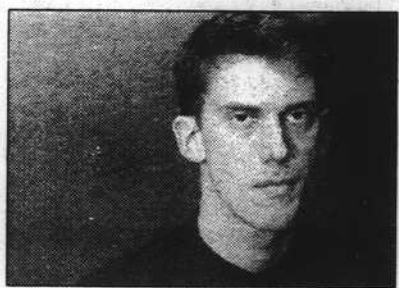


B-2 vs. B-52

Bombers compared in both quality, quantity



Fred Poyner

"The sheer cost of B-2 production makes it apparent that there will never be as many B-2s as B-52s. But sheer quantity might not be the best way to measure a bomber's impact."

Japan. The Japanese have an annual defense budget of \$50 billion, ranking second among the United States' allies in overall annual security-related expenditures.

They spend this money buying from American producers with the understanding that U.S. weapons technology won't have to be replaced 20 years from now.

Investment in our technology has enabled them to create a substantial and well-equipped presence in the Pacific, and never mind about the impact of the VCR as an economic cash-cow for Sony.

The technology of the B-2 will last well into the next century, but 20 bombers alone will not. As an investment, the bomber represents

the present and the future of how defense industries approach government contracts.

Finally, Clinton sees the need for supporting the bomber as a response to the very real needs of a military occupied with a seemingly unlimited number of conflicts worldwide.

Bosnia is at the center for the moment, and tomorrow it could be Korea or the Middle East (again). The last thing he wants is to be accused of not providing enough, or the right kind, of support to the soldiers already involved in a military campaign.

Understandably, the B-2 has had some problems, not the least of which is its cost-effectiveness (more than \$1 billion per plane). Another factor is a General Accounting Office report that criticized the B-2 as not able to avoid enemy radar the way it is supposed to. Accordingly, this is why Clinton has ordered a new look, as opposed to resuming production outright.

We have become a nation of modern warriors, right down to the live, televised broadcast of battle. Our war documentaries come in multi-pixel Technicolor, making the borders between observer and participant nearly unnoticeable at times.

The weapons of war have kept pace, and it would be ludicrous to believe they will disappear, or put an end to war, as people once believed about the invention of the machine gun and TNT.

One of the first testing grounds for those weapons of mass destruction was supposedly the War To End All Wars: World War I.

Poyner is a graduate student in museum studies and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Americans accept the 'mother' word



Mike Royko

Only minutes before the Super Bowl kickoff, Slat's Grobnik slapped the bar and angrily declared: "That's it, I'm leaving. If I don't have a team to cheer for, I can't watch a game."

Hold on. I thought we agreed we would cheer for the Steelers because we're always for the underdog and the Cowboys are such braggarts.

"No, I can't do that. Not after what that one big bozo just did."

Which big bozo was that? "Didn't you hear him? The first Steeler who came running out the tunnel during the introductions. Couldn't you hear what he was screaming?"

Yes, he seemed to be all pumped up, ready to do serious violence to the opposition and urging his teammates to do the same.

"But he was screaming that filthy mother word. He was saying they should kill the mother words or kick the mother words or do something to the mother words."

Actually, I think he might have pronounced that mudda or muhtha. But, yes, I did hear what he was shouting. But I'm sure he didn't know that the NBC microphones would broadcast his words for all the civilized world to hear.

"Then why did NBC have the microphones turned on?"

Because they had no way of knowing that when the fellow was proudly introduced to an audience of millions, he couldn't think of anything more to do than repeatedly scream the mother word.

"Well, there's no way I'll root for someone who would do something like that."

Since when have you become a prude?

"Hey, I'll admit it. I use bad language. I know as many four-letter words as anybody. But I got

some standards. There's a time and a place for everything. Like I never use swear words in the presence of kids or women, except my wife, but she never hears anything I say anyway. I'd think she was stone-deaf if she didn't listen to the radio. And in my whole life, I never used the mother word. You can cut out my tongue and make a sandwich if you ever hear me say it."

No thanks, I'm on a diet.

"I don't think anybody in our neighborhood ever used that word. We could call anybody anything except that. But you didn't never say anything about somebody's mother unless you wanted to get in a fight. Mother is one of the most special words in any language. Or it used to be. There are poems about mothers and songs like 'Mother McGee.' A lot of people call their country the motherland."

The Germans call it the fatherland.

"Yeah, maybe that's why they are always getting in trouble."

But when used in the obscene

context, the word mother isn't directed at any specific mother. It's sort of a generic mother. In fact, it doesn't even mean mother in the true maternal sense.

"What's it supposed to mean?" I'm not sure. Maybe it doesn't mean anything.

"Then if it don't mean anything, why don't they use a different word? How about instead of mother they use some words like ashtray or poodle or cupcake?"

I suppose a person could do that, but it wouldn't make any sense, except maybe poodle. And then the poodle owners and breeders would be appalled.

