

Pakistan picked on by press

Women are not burned alive in Pakistan. Neither are infant females buried alive there, as was falsely reported in the March 1995 issue of *Mademoiselle* magazine.

When I first came to Nebraska, very few people knew that Pakistan even existed. All the people around me wanted to know how it was and flooded me with questions and wanted to visit. I told my listeners about the scenic beauty, the historic heritage, the colorful culture and the archeological discoveries. I told about the hospitable and loving people of my country. I wanted these friends of mine to go there. I was excited and proud of my homeland.

But lately I have again been flooded with questions. This time it is different. All the things I said about Pakistan makes no sense to them now. The media continues to project a one-sided view.

I asked myself, why all this propaganda against Pakistan and Pakistanis? Does the media really care about the people there? The answer is no.

The media just exploits things, creating more problems and negative images and ignoring the results or the solutions to the problems. It seems like they just want to trigger the minds of ignorant Americans against the innocent and harmless people of the Eastern hemisphere.

For the last 20 years, Muslims in general have been the prime target for the media, and lately, Pakistan has become their bull's-eye.

Everything the media portrays about Muslims and Pakistanis has always been negative. The positive aspects are never shown. This gives the general public an idea that the only things these people can do involve terrorist activities and hatred towards the West.

For the past months the headlines of the newspapers have been packed with propaganda against Pakistan and have not even once mentioned Pakistan's name in a positive light. What about the Pakistani peace-



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keeping forces in Bosnia, Cambodia, Somalia and Haiti, and in the Middle East during the Gulf war? None of the news ever mentioned that.

It was a big thing when two French men died in Bosnia and gained the attention of the world. What about the hundreds of Pakistanis who lost their lives trying to promote peace in the above-mentioned countries? Aren't they human? Don't they have feelings and families? Isn't the color of their blood the same as the French, or their dedication to maintaining peace just as strong as the others'?

The other day, I was minding my own business when a woman yelled out of her car, "Are you going to bomb the building?"

"Ignorant people!" I yelled back at the top of my lungs as rage traveled through my pores like lightning.

"Chill out, brother," my brother said in a comforting tone. He is younger but much smarter than me. "It's not her fault. She is doing exactly what the media is projecting."

A couple of weeks ago, CNN had a report on the kids of Pakistan, showing how Pakistani people have child labor in their industries. The media made a big issue about it, not discussing how the problem formed and its roots. Did no one know about this before? Come on now. The United Nations has been buying surgical instruments from Pakistan for years, knowing that kids made them. Now big companies like Adidas have boycotted buying from Pakistan if child labor is used.

I know it is not fair to have kids

work. This has been happening for years. It's not a new thing, in Pakistan or in any of the Third World countries. I know something should be done about it.

But is boycotting the answer? I don't think so. By doing this, you are taking their bread and butter. You are not in their shoes and do not know what they have to do to survive.

If the media really cared, it would have done something to solve the problems and not just create more. What did this do for those kids? Nothing. Just another dead kid on the street.

Iqbal Masch, who was killed in Pakistan last week, was a perfect example of what the media does. Big headlines read, "Kid killed in cold blood in Pakistan." The media doesn't care; it just wants to sell the story.

This news was also published in our newspaper. I couldn't believe it. Last year, the Pakistan Students Association at UNL had its second annual night. Something to promote the culture and cuisine for the community; even Gov. Nelson came. But did we make the headlines? Not at all.

What does that prove? Any attempt to put down the Pakistanis should make headlines, and any attempt to help them is kept quiet. Why?

Nebraska, among other places, needs more cultural awareness and not false projection. The people here have accepted me, and I have a lot of love and respect for them. Lincoln has become my second home and the people my family, far from my own. And I like it that way.

So to all those who do not care about my people and do not want to solve our problems, the least you can do is not create more problems for the people there and for the people here. And also, don't pretend that you care.

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Girls go to work; many say not fair

Where was I when "Take Our Daughters To Work" Day got turned into "What About the Boys?" Day? How did an event created to give girls a turn in the spotlight end up with so much attention on boys? And why does this sound familiar?

In 1992, an enterprising group of women came up with an idea to counteract the incredible shrinking aspirations of adolescent girls. They'd read the dismal news that somewhere after fourth grade, girls' horizons collapsed along with their self-esteem. Their confident voices were replaced by awkward silences or "I don't know's."

The women at the Ms. Foundation hoped that even a one-day workplace special would give girls a positive look at the future. "We said, girls are important," recalls the president, Marie Wilson. "They ought to be visible, valuable and heard."

The idea of taking daughters to work took off. For one day in 1993 and another in 1994, the conversation and attention in thousands of workplaces across the country focused on girls.

But almost from the beginning, there was a choir of boys and others in the background chanting "It isn't fair." Now, as the third annual "Take Our Daughters To Work" Day comes on Thursday, Wilson says, the calls she has had from the media have become variations on the theme of "What About the Boys?"

This could be easily dismissed as an example of the media's perennial search for a new angle. But this year many companies are feeling pressured to change the emphasis and the name to "Take A Child To Work" Day.

In some ways, this controversy has become an ironic reflection of the very problem that the daughters' day founders set out to counter. In fact, it's a reflection of the research about what goes on in the classroom itself. In room after room, the boys' hands shoot up first, demanding and getting the lion's share of the teacher's attention.

