offering cuisine from all over the world, is the most international area of Tokyo. I see more black faces here than anywhere else in Japanethough that’s not saying much. Many of the black men are American 015. We pass a reggae Club called Java Jive and a disco called the Philadelphia Motor Town Dance Club; above the door of the disco is a sign showing two black people dancing. I have never seen such a massive congregation of people, not in Times Square, not at Woodstock, not anywhere. As we move through the crowds, I see wave upon wave of young men in Armani suits and women in tight, tlbody-conscious" dresses. Many of them are smoking Cigarettes.

For all of its affluence, Tokyo_one of the largest cities in the world_isn’t glamorous so much as noisy, frenetic and crowded. Overhead, even in the ritzy neighborhoods, the omnipresent elevated highways rumble and groan under the weight of heavy transport trucks. If this is the urban future, and I sense that it is, it’s grittier and messier than I imagined. More like "Blade Runner," less like Disney World.

The karaoke bar is on the fourth floor of a thin building stuck down a side street. The only entrance is a street-level elevator. We crowd on and go up. The elevator opens to a club with lots of TV monitors. A pair of men are entertaining a group of about 15 women at a long table, and they look as if they’ve been drinking for a while. I am told that the men are bosses who are taking the young women out for drinks to promote company spirit.

We watch as two tuxedo-clad emcees encourage customers to get up and sing. They don’t have to do much encouraging of the ones who have been throwing down the sake.

Three Americans, friends of the Akridges, all black, arrive to join us: Clay West, a lawyer from Spokane now working in Japan; Lorraine Perry-Suzuki, coordinator of the business and management program for the University of Marylandls Asian division; and Rita Scott, from Southeast Washington, who graduated from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and is now

Malsila. the representative 0f the

African Nan’onal
C ongress in Japan.
the country’s lure is
money, which he
raises for projects in
South Africa. Here
he has more personal
money mailers 1’ n
mind. shopping at an
outdoor market in
Tokyo. H e says
Japanese every-
where now treat him
like a celebrity.
here teaching mid-level
executives at an import-
export company how to
prepare for the tests and
essays necessary to get
into American business
schools.
Scott, 34, says her stu-
dents end up at presti-
gious business schools-
Harvard, the University
of Chicago, Berkeley. The
trick, she says, is getting
young Japanese men to
see the questions on the
application forms the way
Americans do. ttThey are
not used to planning ca-
reers," she says, Ilbecause
their careers are planned
for them. The question
IWhat are your goals in
five years and 10 years?’
is difficult for them to re-
late to since they don’t
determine their own career path."
And what is it like for a black woman
from Southeast Washington to be in Ja-
pan? She says its been great: uI don’t
have any negative stories to tell you in
terms of being black. I am a foreigner and
I experience the same thing as other non-
Japanese."
As a teacher, a sensei, Scott is treated
with respect by the Japanese in her com-
pany. "They just about kiss my feet be-
cause I have something they want," she
says. IIWhat they respect is my creden-
tials-Wharton. It has nothing to do with
the way I talk, or dress, just my resume.
IlWhite Americans’ experiences here
are similar to blacks," she says. ItThey
complain more than we do. Theylve never
experienced someone not sitting next to
them on the subway or staring at them.
I’m more oblivious to it. Whites never con-
sider themselves second-Class or a minor-
ity. I understand that, but I dont have a lot
of sympathy. I think it’s good for them.
"Whites have told me they relate bet-
ter to me because of the experiences
they’ve had in Japan," she says. uI think
more of them need to come over."
IT’S WEDNESDAY NIGHT IN OSAKA,
Japan’s third-largest city, ano Keith Kile
dron of Monroe, La., is watching a dance
floor full of Japanese IIOLs’I-office la-

dies_learning to twirl Hula-Hoops. At 28, Kildron, who is white, is a division director of Duskin Co. Ltd., a Japanese conglomerate that owns this 19505-theme establishment called Studebakerls All-American Diner and Bar. He has been in Japan one year and nine months.

Kildron says it hasn’t been easy. Taxicabs often won’t pick him up. Hehs not allowed in many bars and restaurants. He’s engaged to a Japanese woman, but her mother won’t tell the relatives because she is embarrassed. He was concerned that he could not move up in the company so he finally asked and was told he would be given a chance for promotion if he learned the language. Kildron’s not so sure. uThat’s what they said, anyway, but I don’t know?

"I know what it’s like to be discriminated against now, Illl tell you that," he says. What he dislikes most about life in Japan is his alien registration card. "I don’t mind the idea of registering, but I have to carry it around all the time. And why has this"_the fingerprint-Itgot to be on there?" He says it makes him feel like a criminal.

Kildron and I are looking out at the

dance floor from seats at the bar. His blond hair is thinning. HeIs dressed in a herringbone suit. He still wears his Northeast Louisiana college ring. As the company executive who oversees the club, he is here most nights, though not every night.

Kildron rises from his stool to deal with a problem at the door. All around, waitresses dressed as high school cheerleaders serve the customers. One of them stops by. tIYou are an American, aren't you?" she asks. She is from Ohio and is here for only three months. The company brings in a new group of white American women, usually blondes, every few months to give the place a ttHappy Days" flavor. She misses home, she says, but the Japanese ttjust love me," and she has a boyfriend who spends lots of money on her. The Japanese like American women, she says with a smile. Then she returns to her work.

StudebakerIs is really jumping now. The place is filled with proper, well-behaved young Japanese women, seated together and doing a lot of giggling. There are only a few Japanese menein the crowd. Most of the women are out of college, between 20 and 30. Kildron tells me that two-thirds of his customers are OLs who live at home, pay no rent and have lots of disposable income. They come in groups and seldom date because most have curfews set by their parents. The other customers include "salary men" who, like the OLs, are starting out at companies and live at home. But the young men work longer hours and have less time for going out on the town.

Kildron returns to his bar stool. With American music_Chubby Checker, Bill Haley and the Comets-blaring in the background, he tells me that working for the Japanese is very different. Employees are encouraged to begin each day's work with otsutome, a commitment to duty, which includes 9 am. and 6 pm. meditations.

He pulls a folded piece of white paper out of his pocket. It is worn at the edges. On it are some daily meditations. His favorite: ItThe Three Commitments of Duskin Employees:

t(l) I am thankful for being granted a chance as I had hoped to work for Duskin. I promise that Illl do my best.

H(2) I want to be of service to others, in return being grateful for the joy that my life was made anew.

w(3) I try to avoid jealousy, grudges and

quarrels over the title, position and division of material things. I swear to create a pleasant and comfortable circumstance at my place of work_ with prayer."
When he signed on with Duskin, he says, he had to undergo company training that included going house-to-house asking that he be allowed to clean the person’s toilet as a show of humility. He had to go to 19 houses before one housewife said he could do it. After he was done. she gave him a cup of green tea.
ITIS RAINING,SO MY interpreter guides me on an arduous march through the underground tunnels_past countless restaurants and stores and newsstands-of the Osaka subway system, all the while asking directions for a street corner above us. We seem to be in a matching city_just underground. When we finally come up, we duck quickly into a building and take an old elevator to the offices of Kiyoshi Kuroda, editor and president of the Kuroda Journal.
Kuroda is a well-known Japanese journalist who left the Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan’s largest daily newspaper, after 35 years because, he explains, his bosses were uncomfortable with his crusading style.

