

Gifts of Speech News

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1. Dream Act Legislation

From National Council of La Raza:

"Every year, U.S. high schools graduate approximately 65,000 immigrant students. Brought to this country as young children, they have grown up in American K-12 schools and share our culture and values. Like their U.S.-born peers, they dream of pursuing higher education. Unfortunately, due to their immigration status, they are barred from the opportunities that make a college education affordable – in-state tuition rates, state and federal grants and loans, most private scholarships, and the ability to legally work their way through college. In effect, they are denied the opportunity to share in the "American Dream."

"If passed, the "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act" would facilitate access to college for immigrant students in the U. S. by restoring states' rights to offer in-state tuition to immigrant students residing in their state. The "DREAM Act" would also provide a path to citizenship for hardworking immigrant youth who were brought to the U.S. as young children and to pursue higher

education or military service, enabling them to contribute fully to our society. For more information, please see [NCLR's brief summary of the "DREAM Act."](#)

Read the whole article [here](#).

Read an article detailing the difficulties encountered by a girl with a 4.7 GPA because of her lack of proper papers [here](#).

Another account of a promising high school senior [imprisoned for 7 months](#) here in the U.S. even though he had not committed a crime.

Lack of opportunity crushes the futures of young women and men trapped in a legal status not of their choosing. [Read ways the Dream Act can reduce poverty in America.](#)

Visit the **Dream Activist** site at the link below.

Link: <http://www.dreamactivist.org/>

2. Abortion Wars: Then and Now

From the New York Times:

"AT first glance, the recent killing of the abortion provider Dr. George Tiller in Kansas appears to be a modern phenomenon, the heinous byproduct of the politics of the last several decades. In fact, Dr. Tiller is just the latest in a line of brave people who have died for providing abortions. Perhaps the most infamous of these was a midwife named Ann Lohman, who killed herself in New York in 1878 after decades of harassment."

Read the whole article [here](#).

Then you must read [this piece](#) by guest columnist Dr. Warren Hern in The Colorado Statesman. Dr. Hern was a friend and peer of Dr. Tiller's. His life is under threat as you read these words from medical terrorists.

Both articles are well-written, revealing . . . and very, very frightening.

3. Book Review: Bad Girls Go Everywhere

Bad Girls Go Everywhere: The Life of Helen Gurley Brown By Jennifer Scanlon

Reviewed by Ginia Bellafonte in the New York Times:

"In 1991, in the wake of the Clarence Thomas hearings, Helen Gurley Brown, nearing the end of her 32-year tenure as the editor of Cosmopolitan, that great invitation to fanny-pinching, was asked whether any of the women on her staff had ever been sexually harassed, a question to which she jovially replied: "I certainly hope so." Attempting to rescind her remarks in The Wall Street Journal, Brown claimed she had merely been facetious, offering that the sexes were in fine rapport and that she didn't want to "stress negatives." By the time she left the magazine, six years later, Brown had created a landmark institution committed to the view that there were few negatives in a woman's life that could not be reversed with an optimistic spirit and a pair of leopard-print panties."

Read the whole book review at the link below.

Link: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/26/books/review/Bellafante-t.html?_r=2

4. Child Rape Survivor Saves Victims

From CNN Heroes:

Hope was 14 years old when her uncle raped her. "He trapped me to the ground and covered my mouth with his hand," said the 18-year-old from Zimbabwe. "He threatened to kill me if I ever told anybody." So, she kept quiet.

"After a while people around the villages started saying that I looked pregnant," she said. Hope was not only pregnant, but her uncle had infected her with HIV.

Like many young girls in Zimbabwe, Hope was the victim of a widely held belief that if a man with HIV or AIDS rapes a virgin he will be cured of his disease. This so-called virgin myth, perpetuated by Zimbabwe's traditional healers, has led to the rape of hundreds of girls, according to UNICEF. Some of those victims are too young to walk, much less protect themselves.

See the link below to learn how Betty Makoni began the Girl Child Network to help young female victims of sexual assault.

Link: <http://www.cnn.com/2009/LIVING/06/04/cnnheroes.betty.makoni/index.html?iref=mpstoryview>

5. July Web Site of the Month

From the website:

Betty Makoni founded the [Girl Child Network](http://girlchildnetworkworldwide.org/) in Zimbabwe in 1998. She and 10 high school girls established a girls club in a local high school to combat the kind of terrible sexual abuse that Betty herself had undergone and that many girls were enduring from teachers, relatives, and even, officials. They marched across the country; they organized campaigns to teach girls their rights; they built empowerment villages to enable abused girls to heal and support each other.

An estimated 60 000 girls are members of the Girl Child Network Zimbabwe and thousands of girls have been transformed from so-called victims into survivors and leaders. With over 700 girls clubs in, 80% of the members live in remote parts of the country. Despite overwhelming obstacles, including threats, detention and smear campaigns, Betty Makoni and the group continue to champion the rights of the girl child today in Zimbabwe and beyond.

Link: <http://girlchildnetworkworldwide.org/>



--Liz Kent

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