

Gender and Development

Peace Corps Kenya
October 2004

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Nine year old Peninah Nkadyo was rescued from forced marriage in July. See Page 9 for a current picture.

“It was hot outside, and I don’t like tan lines.”

Anonymous PCV, on why she hiked Mt. Longonot naked

Wangari Maathai Awarded Nobel Prize
Source: New Vision, Kampala

October 14, 2004

THE first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize was praised by the awarding committee as "a source of inspiration for everyone in Africa fighting for sustainable development, democracy and peace."

A pioneering academic, her role as an environmental campaigner began after she planted some trees in her back garden. This inspired her to form an organisation - primarily of women - known as the Green Belt Movement in 1977 aiming to curtail the devastating effects of deforestation and desertification.

Her desire was to produce sustainable wood for fuel use as well as combating soil erosion. Her campaign to mobilise poor women to plant some 30 million trees has been copied by other countries.

Speaking recently on the BBC's Africa Live programme, Maathai said her tree planting campaign was not at all popular when it first began.

"It took me a lot of days and nights to convince people that women could improve their environment without much technology or without much financial resources," she said.

The Green Belt Movement went on to campaign on education, nutrition and other issues important to women.

Continued as Nobel Prize on Page 9



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Normally, this space is reserved for a few words from the chair. However, Miss Phillips is currently basking in the Ethiopian sun sipping beers and chain-smoking with a few buddies, one of whom has developed an odd fascination with hamsters since coming to Kenya. This would be the perfect time to start some vicious rumors about our leader, but her homestay mama already did that.

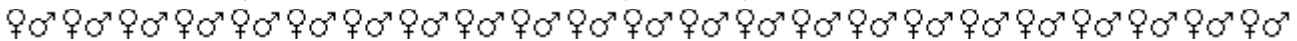
First, we'd like to send warm wishes to Ros Lwin (see left), who is recovering from a knee injury in DC and will be coming back to us very soon! We also give thanks to Joanna Hauger for stepping in with lots of enthusiasm and some great ideas – we hope she'll continue to lend her support. Finally, asante to

the newest PC victims who swore in October 22 for showing their commitment to Gender and Development by buying loads of useless crap at the GAD auction! Although one trainee's suggestion of a "shirts and skins" round of Capture the Flag may seem gender insensitive, we'll overlook that and wish them all the best.

And remember - GAD is always looking for new material for newsletters. This thing doesn't write itself, you know. So if you've been doing something gender-related at your site like teaching prostitutes to bake or sharing copies of Our Bodies, Ourselves with the locals, please submit to Amy Yates. THE END

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Spotlight Celebrity!

(This new feature will highlight women admired by secondary school girls in Kenya.)



Soledad, character on La Revancha

After their father's murder, young sisters Isabela and Soledad are separated. Isabela grows up in a world of luxury, provided for by her godfather, who adopted her; Soledad is raised by a woman she wrongly believes to be her mother, and who was actually a witness to the girl's father's murder. To protect her, she ran away with the child and has brought her up in a humble but loving home. Both sisters grow up to become beautiful women, never suspecting that destiny will one day reunite them to fight for the love of the same man. He is the distinguished cardiologist Alejandro Arciniegas, whom Soledad meets on the cruise ship where she works. From the very beginning, Alejandro and Soledad fall madly in love with each other, without giving a thought to their social differences. For Soledad, he is the love of her life, but she will painfully discover that Alejandro is the son of the man who murdered her father. And furthermore, that she has a very strong rival: her unknown sister Isabela, who also happens to be in love with Alejandro. At the same time, Jose Luis Hernandez, a humble and hard-working young man becomes obsessed with the idea of winning Soledad's heart. Unfortunately for him, Soledad's love for Alejandro only grows, as does Isabela's jealousy - an uncontrollable jealousy that will ultimately unleash a terrible force of hate and passion.

Poetry Corner

**Featured School:
Maai Mahiu Secondary**

**When I Think of Love
Ruth Maina
Form 3**

When I think of love,
I think of street children
Who are always dressed in nothing but the love of God
They survive only on the rotten
Food that is full of saprophytic organisms
And yet God said, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

When I think of love,
I think of hospitals
Where expectant mothers are left to die
Because they have no money to grease
The twitching hands of the greedy doctors
Are they employed to kill or to heal?