KOREAN rights activist Yong-Dal Suh, below. says his goal is llmcnm/ freedom. spiritual freedom 10 use our ethnic culture and our 0 wn language. "
Opposite page: Shigeru Kayano in a traditional. one-room Ainu straw home. His hope: "I don ’I want anyone to forget the history oflhe Japanese invading us. "
Today Kuroda gives speeches, appears on television and runs a weekly paper (circulation 3,000) focusing on minority issues in Osaka, especially Japanese attitudes toward the three major Japanese minority groups_ Koreans, burakumin and Ainu. The burakumin, who are little-known in the West, are vestiges of Japan’s caste system, de-

scendants of butchers, tanners, gravediggers and other low-class workers. The Ainu_whose ancestral home is in the northern part of the country_ are Japan’s aborigines.
The newspaper is published out of two rooms. In one room, several men and women sit around a large table_typing, editing, reading. On the other side of a bookshelf is a smaller, cramped room with a couch, a TV set, a video recording machine, rows of videotapes, phone books, old newspapers, metal file cabinets and two desks_one for Kuroda and another for his secretary. The secretary brings two glasses of iced coffee.
I ask him why foreigners feel so, well, foreign in Japan. Hjapan did not have much contact with other cultures historically," Kuroda begins. Consequently, uthe Japanese think people in the world should have the same faces, look, appear as we have and think the same_if they are really people. We are taught that way and we have thought that way."
Kuroda describes the Japanese as working effectively in groups-whether in combat or in business-because of the country’s history of hierarchies. At the top was the emperor and at the bottom was the rank and file. uWhen the ordinary people complained of bad treatment," Kuroda says, the ruling class "created an even lower level. When we colonized Korea, Koreans were even lower than ordinary people."
But even before the Koreans, he says, "we had burakumin. . . Also the Ainu and people physically disabled." Discrimination was accepted, he says, and people were ltnot allowed to criticize it because it was government policy."
ttThe rank and file benefited by having all the heavy labor assigned to bumkumin and Koreans/l Kuroda says. "Koreans were forced to work in the coal mines. Bumkumin were forced to do things ordinary Japanese do not like to do."
Kuroda was born in 1931. In his third year of junior high the Japanese surrendered to the Allies. "The occupying army brought democracy into Japan," Kuroda says. "So we started to change from hierarchy to democracy. For example, the emperor announced himself as human. He said, Tm not a god, I’m humanf Also, we heard of human rights,’ and a new constitution was established. In that way we have changed from a hierarchical society, a vertical society, to a horizontal society, and we are equal to each other."
But, Kuroda explains, old habits die hard. He believes that the hierarchy system led not only to discrimination but also to war-to the desire to conquer other people who were less worthy. HWe now oppose war and discrimination in our education and politics," he says. "But if you

look at . . . our consciousness and minds, it is different."

In the Japanese mind, he says, uif some people are not treated equal, we think they are to blame because they have some defect in themselves. So we exclude them from the mainstream. We try to neglect them. And ignore them. The general public does not deal with it because it is not directly related to them."

For example, Kuroda says, "we have established a law clearly stipulating that companies have to hire the physically handicapped. We also stipulate that if they pay a certain amount of money I40.000 yen, or approximately $310, per yearl to the government, the companies dontt have to hire them."

As for the comments about blacks by Nakasone and other japanese leaders, Kuroda says: nThat was not a mistake or slip of the tongue. Nakasone and other

men really feel that way, and it was revealed by the statements." Japan, he says, "is a long-closed society, and it is afraid of different cultures and races . . . We are not good at speaking English, and we are afraid to speak to people who might not understand Japanese?

THE HOLIDAY INN IN OSAKA IS GIGANtic, with glass elevators shooting up the exterior and attendants on every floor greeting every elevator door that opens. Waiting in the lobby is Yong-Dal Suh, 59, a professor of accounting at St. Andrew's University in Osaka, president of the International Association for the Study of Koreans in Japan and the best-known Korean rights activist in the country.

The status of the approximately 700,000 Japanese-born Koreans in Japan is complicated. Although they were born here, the Japanese government views them as Koreans, not Japanese. If they apply for Japanese citizenship, Koreans must agree to use Japanese characters to spell their names. The result, in effect, is a name Change many Koreans find deeply objectionable because in their eyes it forces them to surrender part of their heritage. As a result, a large number decline to seek citizenship, though many employ a Japanese pseudonym in public to make life easier.

At the age of 16, all Japanese-born Koreans must register as aliens and be fingerprinted by the government. If a Japanese-born Korean wants to travel abroad, he or she must apply for a passport from the South Korean government. The Japanese government then reviews the passport upon reentry.

Suh takes me to the Miyukimori area of Osaka, the heart of the Korean community, which is 210,000 strong in the city. We get out of the cab in front of the Tsuruhashi subway station. The smell of cooked food, pungent and hot, is all around. We walk past the train entrance and into a maze of small alleys full of colorful Korean clothing and food shops.

Suh has made formal complaints to the Osaka government that the district's streets are too small. In case of fire, he says, the fire engines will not be able to get down them. uThe Japanese government has delayed development of the area," he says, "because of the Koreans." Miyukimori is adjacent to the fancy hotel district in Osaka, and Suh thinks that with a little effort from the government this would be a major tourist area.

tlI've lived in Japan 50 years and have no political rights," Suh tells me later over a dinner of Korean barbecue. "I take pride living as a Korean here. I can't retain my ethnic name and language and culture if I want to be naturalized. I have to be totally assimilated into the Japanese culture.

ltWhat we want to acquire the most," he explains, "is mental freedom, spiritual freedom to use our ethnic culture and our own language." Korean schools, he says,

are not recognized by the Japanese government as meeting national curriculum requirements, and children educated in them cant be accepted into Japanese universities. Korean students donlt get discount passes for buses and trains.

ttBy using the tax we are paying to the Japanese government to sustain their public education system, they insult us," he says.

When Suh was a student, his profes-

continued on page 24

Whats in a
eighborhood?
lf’y (1 bigf/sz (1 131/143, (1 plan) to drop our
guard (1721/ feel at mm 11/ least until
someone 0pm: (1 pom slam (/0273)? Me 5!er
THE OTHER DAY, A NEW STORE, CALLED MAX WONDER, OPENED
in my neighborhood. Its business is primarily adult videos and
magazines, and so I went to visit, to ask the owner why, of all
the places on Earth, or in Maryland, or in Montgomery County,
or even along Georgia Avenue, he had chosen my neighborhood
for his store. It was a nice day. I walked there. I had been inside
adult stores a few times before, but I had never walked to one
from my house.
"Is Brian Feldman in?" I asked the woman behind the counter.
I was standing in the front part of the store, a small area where
they sell newspapers and general-interest magazines.
"No," she said. She was in the back part of the store, the larg-
er part, by a stack of magazines whose titles included Cheeks
and Close Shaxe.
"Will he be in soon?" I asked.
She was wearing a dozen hoop earrings clipped onto her ear,
BY DAVID FINKEL
and on one leg, between her pants and socks, there seemed to
be the dark swirl of a tattoo.
uI don’t know," she said. Then again, maybe it was some kind
of stocking. I couldn’t tell for sure.
I wanted to ask a few other things, but she didn’t want to say
anything more, not without Feldman around, so I looked past

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her at the customers, who were paging through magazines, and she looked past me, toward the front, where another customer was coming through the door. He was wearing a trench coat that was buttoned high and a hat that was pulled low. He had a pasty complexion, there's no other way to describe it, and gray eyes that he cast downward as he asked the woman, "How do I join?"

She motioned him over to the counter. Asked for his driver's license. Asked for $5. Asked him to sign a membership form that said his interest in magazines such as Close Shave was purely educational or scientific or governmental. Into the back he went, and I walked home to my neighborhood, which has become a place not quite sure what to do about its newest neighbor. Some of us don't mind it. Some of us do. Some of us find it an annoyance, some find it a threat, some despise it. Some, no doubt, are customers.

In one way or another, though, all of us know about it. There have been leaflets about it stuck in our screen doors, a meeting about it that turned into a shouting match, even a rally in front of the store. The rally wasn't to shut Max Wonder down but to demonstrate for zoning changes to keep future Max Wonders a reasonable distance from neighborhoods.

We are not zealots in my neighborhood. We are reasonable. Consider the name given to the group coordinating the protest: the Community Alliance for Sensible Zoning. ltItls Time Montgomery County Put Porn In Its Place," read one of the picket signs. "Zone For Families, Not For Porn," read another.

