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Letters

More Focus on Youth Issues

YOUR MAGAZINE SHOULD HAVE A SECTION which addresses the younger members of our culture. As a first-year law student at the University of Warwick, England, I see how young Asians, both male and female, act without the watchful eye of their parents. Although I don't agree with all the traditional restrictions that our culture, and in particular parents, feel compelled to put on us, I do think that our young in England find it almost impossible to find any sense of belonging. Instead of turning their attention towards Hinduism, they ironically religiously avoid any contact with it. It is seen as something in the past, practices which are confined to the older members of their families. With their minds full of Western values and hearts full of contempt for the culture, they find it difficult to think about who they are and their place in our culture. Magazines such as Hinduism Today are essential if we are to restore our youths' faith in the culture. The magazine should focus more on real issues facing our youth in England. It would be nice to have articles written by, for example, university students expressing how they feel about the culture and the religion.

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Hope for Hindus on Holidays

I REALLY ENJOYED YOUR DECEMBER ARTICLE about the Pancha Ganapati festival. I have shared that article with several co-workers who ask about what we do for "Christmas." I hope that, if Gurudeva has time, he will address this issue with young people on his daily internet discourse.

Amber Sukumaran

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* He addressed this issue on the December 13th issue of Today at Kauai Aadheenam and other days of that period. Listen to his daily discourses at: <http://www.hindu.org/today/>

ABCD--An Offensive Stereotype

I READ WITH EMPATHY JANKI KHATAU'S article, US Teen Teaches Us the ABCD's (Jan, '99). It

reminded me of my children's experiences visiting India when they were young. They were ridiculed by their own cousins and uncles for getting a poor education in the US, speaking Hindi with an accent and being less Americanized than Indian kids born and raised in India. Luckily, they had high enough self-esteem not to be adversely impacted by those dumb comments, but it does make one wonder why Indian kids raised in the US are at times mistreated in India. I can think of only one reason, and that is jealousy. Most Indians in India have a heart-felt desire to come to the US, but since it is not so easy, they find it easier

to ridicule those who have succeeded in their effort. Yes, Janki! ABCD does stand for America Born Confident Desi. I am on your side.

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Hindu Millenium Passed in 1943

WHY IS HINDUISM TODAY, WHICH TAKES so much pride in "affirming Sanatana Dharma," getting caught up in the hype surrounding the Christian Era millennium? In the Hindu calendar, the new millennium

arrived over 50 years ago. The year 2000 of the Vikrama era corresponds to ce 1943.

Whether the millennium starts in 2000 or 2001 is a moot point. At least HT doesn't have to worry about the millennium bug, since you work in a Mac environment!

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Madhu's Article
Applauded

THE WOMEN OF VISION
ARTICLE BY MADHU Kishwar
(Nov. 1998) is well-worded
and thought provoking.
Kindly convey my
congratulations to her.
Throughout the ages,
women have been
ill-treated and humiliated in
India. Even saints are no
exception to this general
practice. According to
Kabir, a woman is a 'Nagin,'
a female snake. Tulsidas
said that women should be

beaten like 'drums and animals...' Gandhiji is said to have been a tyrant in his family. Gita places women along with sinners and sudras (IX-32). Some Smriti-Karas do not allow them to study Vedas. Gargi, perhaps, was an exception. Rama was a human like us (Valmiki Ramayana 1-1-1). So was Krishna. Though surely they were superior to most of us, both physically and mentally. So we should not

be upset by such criticism.
Critics are friends. They tell
us our faults. It is time that
we start doing our
house-cleaning.

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Astrologers'
Qualifications

ADDING TO STEPHEN QUONG'S ARTICLE (My Turn, Nov. 1998) I would recommend that astrologers also possess expertise in general medicine and at least one other specialty in the health sciences. Jyotish, known as Vedic or Hindu astrology in the West, is mutually integrated with the

health science of Ayurveda and treats both good health and illness holistically. The astrologer must be nonviolent, promoting life and not taking it, thus be a pure vegetarian and one who cares for other species as well as his own. The world is full of destructive elements, an

advisor-healer must not
be one of them.

Jai Maharaj

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Oops! Wrong
Millenium

IN YOUR BOXED
MATHEMATICS
FEATURE, (Quotes and
Quips, Jan. 1999) you

mention "Baudhayana
in the 6th century ce,
long before Europe's
math whizzes" in
connection with the
Pythagorean Theorem.
Considering that
Pythagoras lived
around 570-500 bce,
the time of
Baudhayana should be
bce and not 6th

century ce; in fact, it should be a lot earlier than 6th Century bce. Furthermore, Baudhayana records mathematical knowledge which might have been known even earlier than himself.

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Tamil or Sanskrit Roots?

IN MANEKA
GANDHI'S BOOK
HINDU NAMES that
is advertised in your
magazine, I found
many words I
thought had Tamil

roots listed as
Sanskrit words. For
example, the word
Thirunavukkarasu
(listed as
Tirunavukkarasa)
was listed as a
Sanskrit word. I am
not a linguist, but I
am sure
Thirunavukkarasu is

a Tamil word. This is just a reflection of a prevalent assumption about India's two classical languages--Tamil and Sanskrit--that any words common to both Sanskrit and Tamil must have originated in

Sanskrit and could not have possibly originated in Tamil. But linguists have shown that many words common to these two languages have indeed originated in Tamil. Given its rich literature and long

history, it should not be a surprise that Tamil would have had some influence on Sanskrit.

Renuka

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