When I think of love
I think of Kenyans
Who used to love one another
But now that love is as dead as
The proverbial Dodo

When I think of love
I think of prisoners
Who are killed by brutal
Wardens like rabid dogs
Like a third rate race

When I think of love
I think of aborted fetuses
Whose future is snapped out
Of life before they see the
Light of dawn

When I think of love
I wish Kenyans would love
One another like one big family
Forever loving, to love.

**Fighting a Dangerous Monster
James Thuku
Form 2**

AIDS, this dangerous monster
Killing boys and girls
Men and women
A number of causes –
But the main cause?
Sex.

AIDS the dangerous monster
Should and must be fought
By boys and girls
Men and women

AIDS, you dangerous monster
School pupils and students
A decision they have made
To fight you AIDS
To clean and sterilize body cutting
Piercing instruments
And they say NO to sex

The person living with AIDS
For them we will care – but
We will pass along AIDS
Should be prevented,
A healthier happier country
We look for and live in
A healthier happier world.

**She is Able
James Kiragu
Form 2**

For long we've remained in them.
Yes! In prisons of limited choices.
Or no choices at all.
Furthermore, "they are girls" we say

Let's be just.
Stop! I say stop!
Pushing girls out of school
Forcing them into early marriages
Stop! Genital mutilation
Stop! Domestic violence
Stop! Thinking of girls as househelps.
Agreed?

Girls are amazingly able
Surely they are!
Ever heard of Ngilu, Margaret Thatcher,
Rebecca Nabutola or Queen Elizabeth?
Imagine no one took them to school
For they were at one time girls.

A pint of respect will push them further
No self respecting man can go raping.
A total man views all girls as his sisters.
Imagine your sister raped.
How would you feel?
Join me in this fight.
Support girl education.
Protect, encourage, guide and advise them.
Let's give them a hope and a future.

What is GAD doing?



WELCOME!

Enos Radeny took over as our official GAD sponsor in July. We look forward to working with him this coming year!

PEPFAR Update

Commitment letters are out. And the money will be released any time, right? Right??? Look for a comprehensive update on scholarships from Susan Mugwe in the next Peace Corps Newsletter.

Deadbeats List

While we appreciate all the volunteer support we've received for the GAD auction in the way of donations and purchases, we do actually need to RECEIVE the money in order to make a profit. That said, our sinewy treasurer has authorized the publication of the following debtors. If we don't receive the money soon, he's coming to IST to start cracking skulls. To avoid bodily harm, pay your nearest GAD member, a PCVL, or Chris Austin!

Deadbeat	Amt Owed
Jennifer Carter	1200
Teresa Carter	200
Justine Egan	380
Joann Lee	710
Alyssa Lowe	1600
Scott O'Beirne	5000
Josie Palumbo	1685
Patricia Riggs	320
Erin Schmidt	160
Lonnie Stimac	1665

Note: Our treasurer managed to collect every shilling from the newest volunteers at swearing in, so we won't have to call in any outside muscle on that one!

GAD Auction by Chris Austin

One thing I've found about the Peace Corps is that it leads to me things I can dismiss as a future profession. Participating in the most recent GAD auction, I found that I can now eliminate second-hand retail from that list. Pilfering through the used, soiled clothing and items was a vile, tedious, and time-consuming affair. Hawking and collecting the money and IOUs was not really that fun either. Yet it was worth it. People actually found some of the crap potentially useful. Plus, GAD raised about 40K, which as you know will help fund our annual Take Our Daughters to Work (TODTW) event. Girls will be empowered and motivated to take over the reins of their country, and Allison Jennings, with her two-tone, vintage, boot-skootin', Dumb and Dumber, horseshoe-buttoned, denim shirt, will be empowered and motivated to take over the dance floor back in Texas. Thanks to all involved. You know who you are.

Coast TODTW By Deb Ensor

Yeah, so Lamu was really cool. All the girls loved it, ridin' to work with their host moms on pundas or sailing across the water on dhows, eatin' mangoes and Swahili stew and wonderin if barracuda tastes better than garlic shrimp on the barbi. They were like "Is this work?" "Sign me up!"

OK, OK, so we didn't really go to Lamu, but for most of the girls, Mombasa was just as foreign, wonderful and fantastic. I was amazed by what Erin McG did to pull off this event, especially cuz there was no event last year on the coast, so she was starting from scratch. And she did an unbelievable job.