My wife, who helped with the signs, was at the rally; so were our two young daughters; so were more than a hundred others: a few reporters, two TV crews, but mostly people from the neighborhood. Some of them I knew by sight, some I knew by name. There was Pierre, a doctor, who lives just past the big evergreen that the neighborhood decorates every year at Christmas, There was Eric, father of three small children, who has a great lawn and a Weber grill and never burns the chicken. There was Cindy, Eric's wife, who, a few days before, had bundled up the children against a Chilly wind and walked with them along our street, gathering sticks of lumber in their red wagon to be used for the picket signs. She pulled the wagon, and they followed. She waved at passing cars, and so did they.

Now, as the rally continued, and traffic began backing up on Georgia Avenue, and horns began honking, my younger daughter came running over to me. I scooped her up. She watched, delighted by the commotion, and I watched too.

I looked toward Max Wonder, willing to assume the worst.

hat
do you think the

real issue is
here? I ask. lIs it
pornography?
Is it a sense of
encroachment? Is
it property
values? Susan
doeSIft hesitate.
sMy childrens
safety: she says.
I looked across the street to the neighborhood, willing to assume the best.
THE NEIGHBORHOOD IS CALLED NORTH Woodside. Stand in the doorway of Max Wonder and look toward it, and this is what you see:
A neighborhood built upon a hill. An assortment of Colonials, Tudors and bungalows mixed along weathered streets. Telephone poles mostly planted straight, and telephone wires that sag only a little. Lawns that are mowed, leaves that are raked, gardens that are fussed over, trees that are tall. The overall sense is of height rather than width, of a crowd but not claustrophobia. It is not big, broad, elegant Potomac, this neighborhood, but neither is it the type of antiseptic tract that sprouts up so often these days behind long walls and gatehouses. Rather it’s an old neighborhood of old houses, a reminder of how so many early suburbs began.
Out of the city stretched a road. Eventually, it became an artery, with smaller roads veering off into the woods. Houses went up among the trees, and when people moved in, they often expected to stay forever. Now, even though we don’t stay forever, the neighborhood is no less important in our lives. It is a buffer, 3 refuge, a place to exhale, drop our guard, feel at ease. Out in the world there is chaos. Within the neighborhood, whose boundaries are defined, whose residents we assume are like us, we have a sense of control.
The view the other way, from my neighborhood toward Max Wonder, is entirely different. It is a view of a busy road, a road that is said to carry 75,000 cars a day, a road constantly humming, controlled by traffic lights, seven lanes across and edged with shops. Not shopping centers, just shops. Close to the street. Some with apartments on top.
Like the neighborhood, the shops are old, but unlike the neighborhood, they have aged in an unflattering way, becoming a type of old that, even when the sun is out, makes them seem grimy and overhung by gray.
We go to them anyway. We go to the hardware store, where they charge $2.44 for a pair of work gloves I could get somewhere else for half the price. We go to the pet store, where we bought the children their fish. We go to the Mexican restaurant, even though it smells damp and the beer is warm, and we went occasionally to the video store that was next to the computer store until it went out of business

last spring. Then, over the summer, the store next to it, a phone store where we got the push-button for the kitchen, closed as well. Then it was fall, and a sign went up by the entrance to the phone store announcing the imminent arrival of something called Max Wonder video newsstand.

A video store goes out of business. Another one decides to open next door. We should have known then.

But ours isnit a neighborhood where suspicions are automatic. Without a second thought, I drove by the store every day, while inside workers were busy reshaping it. They put up shelves. Built a counter. Installed a dividing wall with louvered doors. Put up more shelves. Installed smoked glass.

No one figured it out, though, not until the day when Susan Carroll, who is married to Art, who works for a defense contracting firm that is cutting back on benefits, which has led Susan to take a part-time job because it comes with insurance, was talking to a friend, who had heard from another friend what Max Wonder actually was. It wasnit a new store at all. It had existed in Washington as the Plain Brown Wrapper. It had moved to Wheaton and become Max Wonder. And now it was closing in Wheaton and moving two miles to the south, moving its thousands of films and magazines and customers to a location that, when the leaves are off the big elm tree in the front yard, Susan can see from her door. ttI think you should be concerned," Susan remembers the friend saying that day. ttWhy?" ttBecause you have children?

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DINING
BY PHYLLIS C. RICHMAN
Star- Spangled Ribs
OLD GLORY-3139 M St. NW. 202-337-3406. Open: Sunday through Thursday 11:30 am. to 1 a.m., Friday and Saturday 11 tun. to 1:30 a.m. All major credit cards. No reservations. Separate non-smoking section. Prices: apyetizers $3.25 to $5.95, entrees $5.95 to $12.95. Full meal with beer, tax and tip about $20 to$25 per person.

LD GLORY IS BRINGING NEW LIFE to Wisconsin Avenue and M Street, Georgetownis hub-you can tell from a block away that something is happening. Flags are flying and brand-new aged-looking columns now frame the M Street space that has housed everything from the Big Cheese to a motorcycle bar. Inside is a haven of wood smoke and classic rock. The atmosphere and the barbecue sauces all cleave to a theme: warm and friendly. The brick walls are now capped with a decorative pressed-tin ceiling, and the second floor has been carved into a balcony, which overlooks a two-story-high American flag. The booths are wood, the tables are spread with butcher paper, and paper towels serve as napkins.

Old Glory looks like a rib joint, sounds like a rib joint and smells like one. Its a little bit of Memphis, a touch of Kansas City, a whiff of Southwest Texas, a hint of Lexington and Eastern Carolina and a dip into Savannah. On every table are six bottles of sauce evoking each of those locations, as well as a shaker of dry spices. And wonder of wonders, there’s not a loser among them.

Old Glory is the newest success story from Capital Management and Development, which has already populated Georgetown with Paolo’s, the River Club, J. Paulis and the Georgetown Seafood Grill. The family resemblance is apparent in the service, which is youthful and endearing yet professional enough that the waiters can explain in depth the makings of each sauce. Eating can get pretty complicated with nearly a dozen condiments

PHOTOGRAPH BY BARBARA RIES
Old Glory, Georgetown’s new rib joint, is as alI-American as Elvis and a platter of barbecue.

0n the table, but the staff keeps it cleared of empty plates, the beer mugs full and the paper towels flowing.

More important, of course, the kitchen smokes fine barbecue: The pork ribs are crusty and tender with no visible fat. You can get them plainly smoked with just a brushing of vinegar and a sprinvkling of dry mix, but they have more punch if you order them glazed with tomato-based barbecue sauce as they cook. There are big soft chunks of pulled pork shoulder and sliced pork. The thinly sliced beef brisket is smoky all the way through, impeccably lean yet tender and moist. Only the chicken sacrifices juiciness to its long smoking. Old Glory

makes its own rich and intense summer sausage. And its Virginia ham_not to be confused with country ham_is gentle

and mild yet flavorful. There is also a parade of daily specials that usually includes a New York strip steak plus, perhaps, barbecued leg of lamb, duck or prawns. There is at least one salad among the specials, usually a satisfying bowlful of grilled chicken with crunchy tortilla strips and crisp greens heavy on the iceberg lettuce. Its sesame-lime vinaigrette tastes a bit Oriental, yet suits nicely.

Disappointments are few, but the barbecued lamb special was limp and dry, while barbecued duck was a pile of high-priced smoky meat shreds. In other words, the specials taste experimental, while most of the everyday items show routine excellence.

The smoked meats are also available as sandwiches, and any pulled-pork fan is likely to want it on a roll (albeit a soft one that quickly turns to gum under the sauce and slaw), doused with the vinegar-and-pepper East Carolina sauce. Or maybe the tomato-tinged Lexington sauce, though I think Lexington would look askance at tomato.

Probably the way to tackle Old Glory the first time is to pour little dabs of each sauce on a plate and taste them all. Its not that you'd easily pick a favorite, but you might decide which to match with what.