"Why should a poodle be any more sensitive than a genuine mother or someone who had a mother?"

Everybody had a mother. "That's right. So when something like this happens, everybody who hears it should be mad."

But we live in a different era. There was a time when it would be unthinkable to hear a woman use any language stronger than "damn" or "tish" unless she was a harlot. Today, women on all social and economic levels use foul words that once were heard only in barracks or taverns.

Where do you think tiny suburban tots learn their first four-letter words? In preschool? No, in the family can when their gentle moms call someone who cut them off in traffic a (bleep) or a (deleted).

"So you're saying that nobody's going to care that some big clunk yelled the mother word. Even real sweet little mothers, with white hair and twinkly eyes who are cooking meatloaf and baking apple pie, aren't going to be bothered?"

There was a time when they would have. There was a time when the entire country would have been shocked, and that lineman's foul language would have made him an outcast and the president of the network would have issued a heartfelt apology. But those times are gone. Today, there are probably thousands of mothers in Pittsburgh screaming, "Do it, do it."

"So you're saying I shouldn't take it seriously."

That's right. Just relax and watch the game like a good American.

"You're probably right. But I hope somebody knocks that poodle (bleeper) on his back."

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Kids nowadays

Childhood seems harmless in today's society

I'm not sure how it all started. Maybe the radio stations in town played one too many Violent Femmes songs. Or maybe it was all of the old friends who came back for Christmas break this year, willing to drink too much, stay out late, and behave like obnoxious adolescents with me.

I used to think I was immune to nostalgia. But the icons of my childhood and youth have been popping up all over, and I find that I have no desire to escape them.

Conjunction-junction, what's your function? Do you like green eggs and ham?

I'd love to be a 6-year-old again, dozing off to the sound of my dad reading Winnie-the-Pooh stories. The only real concern I had at the time was whether my stupid dog ever would learn to talk and solve mysteries.

Unfortunately, barring severe brain damage, that carefree age is well out of my reach.

So how many times did you see "Star Wars"? And where were you when the space shuttle blew up?

I was in junior high, ninth-grade algebra class. I'll never forget watching the explosion over and over again in that crowded and strangely silent classroom.

But junior high was a horrible time. My hair never did what I wanted it to do, and I couldn't afford enough clothes to keep up with the popular kids. That early adolescent haze is best left in the past.

After junior high, I lost my fascination with the elusive "in" crowd. I came to know the joy of full-scale rebellion, and started hanging out with a motley collection of geeks, outsiders, skate-punks and fashion victims.

That's the era I keep coming back to. I was immortal. I didn't have to care about anything. I've been digging my old punk rock tapes out of boxes lately, and I even bought the Repo Man soundtrack on



Jennifer Mapes

"I used to think I was immune to nostalgia. But the icons of my childhood and youth have been popping up all over, and I find that I have no desire to escape them."

CD — it was a cheaper alternative to getting my turntable fixed, so I could listen to my battered vinyl copy. I know every beat of every song. And the music takes me back.

My friends and I were a little wild in high school. We were bored most of the time. We drank alcohol whenever we could get our hands on it, sometimes hard liquor mixed with sweet juice, sometimes cheap beer stashed in someone's car or basement. We slipped outside every day at lunch period to smoke.

My best friend dyed her hair black one day. When her parents forced her to dye it back to its original brown, the result was a rat's nest in a dozen shades of color ranging from blond to ebony. Some time later, we dyed another friend's mohawk a gaudy shade of red. The dye ate holes through one of my mother's best towels.

The popular hangouts came and went, but in the end no business

could withstand the constant patronage of a bunch of funny-looking teen-agers. So we tiptoed around each others' parents, and whispered news of parties at abandoned parents' houses or older friends' apartments.

Late one night, me and a couple of my girlfriends sneaked out of the house after the resident parents had gone to sleep. We prowled the surrounding neighborhoods until we found a dark block with well-kept homes and tidy front yards. Then we switched around everybody's lawn ornaments and ran away.

It's not that I want to go back. I have privileges now that the adolescent me would have killed for: I can drive anywhere, buy liquor in bars and stay out as late as I want.

But the memories of my carefree youth have been making me wonder about kids these days.

I had a copy of The Anarchist's Cookbook when I was a teen-ager. I found it in the political science section of a local bookstore and bought it in a fit of subversive glee. The book contained instructions on how to make all sorts of bombs and other disruptive devices.

My friends and I weren't the nicest kids. In fact, we were horrible. We did a few bad things, and a lot of stupid things.

But nobody I knew ever plotted to blow up the school, as two boys from Pine Grove Junior High School did in Minoa, New York, last week. And we had access to the same information they did, albeit in pedestrian form.

No one I knew ever carried guns to school, and no one I knew ever got shot. No one walked into my school and shot at their classmates, as a boy in Moses Lake, Washington, did last week.

I have to wonder what kids these days are coming to.

Mapes is a senior advertising and history major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