Ten (or was it 12, i cant remember) girls came from as far away as Taveta and Kasigau and Kilifi. They spent two days with their host moms and then we had a kick-ass, inspirational seminar on Saturday. It went way way into the wee hours, long after the moms were gone (and long after we had heard enough of

the AIDs poems and religious songs the girls sang for hours afterwards at the talent show).

What can I say? It sounds sappy, but this event actually moved me to tears. At home, in the states, when people would ask me to host a student at my job (I was a newspaper reporter and got this question a lot) I would groan and think, "What a waste of time, This is for dorks. Pleasssee, I am too busy." But, man oh man, what a different thing it is here! I mean really, I and almost every other person in the room cried (or at least misted over) when one of the speakers told the girls that all her life, people had told her the sky was the limit. Well, she said, for me, the sky is only the floor.

The floor. What a place to start. For many girls, the floor is the limit. Washing it, sleeping on it, giving birth on it.

So, these few days - geez. For many it was their first time to use a phone, a copy machine, a fax. Wonders of the modern world! First time in a hotel, to take a shower, to be served by a waiter. Privileges of the modern woman!

Though we see it everyday - the poverty, the despair, the life of turmoil and disease and never ending cycles of birth, death, planting and harvesting, rain and drought, hunger and starvation - it was awe inspiring for me to see the eyes of a few young girls open in wonder as they realized they were not chained to such a life. That these possibilities existed out there, not just for their brothers, for men, for people from the cities, for rich people or white people or any other people but them - that these possibilities could actually be *their* possibilities.

To see even this little bit of hope and this glimmer of understanding, well it made me realize what we are capable of doing through the Peace Corps. With education, scholarships, TODTW, with all these things as well as our own spirits and smiles and friendships, wow, well the sky really does seem like a good place to start.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE FEMALE ORGASM

an in depth study by Amy Yates

Caution: If you were offended by the title, just stop reading now. You've been warned, so no complaints!

The discussion started over a few beers (as all good discussions do). While chatting with other volunteers in Nairobi, one of them made this simple statement: "A country's economic development is directly related to the number of women having orgasms."

The logic is pretty simple really. Developed nations have more gender equality, which leads to more sexual freedom, which leads to orgasms – lots and lots of them. It was a pretty intriguing theory – one worth exploring in my opinion.

I decided to do a little research and using the scientific method attempted to prove the hypothesis. The first problem I encountered was trying to prove cause and effect in succession. I mean, using the same kind of logic, I could also say that Big Macs cause obesity, and since obesity will soon be the leading cause of death in America then McDonald's is more dangerous than smoking. While this conclusion is likely true, it's a big leap. But at least they're taking Supersize fries off the menu – because they care.

The problem is that Big Macs don't ALWAYS cause obesity, just like smoking doesn't ALWAYS cause cancer. That's why those evil tobacco execs can get away with telling us smoking is harmless.

OK. Back from my cigarette break. Gasp. So the trick seemed to be showing that a developed nation always has gender equality, and that gender equality always leads to more orgasms. The first task seemed easier, so I started with that one.

I reviewed the CIA World Factbook, which lists 34 nations as "developed". I was looking for a country that would really stand out in the realm of gender issues. I suppose I had my own personal prejudices, because I immediately excluded the US and Western Europe. Two countries piqued my curiosity – Turkey, which has a large fundamentalist population and South Africa, which is, well, so African.

I started with Turkey. Although there has been a sharp increase in fundamentalism in Turkey over the last 15 years, I was surprised to discover that the women's movement has a long history there. Women have been advocating social reform since the Ottoman Empire and were granted many rights unheard of in other Arab nations.

Sure, Turkey has some progress to make. As of 1985, 32% of women were still illiterate despite the fact that education has been mandatory since 1926. But coming from a country where most girls would rather be Christina Aguilera than Christine Todd Whitman, is the US much better off?

Next was South Africa. Again, the women's movement has a rich history, including the formation of the Federation of South African Women, a multi-racial body established in 1954 to combat Apartheid. Today, boys and girls have nearly equal access to education, and girls may actually have a slight advantage.

While the evidence is all anecdotal, it seems pretty clear that gender equality is kind of a side effect of development. Not only that, but if you look at the other 150 odd nations in the world that aren't "developed", they also appear to be a step behind in women's issues.