For ribs Iim partial to the Memphis sauce_tangy with smoked tomato vinegar, redolent with black pepper and faintly sweetened by molasses. Kansas City is a runner-up, with its cayenne punch and faint aroma of orange and celery seed. Southwest Texas's three kinds of chilies with cumin, coriander and oregano is the hottest, to stand up to the beef brisket. And Savannah, which the staff recommends with ham, I prefer with chicken.

But as good as the smoked meats and sauces are, they are only half the story of Old Glory. The appetizers are hefty and likely to fill you quickly (if you are foresighted enough to save room for dessert, youIll share the starters). The chicken wings; besides being crisp-skinned and juicy, are another good excuse for barbecue sauce. Sooner State Caviar is a nicely balanced black-eyed pea salad served with remarkably thin and crisp tortilla chips. Barbecued shrimp are five classy giant shrimp, fresh and plump, well coated with dry spices and grilled in the shell. And the chili is serious stuff, dense with shredded meat and just a few beans; it has 3 wonderful complexity of seasonings, but is way too salty on occasion (a flaw that haunts some of the vegetables too). If you want a little preview of the barbecue, you can order an appetizer plate of four miniature biscuits stuffed with small samples. If they weren't so good, you wouldnt

need appetizers at all. Entree portions are large, and the bread basket includes grainy golden cornbread with chewy niblets of corn as well as light, flaky biscuits.

But whatever you do, donit miss the

vegetables. Old Glory makes a succotash that puts all others to shame. The corn is sweet, the limas are delicate, and they are bound with cream. It is luxury succotash. The shoestring fries are browned to a mahogany shade, and it would be hard to find better. Hoppin' John's Black Eyed Peas and Rice is a delicious Southern classic. The slaw is mustard-spiked, creamy and sharp. The potato salad is homey, with bits of skin; it tastes bland at first, but improves as it warms to room temperature. And the beans, firm and smoky, are too sweet for my taste_which made them perfect for every one of my companions. Old Glory hasn't missed a single opportunity to make its mark. Even the root beer is made in-house (again, it is a bit sweet for me), The Old Glory ale on draft is a local brew to be proud of too.

It would take a mighty dessert to tempt anyone after an Old Glory barbecue platter. For me, that mighty dessert is Aunt Lil's Saturday Night Coconut Cherry Cobbler. The cherries are tart and flavorful, their syrup barely thicker or sweeter than juice, and the crunchy coconut topping is wonderful. There are other compelling options too, including giant oatmeal chocolate-chip cookies sandwiching frozen custard, or a frozen black-bottom Key lime pie that is respectably tart, if a little short on lime.

A meal at Old Glory ends not with sedate little after-dinner mints, but with Tootsie Pops. In addition to little boxes of matches, there are identical boxes of toothpicks. The six-packs for sale here are of barbecue sauce or root beer. Is this the heralding of a new, wholesome, American-as-cherrycobbler Georgetown? I

Solution to Last Week's Puzzle

U
N

JAPAN

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sors told him that if he wanted to be a successful academic in Japan, he needed to apply for Japanese citizenship and change his name. He refused, as had many before him. In 1938, when the Japanese declared that all Koreans were to give up their Korean names completely, Suh says, "some committed suicide."

NOT ALL KOREANS IN JAPAN AGREE with Suh. Novelist Nobuko Kyo, for one, had no trouble adopting the Japanese version of her name. "Koreans living in Japan need new ideas," says Kyo. We are the new tribe, not Japanese, not Korean-but we are a new group that can bridge Japan and Korea."

I am having dinner with Kyo-who is 30 but looks much younger-her Japanese husband, Satoru Imamura, and their sleepy-eyed 5-year-old daughter, Natsuki. Every now and then she lays her head down on the tablecloth. We are in a special dining room atop the Kumamoto Castle Hotel. Outside the window, the castle itself-the hilltop abode of Kiyamasa Ka-

to, the feudal warlord of this area-is lit in the distance and looks like the home of a god.

Kyo-whose novel A Very Ordinary Korean in Japan has sold 20,000 copies-was born and raised in Japan. But the law of Japan views her as Korean. In order to gain greater acceptance for her work, she abandoned her Korean name. "Eighty percent of Koreans living in Japan use Japanese names," she says. "Only people who are very concerned about racial issues use Korean names." Her Japanese name, she explains, is simply the Japanese pronunciation of her Korean name. She has chosen, however, not to become a naturalized Japanese. She sees "no advantage at this point to becoming Japanese. "If I get Japanese nationality," she reasons, "I will lose the chance to appeal to Japanese as well as to Koreans." Why? Because a change of nationality would turn off the Koreans, which in turn would destroy her credibility with the Japanese audience as a spokesperson for Koreans. Kyo's appeal is based on her rejection of activism. She says ordinary Japanese "think activists . . . are different from themselves, whether they are active in opposition to discrimination or nuclear arms."

iiHer book just describes usual social life in Japan," says her husband. "Other books are about active social movements." Many Koreans, he continues, ask, H Why does Miss Kyo write this book with no interest in discrimination? But she has had many responses from Japanese people who said, This is the first

time we understand. We like the Koreans in your book "

Kyo gently touches her daughter, who is fast falling asleep. Looking at her half-Korean child and her Japanese husband, Kyo says, "I think nationality is an outdated concept. Nationality is not the same as race."

As for the fact that Koreans are prohibited from voting in Japan, Kyo dismisses it as a minor insult. She says that "the right to vote is very important to some, but among Japanese young people, they don't like to go voting-voting is not significant to them."

Her husband agrees. He explains that the way to achieve power is not through politics, but through books and culture. "We Japanese and young Koreans want to make friends," he says. ItThere was no chance before the book appeared. In order to live together, we need to talk. In order to talk, we've got to know each other. We still dont know each other well."

In any case, protest is not her way of doing things. "People in the US. and Europe have placards and shouting," she says. "That style is not appropriate in Japan. Living in a society of groups, if we act differently from the group people, it gets hard to live together."

THE CAB TURNS UNDER A TRAIN OVERpass in Osaka and into a neighborhood that is dreary and poor, but not a slum. Arriving at a small office building opposite a parking lot, I take the elevator up to an office cluttered with cartons of magazines and papers. There, Kenzo Tomonaga, secretary general of the Burakumin Liberation Leaguels research institute, comes out to meet me.

I already know a little about the history of the bumkumin. Between the early 16003 and Commodore Matthew Perry's arrival in 1853, Japan was an isolated, feudal society. Warriors were held in highest esteem, followed by farmers, artisans and merchants. At the bottom of the caste system were the bumkumin and the him'n. The him'n were beggars, actors and jail guards. They lived separately from the burakumin, who guarded tombs, butchered meat, made bamboo and straw goods and tanned leather.

In 1871, the Meiji government abolished the caste system and decreed that the hinin and the burakumin should be treated as commoners. The him'n assimilated into society, and today there are no signs of their existence, except in museums and history books. The emancipation of the burakumin did not go so well. They were still easily identified because they had been confined by the government to a specific, identifiable area, or buraku, in each community. (Kiyoshi Kuroda had told me of a recent newspaper report, which I was unable to confirm, that 150 or more Japanese companies to this day use a book called buraku chimei sokan-a location register-to help them