The same thing is happening everywhere. These days, every time Black History Month rolls around, someone is sure to say, "What about White History Month?" Every affirmative action — I use the words literally — designed to make up for past discrimination is reviled as present discrimination.

Talk about unfairness to men and you'll get a sympathetic nod. Talk about unfairness to women and you will — take my word for it — get accused of male-bashing.

There is more attention to instances and anecdotes of preferential treatment than to the patterns of prejudicial treatment.



Ellen Goodman

In this case, we are urged to worry about being fair to boys' aspirations. Meanwhile, a full 95 percent of the senior managers in the country are men.

I wonder if the current attention focused on every male protest is an automatic response to power. Last fall, when the GOP victory was attributed to angry white men, a panoply of Democrats, including women, sounded like battered wives asking themselves, "What did I do to make him mad?"

Is that what's going on here?

I know that every boy does not become a CEO. As Marie Wilson says, "Who in their right mind would say that boys don't need exposure to work?"

Work and family are so segregated now that few children actually know what their parents do all day. There are sons, especially in poverty, with as great a need for mentorship, for seeing and being seen in the workplace, as daughters.

But this event was never intended to be a Career Day. It was meant specifically to focus on girls between nine and 15, to offer an alternative message to one that most still get from society at this critical time in life.

So, what about the boys? Those who want a sons' day at work can surely find a men's organization to do what the Ms. Foundation did. There are 364 other days in the year.

But if we are talking about a day in which both boys as well as girls will get to hear messages that society rarely offers, well, I am reminded of what Justice Ruth Ginsburg once said: "If I had an affirmative action program to design, it would be to give men every incentive to be concerned about the rearing of children." What about a day devoted to fathering, to caretaking? If that doesn't seem as glamorous as work, as prestigious as a job, well, that's the problem, isn't it?

Last year, more than 30 million adults and girls became a part of "Take Our Daughters To Work" Day. This year, we can expect more. It isn't broke. It doesn't need fixing. In fact, it's part of the fixing.

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Swimsuit wearer bares soul

Summer has its flaws, just like the rest of us.

I think the season made a mistake by letting the word swimsuit become a part of its definition.

I decided to lessen my swimsuit-shock syndrome by preparing for my summer earlier this year. For the past three months I've been religiously sweating on the Stairmaster and panting through Power Step Plus aerobics.

I have to do this, you see. I have to stop this cyclical pattern of waiting until the first of June to figure out I'm a healthy and modestly-figured woman, so that by the time fall comes around I look halfway decent in my swimsuit.

Ah, but come this May 15, when I get up to Minnesota (the water-blessed heavens of the Midwest), I'll have 10 pounds and 2 percent less body fat on my womanly figure. That means I'm starting the summer with just a slight less jiggle in my conservative swimsuit. Amen.

Granted, now I'm on a rampage, and I plan to come back to school in the fall looking like Cindy Crawford. (After all, Cindy is a big woman too, although she has the time and the money to hide her large bones under a perfectly lean mass, unlike me.)

I decided back in February that this would be the year to end my pattern. I have one year until graduation, and I think by now I should be able to handle my stresses without a bag of Doritos and a dessert run to The Garden Cafe.

Besides, I love to exercise. I always have. I love the pain and the mental anguish. I love to push



Lara Duda

myself. It's just that college has been difficult for me when it comes to being consistent with anything, much less working out.

Plus, this year I plan on working on my spray. Yeah, I know it sounds rough. I water ski weekly, if not daily, all summer. For the past two years I've had the best summer job on one of America's 10 most beautiful lakes, according to *House Beautiful* magazine. And I'll brag about it, because I know this is the last summer I'm going to have the luxury of having three months off to play.

But once again I'll be living in my swimsuit, and at least this year I won't waste the first month living in paranoia of my butt. It's not that I'm so insecure that I won't go out in public. I think that's ridiculous. I may have some hips going on, but that doesn't mean I can't enjoy myself. And it certainly won't keep me from being active.

Just because I was blessed with the means of bearing children more easily doesn't mean I'm going to let it keep me from doing the things I want to. So what if I don't have stick legs and big boobs like those damn magazine models (and I mean "damn," because it's become so

socially accepted as beautiful that it makes me sick).

I think I was lucky, though, with men. I was fortunate enough to meet some great guy friends on the lake who never once made me paranoid to be in a swimsuit around them. (I may be a feminist, but I am human, and I do wonder what men are thinking at times.) Granted, they got a few free shows when my swimsuit wasn't exactly on right, but you've got to expect that when you play water sports. And besides, they liked me because I took chances, not because I was something for them to gawk at.

Taking chances gave me more confidence with water skiing, not to mention feeling completely comfortable being half-naked in front of men. Even when all my girlfriends look like those damn magazine models.

OK then, I'm ready. I'm looking forward to taking my long runs down the beautiful tree-lined dirt roads of upper Minnesota.

Last I heard, though, upper Minnesota still had some ice on its lakes. Hmmm, that leaves me approximately five to eight weeks until I can start lying out in the sun. That's approximately five more pounds and two percent more of body fat. Ooooh, that'll be just right!

That is, of course, if I can make it through finals week without that sinful temptation for caramel and raisin bread pudding at The Garden Cafe.

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Mike Luckovich