Now the second question: "Does gender equality lead to more orgasms?" Unfortunately, there is a gaping hole in research on this subject. I couldn't find one single study on the frequency of women's orgasms in developing countries. Go figure!

So I was left to ponder other questions instead: "What DOES lead to more orgasms? And are these causes indicators of gender equality? What factors inhibit orgasm and are these indicators of gender inequality?"

The leading cause of anorgasmia (lack of orgasm) in women turns out to be a history of sexual abuse. In fact, 40% of women who report orgasmic and other sexual dysfunctions also report being sexually abused or coerced. But there are no statistics to indicate that the rate of abuse is any higher in developing countries. Probably the same proportion of sickos exists in every nation.

However, studies have also found sexual dysfunction in both men and women to be linked to education level. In 1999, researchers at the University of Chicago and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School found that high school dropouts are much more likely to have sexual problems. Among women, 42 percent who did not complete high school reported lacking the desire for sex, while only 24 percent of female college graduates had such an experience. Among men, college graduates were two-thirds as likely to report climaxing too early as compared to men who did not complete high school.

Other studies have confirmed these findings, and have added evidence that patients suffering from sexual disorders often have a lower socioeconomic status. Given these statistics, it is likely that women in developing countries, who rarely finish high school, are at a higher risk for sexual dysfunction.

There were two final questions to answer. What factors lead to more orgasms and are developing countries at a disadvantage? Some might argue that sexual freedom allows women and men to gain more experience, resulting in increased pleasure. Others might assume the opposite – that a long-term romantic relationship would improve a woman's odds. As it turns out, neither is true. According to researchers at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, the female orgasm is not dependent on the experience of either partner or on a loving, monogamous relationship. Also defying conventional wisdom, there is no link between the frequency of orgasms and the availability of contraceptives (ostensibly allowing couples to relax more).

Instead, women seem to be more influenced by subconscious desires for symmetry in their partners. Measuring facial and body symmetry has long been regarded as an unbiased way of determining attractiveness in humans and animals. And attractiveness is one indicator to potential partners of genetic superiority. Solidifying these findings is the fact that women are more likely to have orgasms with symmetric partners only during intercourse, when they might get pregnant. Other activities show comparable rates of orgasm between symmetric and asymmetric partners.

And what about these symmetric men? Are they better partners, better fathers? Are they more likely to contribute positively to the continuation of the species? Hardly. Studies show that symmetrical men have the shortest courtships before having sexual intercourse with the women they date. They invest the least money and time in them. And they cheat on their mates more often than guys with less balanced bodies. Given this, it seems that women aren't seeking monogamy any more than men are. In fact, the study also showed that women are more likely to have orgasms outside of their steady relationships.

So where does that leave us? Oh right, developing countries. Yeah, I'm out of room now. But it's a good theory anyway.

Gender Issues in the News

"Now we can make love, for our sex is clean."

Traditional Kikuyu circumcision song

Conference on FGM Held in Nairobi

Source: The Nation
September 22, 2004
Kwamboka Oyaro

Last week's international conference on female circumcision, in Nairobi, was yet another effort to eradicate a die-hard practice. In Kenya, the practice is illegal, having been criminalised in the Penal Code and the Children's Act (2001), which protects girls under 18.

But a 1998 study by the World Health Organisation showed that it was still rampant, with the three Gusii districts of Kisii, Gucha and Nyamira recording the highest rate - 97 per cent.

Of Kenya's 42 ethnic groups, only Teso, Luo, Luyia and Turkana do not practise it. Why then is what lobby groups call female genital mutilation common despite interventions by many organisations?

"Circumcision is part of a people's culture and telling them that it is primitive only makes them aggressively defend it and continue practising it," says Prof Jesse Mugambi of the University of Nairobi's cultural studies department.

This explains why NGOs and churches, which organise alternative rites of passage, still have some girls being circumcised before or even after the training.

"In the African culture we welcome visitors, and it is rude to disagree with them. But this does not mean we will do what they advise us to do. We will continue with our lives the way we have always done once the visitors are gone," the don says, referring to the campaign against it.

"Outlawing female circumcision can be counterproductive," he points out. "It will go underground, making people do it hurriedly without taking into account hygiene and safety.

"It has happened before - in the 1920s and 1930s. The more the missionaries and the colonial government forced the Kikuyu to abandon the practice, the more it became prevalent."