avoid hiring burakumin.)
In 1902, the burakumin started a civil rights movement. In 1955, the movement merged with another group that was organized to fight discrimination against burakumin to become the Burakumin Liberation League.
Tomonaga leads me into a windowless conference room. The only decoration on the wall is a large pictureof Jijichiro Matsumoto, the most famous burakumin leader. When the government was reconstituted following World War II, Matsumoto rose to become vice speaker of the Japanese House of Representatives. A young man brings us green tea and then bento, a Japanese box lunch, as we talk.
In contemporary Japan, Tomonaga says, there are slightly more than 2 million bumkumin, or about 2 percent of Japanis population of 124 million, although the government claims they make up only a little more than 1 percent. There are about 100,000 burakumin, or 4 percent of the population, in the city of Osaka, he estimates. Of the 35 representatives on the Osaka City Council, five are burakumin. Most of the young burakumin men are in the construction industry earning low pay. Once they turn 30, they have trouble getting even construction work. Consequently, he says. most of the bumkumin live in rural areas, where they can find manual work and escape urban labels.
A survey done last year by the institute found that burakumin graduate from college at a rate far below the national average. There is a higher level of alcoholism among burakumin than in other segments of the Japanese population, and there are more birth defects. And because burakumin often engage in dangerous physical work, there are more handicapped people in the ranks.
The next day, Tomonaga takes me to Sumiyoshi, a large burakumin neighborhood in Osaka. This neighborhood was built with government funds in 1956 despite opposition from some bumkumin who felt that an identifiably burakumin area would perpetuate segregation and discrimination against them. Today, according to Tomonaga, 1,600 people live here. One-third work in city government as trash collectors, janitors and water meter readers; a third are on welfare; and the rest have blue-collar jobs with private employers. There is a community day-care center after school, a subsidized apartment complex and a co-op supermarket. When I am introduced to community leader Mitsuro Kosumi, he tells me that "the Japanese government will give us money to be quiet;th will not address discrimination against Us."
Tomonaga takes me to an old,rone-room wooden shack. It is typical of housing for burakumin before the government built the apartments. High above the shack, the main building is visible. Jutting from the

side of the building is a massive sculpture of a woman holding a baby in one arm. The other arm points to the sky.
Tomonaga says she is reaching out against discrimination.
Tomonaga himself, surprisingly, is not a burakumin. nOnly foreigners ask me that? he says when I ask why a burakumin leader is not a burakumin. He was born illegitimate, which meant he was part of yet another disadvantaged class in this family-oriented society. And that made him "keen on discriminatory issues since I was a child." Since there was no advocacy group for illegitimate children in Japan, he got involved with the burakumin movement at Osaka City University. When he graduated, he went to work as a journalist for the Burakumin Liberation News. He married a bumkumin woman and they have two children, ages 16 and 20, both of whom are activists in the movement.
When discrimination cases occur against burakumin, Tomonaga explains, the league engages in the controversial tactic of "denunciationll-putting pressure on the offending party by staging continual demonstrations and tying up business operations and phone lines. League members also protest in front of the homes of the target companyls senior employees. "The movement calls for self-reflection and apology," he says. If there is discrimination within a company, the movement asks that there be meetings to address the problem in the section where the offender works. There are complaints that the tactics amount to extortion and coercion, but bumkumin leaders say they are using legitimate tactics to bring attention to discrimination against them.
In explaining Japanese discrimination against burakumin, Tomonaga points to the notion of yamato damashii, or Japanese spirit. Yamato damashii, he says, was used by Japanese to inspire fighting men during war.
iiIn yamato there is no concept of human rights? Tomonaga says. IlMost leaders believe the idea that there is Japan only as a homogeneous society."
THE DRIVE TO NIBUTANIwTHE ONE small town in Japan where the Ainu are the majority of the population-takes us into the cooler, northern reaches of the country. Horses graze in pastures that spread between the large rivers. The coast is dotted with fishing ports. After checking into Nibutaniis only motel, I put my bags in my room and walk across the

highway, past a line of small woodcraft shops where Ainu craftsmen carve wooden bears for tourists, and into the woods. In a clearing is a small Ainu museum with several Ainu-style, one-room straw houses next to it. And off to the side is a newly built wooden house. It belongs to Shigeru Kayano, the author of 13 books, including The Romance of the Bear God and Other Ainu Folktales. Kayano, 65, is a big man with lush, thick eyelashes and bushy eyebrows-characteristics of Ainu. He is wearing an oversize shirt, shirttail out, and socks over large feet.

Kayano sits at his dark oak writing desk with his legs tucked under him. His wife, a small, friendly, dark-haired woman, serves us Japanese wafer cookies and green tea. He then begins the story of the subjugation of the Ainu.

Before 1850, Kayano explains, there was no systematic trade between the Ainu, who lived in the northern part of the country, and the Japanese. Eventually, the Japanese moved north onto Hokkaido, one of the four main islands that make up Japan. He doesn’t know the exact population of the Ainu in Hokkaido at that time but guesses it was more than 100,000.

Nibutani in the 18605 was home to 26 Ainu families, he says, and had a total population of 116 people, all of them Ainu. Forty-three men were forced by the Japanese to go from Nibutani to Akkeshi, a town 350 kilometers away, to work in a fishery. "They were taken like slaves," Kayano says. For a years work they received ua small wooden bowl? One of the men who was taken-they were chosen because they were young and could walk well_was Kayanols grandfather, who was then 12. His grandfather missed his home, so to make himself useless to the fishery, he put his hand on a cutting board and chopped off his index finger. ltBut they wouldnt let him go," Kayano says. 850 he took the poison out of a blowfish and rubbed it on his body. It turned him a dark brown, and then the owner said, lLet him go.’ "

Since the Ainu were a majority in Nibutani, they were not forced to live separately as they were in other villages. But as more and more Japanese moved onto Hokkaido, discrimination intensified. In 1889 the imperial government enacted kyudojinbogoho, or the Aborigine Protection Law. It allowed each Ainu family to keep five hectares of land and gave them soybean and pumpkin seeds. The idea was to force the Ainu to farm; they were no longer allowed to fish for what had been their main source of food-the salmon that swam in the rivers. Kayano’s father was arrested for fishing in a Hokkaido river in 1931. tlThe government wanted to eradicate usf he says. Ainu were also forbidden to hunt deer and bear, even as

the government was killing bear and deer. A government-owned cannery was built

to ship canned meat and fur to southern Japan.
In 1893 a grammar school was built in Nibutani and use of the Ainu language was prohibited. Japanese was the only language allowed, and the teachers were all Japanese. (Kayano learned the Ainu language from his grandmother, who could not speak Japanese.)
By the early part of the 20th century, the government did not have to force assimilation-the Ainu were running away from their second-class status, often moving away from Hokkaido so as not to be identified as Ainu. "Many were waiting for the chest and leg hair to disappear," Kayano says sarcastically. I think back, of course, to the man from St. Louis and the reaction of the public bathers at the Tokyo omen.
Life was not easy for the Ainu who tried to assimilate into Japanese culture. "Even today you can’t see Ainu police or bank clerks," says Kayano. ltThere are only a few teachers."
He looks around at the fine wooden house he has built. "When I was a boy," he says, "I lived in an Ainu house made of straw. I wished to live in a Japanese house because they had higher living standards. They had better houses of wood."
Now, as leader of the Ainu movement in Japan, Kayano is focusing on keeping the Ainu language from dying out. He teaches it and in the last five years has gotten the government of Hokkaido to support his language program financially. He has 52 adults and 25 children in his classes. tEven my grandchildren take my courses? he says.
What more does he want the government to do? He points out that Hokkaido’s population is 5.7 million_of which at most 50,000 are Ainu. "So realistically," Kayano says, we can’t say, lJapanese get out!’ But I don’t want anyone to forget the history of the Japanese invading us here. At least the Japanese should recognize that they are living on the land of the Ainu."
OF JAPAN’S APPROXIMATELY 100,000 ILlegal laborers, the government estimates some 1,000 are from Pakistan. Immigration is not allowed in Japan, although the country is in need of blue-collar labor and tolerates illegal immigrants. The Pakistani community in Kawasaki is close-knit and revolves around the local mosque.
When I visit the port city, I ask one of my hosts to introduce me to a spokesman for this group of disenfranchised, yet very necessary, workers. She tells me of a man who has agreed to talk to me as long as I do not use his name.
He and his family live on a small,
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complex payc/zo/qqy of minorin
people, ’Nakauone aaya. 1%
are very immature in ()ca/i/zg
MM: fm’ayn culture orforayn
people. Am) I too am guilty

of making) f/mt midtake. ,
darkeand I mean dark-alley. Their tiny, two-room apartment has some modern amenities_a phone, a TV and a refrigerator. But there is no running water. To bathe, the family must walk half an hour to a public bath, or sento, which is not as luxurious as an onsen. Each visit costs about $2.50.

