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Letters to the Editor

Marrying Young

I whole-heartedly agree with your ideas [Publisher's Desk, September] that boys and girls should be married early. The best age, as pointed out by you is 16-girls and 21-for boys. I myself have studied and reflected on this subject and came to the same conclusion. Both from the point of view of Nature-the growth of the physical body with age-and from the practical point of view, 16-for girl and 21-for boys is the most suitable age. For example the girls' most youthful time is from around 15-years (when she starts her menstrual cycle) to about 25 years. After 25 years of age, she is no longer a girl. For the boys the most youthful time of life is between 20 to 30 years. After 30 years he is no longer is a boy but is changed to a man. And the marriages are always performed between boys and girls and not between men and women. Dr. Navachandra Khanduri

Nagpur, India

Comparing Truths

All of us enjoy reading Hinduism Today. Every page has some new information. I have begun to realize how little I know about religion. A special thanks for the comparative study column of world religion [Truth is One, Paths are Many, August]. It is also timely because India is in turmoil regarding religions.

Anandh Ramachandran

Madras, India

Anglo Saxon Ganges

I was saddened to see the word "Ganges" being used in the September issue. Hindu people should not use this word, because, it is derogatory. The word Ganges was given by the Anglos. They have the habit of changing non-Anglo names to insult and denigrate the non-Anglo peoples. We should not accept this insult to Ganga. Let us tell the whole world that our sacred river is Ganga, not Ganges.

Amulya Tyagi

Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

20-20 Vision 2000

I have been reading about the Global Vision 2000 in many newspapers and magazines. Hinduism Today has done a spectacular job in covering this historical event [October, '93], especially the Youth Conference. I have counted that there were 33 color pictures and 7 black and white pictures. After reading all the negative coverage in most of the English newspapers I was pleased to read a balanced coverage on detail. In my opinion every Hindu should subscribe to Hinduism Today to keep up with the worldwide Hindu news.

Vijay K. Pallod

Houston, Texas, USA

Vivekananda's Sponsors

The recent August issue of Hinduism Today, made me so happy to see an article on Swami Vivekananda, with many photos of his and others and some places closely connected with him. Though it is nicely written yet I am to point out some factual for your kind perusal and correction. You stated in 1893 the Maharaja of Mysore sponsored Swami Vivekananda to go to America. According to the official biography to Life of Swami Vivekananda referred above, the fact that the people of Madras sponsored Swamiji to go to America. There is no record to show that the Maharaja of Mysore invited Swamiji to Mysore nor that he visited Madras to see Swamiji with the idea of sponsoring him. He is only one among the thousands who gave their contribution. The real sponsors are the people of Madras, who strained every nerve to collect money and who took the first initiative to send and sponsor Swamiji to Chicago for participating in the Parliament of Religions and not anyone else.

Mr V. M. Manthiram

Director, Vivekananda Study Center

Madras, India

Pai's Queasy Quotes

I have just gone through the write-up on Amar Chitra Katha and me published in the July '93 issue of Hinduism Today. Mr. Vijay Shankar is a good, nice person. But apparently his knowledge of English is poor. What has been printed in page 11 under the caption, 'Pai on Pai' has little relation to whatever I had said. Why, it is not even in good English! Mr. Vijay Shankar is going through his difficulties. At the same time I thought I would be failing in my duty if I did not bring my feelings to your notice. If building goodwill for Hinduism Today is one of your aims, in the future please don't assign such interviews, except in the field of music and dance, to Mr. Vijay Shankar.

Anant Pai

Editor, Amar Chitra Katha

Bombay, India

Fetal Focus

By allowing an abortion, a woman or her family might feel that a potentially serious family problem is averted. In reality it is not better than treating the symptoms of a disease rather than its cause. Despite these reasons and opposition, threat and even murder by anti-abortionists, worldwide there is a progressive increase in the number of abortions performed every year. Why? According to Western perception a human being, identified by his physical body, has only one life that ends with the inevitable demise of that body. Abortion is no longer a problem of the Western society alone. Even those Eastern countries where permissiveness used to be considered as a contemptible conduct are now willingly jumping into the bandwagon of so called freedom of choice. Is there a solution to this problem? Yes, there is, provided we are prepared to undertake such a task. Unwanted pregnancy is the cause of abortion. Therefore, abortion can be eliminated or at least minimized substantially when the ego and desire and lust that are responsible for causing unwanted pregnancy are controlled. This is possible, as Swami Bua Ji Maharaj pointed out (June 93), only by exercising self-control and self restraint. We should not be concerned with physical aspects of life only. There is a spiritual dimension as well. Dr. Jatindra Saha

Plymouth, England

Cults in America

This letter is not to justify or condemn anyone of the tragedy of the Waco, Texas incidence and the death and destruction of the innocent children, the followers of

David Koresh and his Christian community. I called this an American Cult, because this is only an American phenomenon. Most Christian people in America are not ready to accept any other beliefs besides their own. It is what creates this problem. The only country which offers true religious freedom is India because Hindus are the most tolerant people in the world where religion is concerned. Isn't it an irony that the founder of Christianity, Lord Jesus, was called a "Cult Leader" and his society crucified him. Now his followers call others "cults." I asked a friend, "Why do you call David Koresh a cult leader?" He said, "Because he called himself God." I asked him, "Why do Americans call the International Society of Krishna Consciousness a cult?" He said, "Because they have cultish philosophy and they wear funny clothes." It's easy to talk about freedom of religion but it is very difficult to practice it as it requires love and patience.

Bharat Gajjar

Wilmington, Delaware, USA

Devadasis Forever

Your series of articles about the "Devadasis-India's legendary temple dancers," is deeply appreciated by everyone here at the society of Abidance in Truth. We applaud and heartily encourage such excellent "spiritual journalism." Our ashram maintains a regular schedule of Indian spiritual cultural events featuring Indian musicians, singers and dancers. Yes, we do invite into our temple traditional Indian dancing, such as bharata natyam and other forms. We have found these events to be quite spiritually inspiring for our members and guests, and the dancers are always deeply touched by performing in such a holy setting. Richard Morey, General Manager

Society of Abidance in Truth

Santa Cruz, CA

Dharma Media

Guidance from a person of knowledge is sometimes useful but it is the self that has to be disciplined and this fact must be understood by all human beings whether Hindus or others. Your magazine can be a good media to infuse the message of true dharma. It must be very clear to everyone that there is no easy way, considering the diverse material offer that is abundant in the modern world, to achieve HIS grace. Indrajit Ganguli

Frankfurt, Germany

Corrections

The final comment regarding the Parliament of Religions on page 15 of the November issue was made by Dr. Robert Miller of Virginia.

The dancer in the "Performances" section of the Global Vision 2000 photo essay, Oct. '93, is Amrapali Ambegaokar, not "artist of Prabhat Kala troupe."