This attitude prevailed when the authorities tried to implement the law against female circumcision. MPs are often heard daring chiefs and other law-enforcers to go to their constituencies. To be seen to be upholding this cultural practice is a sure way to get votes.

Some parents play the cat-and-mouse game with the authorities. When the latter are more alert during school holidays, they take their children for the "cut" during the term.

In other areas, hospitals are cashing in. A girl is admitted ostensibly suffering from some disease, only for her to undergo the cut.

But this, they argue, waters down the significance of the practice as some communities argue that shedding blood binds the initiate to her ancestors and is let into the community's secrets. In others, the training that goes with the cut to mark the transition between childhood and adulthood is most important. Having it in the hospital allows neither.

Finding out whether communities attaching so much importance to blood will accept it from somewhere else, say a finger, may change the approach in eradicating it.

The tragedy is that efforts to eradicate female circumcision do not provide practical alternatives. Generally, there is no forum for the preparation of youths for adulthood - a rite of passage.

Parents spend about three months each year with their children during holidays or doing homework or for extra tuition. Prof Mugambi says that during the nine months children spend with teachers, there is little time for nurturing as they (teachers) strictly follow the syllabus. They are not trained in nurturing either.

He calls upon the people fighting the practice to ensure they do not just condemn it, but also ensure children get the skills for the next phase of their life. Without this, a void will be created, hence the need for circumcision and the traditional training.

Moreover, the circumcision age is coming down among many communities, with Taita girls doing it at eight days old. It might be helpful if parents respected the children's choice before going ahead with the procedure. Fouzia Hassan, 13, was eight when she was circumcised together with her sister Fardousa.

"We were subjected to the Stone Age ritual prevalent in our Somali community. I saw the old lady with many blades doing it again and again. I screamed, but my mum only ordered: 'Quiet!' The pain, horror and shock of circumcision left an indelible mark on my psyche," she told the hundreds participants at the conference, with tears welling in her eyes.

For a successful campaign, the justifications must be crushed, argues lawyer Judy Thongori, who specialises in family law and human rights.

In many communities, supporting arguments are entrenched in the people's psyche, and in such cases, training may be the only way to ensure the war is won.

Among some communities, an uncircumcised woman is a bad omen; all her children and husband will die, they believe. "No woman wants this to happen to her loved ones, and will opt for the procedure," Ms Thongori says.

Perhaps the most plausible justification for female circumcision is reducing sexuality, a procedure they will be horrified to think of, if it happened to them, says Ms Mary Moraa of Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organisation.

"To succeed in the campaign against female circumcision, men must be actively involved," she says. "They are passionate about the rite; some will even fight physically when they meet people advocating its eradication. But do they understand what it means?"

In some areas, circumcision of girls was introduced long after the men's had gone on for years. In a recent Nairobi workshop for journalists, organised by the Association of Media Women in Kenya, Mr Kiboki Kigai was shocked to hear of the physical and psychological effects of circumcision on girls.

"It is time all men who have in one way or another made women undergo the rite apologised. On my part, I am truly sorry," said Kigai, whose Sabaot community practises girls' circumcision. More converts like him will be an asset in the campaign.

But although the practice has taken root in many communities, it is not a religious affair; it has no basis in Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism or Islam. "It is not even cultural," says Somali model Waris Dirie.

"It is good to outlaw it so that people may know that the law protects them, but it is more important to change the people's attitude."

Ironically, as the conference was going on at Kenyatta International Conference Centre, two Maasai sisters who were poorly circumcised two weeks ago at the instigation of their brother, were recuperating at Nairobi Women's Hospital.

"This thing must be brought to an end," says Mrs Linah Kilimo, the minister in the Vice-President's Office.

Although two of the women circumcisers have been arrested, the girls' brother is still at large.

It is Mrs Kilimo's belief that if the Maputo Protocol is ratified, the fight will be taken a notch higher and, eventually, wiped out in Kenya.

President Kibaki has indicated that Kenya will soon ratify the agreement, which means that it will join the Comoros, the first African country to do so since it was adopted in July 2003 in Mozambique by the heads of state attending an African Union Summit.

Libya and Rwanda have also ratified it.

For the pact to enter into force and become law, 15 states must ratify it. Then women will enjoy the provisions which, apart from protecting them from harmful traditional practices such as female circumcision, include the right to life, integrity and security of a person, and the rights to participate in politics and decision-making, inheritance, food security and adequate housing.