Because he is active in the local mosque, the young father is considered a leader of the city's illegal Pakistani workers.

Six months ago, his wife had a baby and the boy is not doing well. When the baby was born, the mother needed an emergency Caesarean section. So that she could receive national health care, the father applied for an alien registration card even though it could call attention to the fact that his student visa had expired. Now he is concerned that the police will notify the immigration authorities. So far there have been no problems, but the family lives in fear.

The man came to Japan as a tourist in April 1988. Then he enrolled in a language school and the government extended his visa. He went to school in the morning and worked illegally in the afternoon.

Finally his boss told him to choose between school and work. He quit school. "I tried to get a work visa," he says. "The boss and I went to immigration, but they said no, I was not eligible."

Then he was forced to leave his job because his boss believed that the immigration bureau was watching him. When he applied for another job, they asked about his visa status. He showed them his passport, and they winked.

"He is not paid the same wages the Japanese are paid," says his wife, who is Pakistani also.
"My boss is not good, always shouting," says the man.
ttThey shout at him for the mistakes others make," says his wife, who, to the man's obvious embarrassment, goes on to lament that her husband gets none of the bonuses that are given to the Japanese. He goes to work half an hour early to do janitorial chores that none of the other men who work on circuit boards have to do, she says. And he is not invited to company picnics.
He says most of his co-workers shun him. "If I try to sit with the others, they stop talking," he says. tTm bearing it because of my son."
His wife explains that he is unable to take a day off to find another job, because he is penalized at the end of the month if he misses any work. He works 62 hours each week, with Sundays off.
Most of the other Pakistanis, he says, work in construction, as cooks and busboys in hotels, in dry cleaning, in factories cutting iron or in companies making plastic molding for computer and TV casings. Most come on tourist or student visas, and many pay about $230 per month to a school to keep their full-time student visas valid, while working illegally on the side.
The couple would like more than anything to live legally in Japan. "We dont want to fight the government, but it seems like the government wants to fight us," says the wife.
ttJapan is good for one thing_money," says the man.
NOT LONG AFTER HE ARRIVED IN TOKYO in the spring of 1988, Jerry Matsila, the African National Congress's representative in Japan, opened a letter addressed to him. In it he found a bullet and a note reading, "Go Back to Africa."
But Matsila stayed on. Like the illegal immigrants, he's here because of the money. He's raising it for the ANC and for educational and community projects in South Africa, as well as to support his family and staff in Japan.
The idea for an ANC representative in Tokyo sprang out of a meeting between then-Prime Minister Nakasone and ANC President Oliver Tambo. Both men were concerned about relations between black South Africans and the Japanese. Tensions had escalated as Japan increased trade with South Africa in 1986 while other major industrial countries, in an effort to put pressure on the apartheid government, were decreasing trade. One hundred fifty U.S. companies, for example, had pulled out, and the Japanese had moved in.
llAll the G-7 nations except Japan had a representative from the ANC? Matsila says. "We didnlt think Indians and other Asians, heirs to Gandhi, would need to

be encouraged to support us. So our focus had been on Western Europe and America."

Currently, he says, 64 percent of the cars in South Africa come from Japan; 50 percent of the gold in Japan comes from South Africa, along with 80 percent of the platinum and 42 percent of the diamonds. Matsila says that of the money he raises-about $780,000 a year_from donations by private Japanese groups, about half of it goes to the ANC and to black South African projects. The other half pays Matsilais expenses, his familyls expenses, his housing, his childrenls school tuition and his office and staff expenses.

The bullet episode has been all but forgotten. Today, he says, he is warmly welcomed and is treated like a celebrity around the country.

"IN THE FUTURE, JAPAN WILL MORE readily accept different people," says former prime minister Nakasone, who is a member of the Japanese House of Representatives. "The Japanese economy needs more and more experts and workers from other countries. And if we want to continue our present level of economic growth until 2030, we will need 2 to 3 million foreign people-by then Japan will be an aged society with fewer young people?

As we sit in Nakasone’s spacious office, surrounded by his guards and several aides, his remarks strike me as incredibly ironic. A country that refuses to allow foreigners to immigrate is now in the position of needing an infusion of young, foreign blue-collar workers to keep its economy booming.

Itls midday, and Nakasone has agreed to meet with me for-a few minutes. Hels dressed in a dark suit and has a Chrysanthemum pin_a symbol of the Diet_in his lapel. He’s obviously nervous and cautious, and he sits with his arms crossed in an overstuffed, high-back chair. His voice is gruff; his speech is measured.

I ask him about Japanls historical mistreatment of its minorities.

Regarding what he refers to as "the Korean problem," Nakasone says, "We will abolish the requirement for fingerprinting and that will be replaced by a signature?

As for ttthe Durakumin problem," he says, it "is often exaggerated for political purposes by specific groups.

"We do not understand the complex psychology of minority people," he says. "We are very immature in dealing with foreign culture or foreign people. What is beneath the minority problem is we do not begin to understand some of the intricacies and subtleties of minority issues. And I too am guilty of making that mistake. I did not have enough knowledge, and my understanding was not enough. A couple of similar mistakes have been com-t mitted by my own colleagues. I embarrassed myself and decided to study the

issue and learn about it."
The United States, he says, has a tradition of open-arms immigration. "Einstein was one such immigrant. Kissinger. Brzezinski. Many came to enrich American society." I notice that he doesntt mention any people of color.
ttIn order to realize the doctrine and dreams enshrined in the American Constitution," Nakasone says, ttpeople united to work together. The U.S. set a target for itself high with idealism.
ttIn contrast, our country, Japan, evolved over 2,000 years in a natural manner. Before a constitution, we had a nation. 80, history, that is where we are different with the U.S." He talks about democracy as Itthe main current of the 20th century," and predicts this will continue into the let. He links Japanese economic strength to expanding democracy in countries like South Korea, the Philippines and Pakistan.
At one point Nakasone says, "I learned that the energy of the U.S. is nurtured by different people coming together. It is the power of fusion."
AFTER SPENDING MORE THAN TWO months in Japan, I was left with a kaleidoscope of strange and wondrous memories: huge vending machines on most street comers selling everything from hot coffee to whiskey to Pocari nSweat," a Gatorade-type drink; buildings without addresses; an abundance of company pins religiously worn in lapels; taxi doors that open automatically; the formal exchange_and stue dious examination_0f business cards at the start of every meeting; paying $7 for four peaches and $20 for a small watermelon; a flashing sign at a baseball game urging children and parents to uobey the rules of society"; the efficiency of high-speed bullet trains that connect Japan’s enormous, overlapping cities.
On reflection, I see some similarities between bias in Japan and in America. The bumkumin provide the poor Japanese with someone to look down on in the same way that blacks have been looked down upon by poor whites in the United States. Japan’s treatment of the Ainu parallels Americals treatment of the Indians. And the Pakistanis and other illegal workers in Japan face conditions similar to those of illegal aliens here. /
But there are many differences as well, and the trip left me with a number of overarching questions. How do you explain an

Asian country that is so extraordinarily nationalistic yet features white foreign faces-as symbols of affluence and style_ in a host of advertisements? I saw everyone from the Marlboro man to pro golf champion Greg Norman to blond fashion models hawking merchandise. And in a nation focused on doing everything the Japanese way, why are there so few children's dolls with Asiatic features and traditional Japanese clothes? Most have white faces and Western clothes.

What triggers Japanese bias toward foreigners? One answer may be found in the way the Japanese treat their own minorities. Several Japanese people that I talked to conceded that there is little physical difference between the Japanese and the Koreans. Yet, without any hesitation, these same people admitted to sharing widespread Japanese distaste for Koreans born and living in Japan. The burakumin situation is even more puzzling. They are considered the lowest social group in the country, lower than Koreans, but the bumkumin are, in every sense of the phrase, purely Japanese. As for the Ainu, while some may have hair on their chests and arms, they too look very Japanese.

I also remembered the words of Motoo Shiina, a former member of the House of Representatives who is still active in politics. tlJapan is not E Pluribus Unum,' ,' he told me. "We believe in being watertight, monolithic, homogeneous."

A deeper explanation of the mysteries of Japanese racism came from John W. Dower, an MIT professor who has done extensive writing on Japan. I spoke with him one afternoon in Tokyo. "Where white supremacy is distinguished by its denigration of the other," he said, "Japanese racism is much more preoccupied with extolling the unparalleled virtue of being Japanese. The Japanese lexicon of racist epithets is impoverished compared to that found in the US, but at the same time, within Japanese society itself, non-Japanese remain eternal loutsidersf The language of intolerance may be softer, but the practice of exclusion is more severe."

But I also remember Malcolm Adams, who sees opportunity where others see barriers. The 42-year-old president of Tokyo's Totown Communications, Adams is the embodiment of Nakasone's "power of fusion." He carries a picture of himself with Nakasone; another with Bush. He represents a fledgling 22-member music revue called the Totown Funk Ensemble. He dreams of making a movie about blacks in Japan called "Shadows in the Rising Sun." He has rappers teaching Japanese how to rap. But most of all, he says, through his music he is trying to build a "nation within a nation_Afro-Asians."

Adams calls himself the oyabun, or godfather, of blacks in Japan, and he

preaches the gospel of global perspective. He's got a slick, American, streetwise

energy to him that seems out of place, to say the least, in Tokyo-and he’s straight up about being in Japan to cash in. "Opportunities on the international level ought to be vigorously pursued by young blacks," he says. ttThrough the international scene, they’ll find a clear picture of the American scene and how to relate . . . Young blacks in American ghettos and high school need to think about Japan. African ancestors came to America by force. I flew a 747 to Tokyo by choice."

A Nebraska native, Adams came to Japan in 1976 with CBS News. He did a show for CNN called "This Week in Japan." He married a Japanese woman; they got divorced. He has two children, ages 12 and 13. "They call them halfs," Adams says, "but we teach children they are not halfs but doubles-Afro-Asian."

Repeating one more time sentiments that I heard again and again in my journey, Adams says, lIWe are clearly foreign in this society. Cut and dry. You are either Japanese or not. Being black is not as much of the problem as being foreign."

Yet Adams explains this culture clash in more complex, subtle terms than do the other Americans I’ve talked to. ttThe most important thing to understand about Japanese is the tatemae, the standing-in-front persona," he says. Only when people are comfortable with one another can you reach honne, lithe inside feeling."

"You sit there sometimes, staying away from the issue at hand because ambiguity is a virtue. The idea is that the issue will come out once you have something in common. That is the group orientation. The mind-set is consensus . . . Things happen in longer term relationships."

The biggest fear of the Japanese, Adams says, is that i1they will make you uncomfortable with their way. The feeling is, ’There is no way you will understand me. Im Japanese. Iim uniquel . . . They have a lot of personal shame and inadequacy about dealing with foreigners."

But why is it worthwhile for blacks to fight through this tangle, to move from tatemae to honne, to break down the daunting barriers and reach out to the Japanese? Once again, for Adams, global perspective is the answer. ltThe key to black liberation," he says, ltis the international realm. A majority of the world is people of color who have suffered economic and psychological oppression.

"Black people can jump into any society and get Ialongl with people much more quickly because we don’t have that ethnocentricity. Blacks have the ability to deal with other nations and races with respect_mutual respect."

"This," Malcolm Adams says, His a great time to be black in Japan? I

NEIGHBORHOOD

continued from page 22

Susan had never been in an adult store. 50 she drove to Wheaton, paid the $5, signed the card swearing disengaged in-

terest, went in the back. ttIt was full of men," she says. "I was the only woman. It was uncomfortable. I just thumbed through some things, just to verify it, and split."

Now, a few months after signing up, months in which Susan has become the leading voice against having Max Wonder in the neighborhood, she is in her kitchen, looking through a file for a copy of the proposed zoning changes that she hopes Montgomery County will consider. It was written by lawyers_the neighborhood has them too-and it suggests a 1,000-foot minimum between any adult store and the nearest residence, school, church, library or playground. It goes on to describe how the 1,000 feet should be measured, and define what an adult bookstore is, and explain that "sadomasochistic abuse" means Kflagellation 0r torture by or upon a human who is nude, or clad in undergarments, or in a revealing 0r bizarre costume" . . . and meanwhile, out back is the fresh sod of a newly landscaped yard, and on the kitchen counter is a package of Oreos, and upstairs is the bedroom where, with the help of a midwife, Susan and Art's second child was born.

"What do you think the real issue is here? I ask her. llIs it pornography? Is it a sense of encroachment? Is it property values?"

This is an easy question for her. She doesnt even hesitate. She has answered it a hundred times. It is less an answer than a speech. "My childrenls safety," she says. uThe safety of the other children in the neighborhood. He supposedly has a clientele of 12,000 people, and statistics, I'm sure, will bear out that probably in that group are one or two people who are not upstanding citizens."

She looks at me. Im not sure what to say, but I think about a time years before when I was covering the execution of Theodore Bundy, and he was linking all the murders he committed to his fascination with pornography. "Do you deserve the punishment the state has inflicted upon you?" he was asked in his tinal interview. The interviewer was James Dobson, a religious broadcaster who had been a member of Ed Meese's pornography commission. The choice of Dobson was Bundy's. "I don't want to die, I kid you not," is how Bundy began his answer, and then went on to say this:

"What I hope will come of our discussion is I think society deserves to be protected from itself. Because as we've been talking, there are forces loose in this

country, particularly again this kind of violent pornography, where on the one hand well-meaning, decent people will condemn the behavior of a Ted Bundy while they’re walking past a magazine rack full of the very kinds of things that send kids down the road to be a Ted Bundyf’

The next day, he was executed. Over the years, I had covered Bundyls murders, covered his trials, interviewed him. After the execution, I talked to the father of one of his victims, who couldn’t stop crying, and then I talked to one of his legal defenders, who said that when she had visited him in prison, he would sometimes unzip his fly and massage himself to see how she would react. Now, in Susan’s kitchen, I tell her about what Bundy had said to Dobson, and I tell her also that no matter how easy it would have been to ascribe his violence to pornography, I’ve never believed it was simply pornography that turned him into what he became.

"Look. It’s not that they’ll get so sexually excited in Max Wonder that theyill run out and look for a kidf’ she says. "It’s just that people come here from as far away as Virginia for this stuff, drive all this way for it, and they are in our neighborhood."

Which, of course, is the real issue in this. Not pornography. Not the First Amendment, or any of the other countless issues that come up when an adult store barges into a neighborhood. But the neighborth itself.

She gets up, looks out the window, wonders why a porn store had to go there. ttWhy not a childrenis bookstore?" she says. ttWhy not a place you can get cappuccino?"

That decision wasn’t made by the neighborhood, though, it was made by someone who lives in Bethesda, the building’s owner, Yoav Katz, who describes himself as caught between conflicting obligations. Certainly, he says, there is "an obligation to be sensitive to the neighborhood." But on the other hand, he says, he has obligations to a noteholder, "a fiduciary responsibility to pay him."

The noteholder, he adds, is an 84-year-old man. Who depends on the money.

Who is legally blind.

As proof, he takesout some letters the man has written to him over the years, typed communications from someone who, because he cant proofread, has to depend on his fingers being on the right keys. Some of the letters make sense. Some include unintended gibberish. One is addressed to Yoav, another to Yakov, another to Noah. One is dated November 36th. Another is dated September 78th.

ttI lived off Georgia Avenue for 11 years, not far from where Max Wonder used to be," Katz tells me, "and I didn’t p?
rt
gives his daughter

a push, and she
goes skimming
above the ground,
laughing. It is
twilight now. On
Georgia Avenue,
the porn storeis
neon sign is
visible through
the branches.
even know it was there." Never, he says,
was there a problem with the store, not
one. Not only that, he goes on, but he
shopped in nearby stores. And his daugh-
ter, the light of his life, used to eat pizza
in the store next door. So last summer,
when the leasing agent called to say that
Max Wonder was interested in his prop-
erty, he didn't hesitate to work out a deal.
I ask him how long the lease is for.
"Five years," he says.
I ask if he has any regrets over signing
the lease.
He says maybe a few.
I ask him why he didn't try to lease to
someone else, and he says he almost did,
that there were negotiations with a bagel
store, but the financing fell through.
He shrugs.
"A bagel store," I tell Susan when I get
back to the neighborhood from Katz's
office.
"Youire kidding," she says.
I HAVE LIVED IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD
a year and a half now-not enough time
to know it intimately, but more than
enough time to trust it. Maybe this is a
little foolish. Just because a neighbor
smiles at me from his front yard doesnt
mean I know whats in his back yard, or
his bedroom, or his dreams. But in these
quick times, when life turns less on true
knowledge than on assumptions, I guess
I'm more willing to trust a neighbor pull-
ing a red wagon than a pasty man unwill-
ing to raise his eyes. All things consid-
ered, I wish that Max Wonder were gone.
Nonetheless, wishes are one thing, and
leases are another, and my expectation is
that we will have Max Wonder with us for
years.
A few neighbors say this isn't neces-
sarily so. They say there is always the
chance that Montgomery County will
zone it out of the area-ebut with the in-
evitability of court challenges no one is
really holding his breath.
They also talk about Brian Feldman,
the owner, who in November was sen-
tenced to 51/2 years in prison in North
Carolina for conspiring to distribute co-
caine. The question is whether a porn
shop in Maryland can be run from a North
Carolina prison. As of mid-December,
however, Feldman was still among us,
vowing to appeal.
Then there are those who say Max
Wonder could simply go out of business.
But watching the store from across the
street one day, watching the steady
stream in and out, I decide this is the un-

likeliest scenario of all. It is late afternoon when I decide this, the time of day when Feldman is usually in the store.
This time, I call.
ttHe’s not talking to nobody," I am told. In the background, I hear noise, and its easy to imagine a dozen pasty guys, clamoring for the latest issue of Cheeks.
Meanwhile, over at the Carrolls’, Susan and Art are out front with their daughter, pushing her in her swing.
"It’s a great swing? says Art, and it would be hard to argue it isnit. It hangs from their elm tree, from a branch 25 feet off the ground. Art put it up last summer, before Max Wonder was around. He climbed a ladder, looped a long rope over the branch, tied a clove hitch and, to test the knot, slid down the rope to the ground. It held, and it has held since, and Art is proud of the swing, proud of his house, proud of his life. He gives his daughter a bigger push, and she goes skimming above the ground, laughing. It is twilight now. On Georgia Avenue, the cars have on their lights. Over at Max Wonder, the pink and blue neon sign is visible through the branches. tOkay," Art says, and this time he gives his daughter a bigger push, a push so big she goes higher and farther than sheis ever gone before.
Susan, watching, sees it first. "Art," she calls.
But Art has seen it too. Their daughter, still in her ascent, looks scared, as if she is going to cry. He has pushed too hard, he knows it, but there is noth- ’ ing to do except wait for her to sail back, and then she does, and Art catches her, and instead of crying, she laughs some more, safe. I

V
THE WASHINGTON POST MAGAZINE PUZZLE
BY WILLIAM LUTWINIAK
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BY DAVE BARRY
HAD HOPED THAT WE COULD GET
the new year under way without any reports of ecologically dangerous shellfish attacking women’s undergarments, but I see now that I was a fool.
I have here an alarming news article written by Christopher Taylor of the Watertown (N.Y.) Daily Times and sent in by several alert readers. The headline, which I am not making up, reads: "Large Colony of Zebra Mussels Found Clinging to Big Brassiere."
In case you haven’t heard, the zebra mussel is a hot new environmental threat. F orget the killer bees. Oh, sure, they got a lot of scary headlines-IlKiller Bees Sighted in Mexicoll; "Killer Bees Sighted in Texas"; "Killer Bees Become Amway Distributors’I-but they never lived up to their potential. Whereas at this very moment, the zebra mussel is raging out of control in the Great Lakes region. Well, okay, maybe ltraging" is a strong term. As a rule, mussels don’t rage. You rarely hear swimmers being advised: uIf you see a mussel, try to remain calm, and whatever you do, DON’T PROVOKE IT."
Nevertheless we have reason to fear the zebra mussel, which gets its name from the fact that it roams the plains of Africa in giant herds.
No, seriously, it gets its name from the fact that it has a striped shell, which grows to about an inch long. About five years ago, a group of zebra mussels, possibly carrying forged passports, came from Europe to the Great Lakes in the bilge water of a European ship, and they’ve been reproducing like crazy ever since. They are the Sex Maniacs 0f the Sea. Here’s a quote from an August 1991 Washington Post article:
uEaCh female can produce 30,000 eggs a year, leading to huge colonies of billions of the animals clinging to every available surface. Recently, marine biologists have discovered concentrations reaching

XE
Mussel Beach
7
700,000 mussels a cubic yard . . .’
-So apparently spaying them on an individual basis is out of the question. But something has to be done, because zebra mussels are clogging up water-supply pipes, and they’re spreading fast. Controlling them could cost billions of dollars_money that will have to come out of the pockets of the scumballs who wrecked the savings-and-loan industry.
No! That was another joke! The money will of course come from lowlife taxpayers such as yourself, which is why you need to stay informed about this story, especially the giant-brassiere angle.
Here are the key quotes from the Watertown Daily Times story:

0A large brassiere pulled from waters
near the Genesee River at Rochester
was carrying the largest colony of zebra
mussels found so far in Lake Ontario . . .
uThe brassiere-and the mussels_
are now under observation at the
Department of Environmental Conser-
vation Fisheries Research Station at
Cape Vincent.
"DEC Supervisory Aquatic Biologist
Gerard C. LeTendre said the bra was
scooped up while DEC staff were trawl-
ing for dead lake trout near the Genesee
River . . . Because of the size of the gar-
ment. Mr. LeTendre said, more than
100 mussels had managed to attach
themselves to it.
It tWhoever that bra belonged to was
of large proportions,’ Mr. LeTendre said.
Ilt was huge.’ "
This episode raises a number of trou-
bling questions, including:
0 They were trawling for DEAD
TROUT?
0 Is that sporting?
0 Could it possibly be that the zebra
mussels have become carnivorous and
ATE the original bra occupant?
- Has anybody seen Dolly Parton IN
PERSON recently?
In an effort to get to the bottom of
this, I called the research station and
grilled Gerard LeTendre.
uIs it true," I said, uthat you have a
large brassiere under observation?
ItIt’s really just in a box in my office,"
he said. IIThe newspaper made it sound
like we have it in an aquarium."
He also said they still don’t know who
owns the bra.
"We know it’s a fourahook bra," he said.
"But it didnlt belong to a large person. It
was just a very well-endowed person."
He said that many people have offered
suggestions about what to do with the
bra. including uholding a Cinderella-type
contest to see who it fits."
For now, however, the mystery re-
mains unsolved. Mean-
while, the zebra mussels
Even as you read these
words, a huge colony of
them could be clustering
ominously around a
Sears catalogue that fell
overboard, nudging it
open to the foundation-
garments section. It is a
chilling thought, and until the authorities
come up with a plan of action, I am urg-
ing everybody to take the sensible pre-
caution of developing a nervous facial tic.
Also, if you MUST wear a bras-
siere, please wear it on the outside,
where the Department of Environmental
Conservation can keep an eye on it.
’ Thank you. I
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