Under the pact, states are required to prevent exploitation and abuse of women in advertising and pornography. They are also entitled to a paid maternity leave in both the private and public sectors. Discrimination or any different treatment based on sex is criminal.

Although ratification is the first step in changing the law, states must implement it first to ensure women enjoy the provisions, says Ms Anne Gathumbi of Coalition of Women Against Violence (COVAW), the organisation spearheading the ratification campaign.

There is hope that the war against female genital cutting will soon be won. Mrs Kilimo testifies to this as she belongs to the Marakwet community, a people notorious for the belief that for a woman to be a true member, she must be circumcised. Yet they elected her to Parliament in 2002.

She is a good example to the communities which still think that an uncircumcised woman is a lesser human.

Female Athletes Making Great Strides in Attractiveness

Source: The Onion

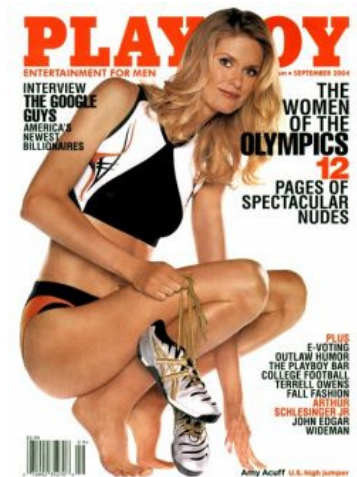
LOS ANGELES—In the wake of the Summer Olympics, during which many American women achieved a level of media attention often reserved for men, sports fans are pleased to report that female athletes are continuing to make great strides in their personal appearances.

"As recently as 20 years ago, women's sports were for hardcore fans only, most of them women," Gary Hoenig, editor of ESPN The Magazine, said Monday. "But due in a large part to the superior facial features of women like Maria Sharapova, the media have turned a spotlight on female athletics—and Americans of both genders are tuning in."

According to Hoenig, coverage of female athletes is no longer relegated to the back pages of sports magazines.

"Female players are finally being recognized by a larger audience—they're getting larger photos in the newspapers, appearing on talk shows, and taking the covers of magazines like Maxim and Playboy," Hoenig said. "As these ladies get prettier, that exposure will only grow."

Although women's athletics have produced the occasional good-looking stars, like tennis great Chris Evert or gymnast Mary Lou Retton, women like U.S. soccer champions Mia Hamm and Brandi Chastain have raised the bar.



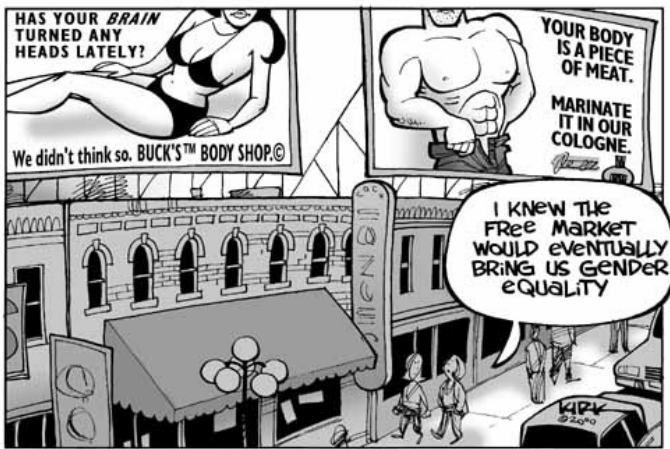
Above: U.S. Olympic high jumper Amy Acuff.

"In the old days, when people talked about the female athletes of the day, words like 'perky,' 'fit,' and even 'handsome' would be used," Hoenig said. "Today, you hear words like 'sexy,' 'hot,' and even 'fuckable.' These women athletes are more attractive than ever, and the nation is taking notice."

Experts say the massive popularity of tennis champ Anna Kournikova has had an undeniable effect on female athletics, as well.

"Anna changed the way people see female athletes," Hoenig said. "She's not just focused on being a star on the court. She wants to star at red-carpet events, in the gossip pages, and in her own line of swimsuit calendars. That she never won a singles tournament and barely cracked the Top 10 ranking during her athletic career doesn't change the fact that she looks incredibly hot in a tennis ensemble."

Though some female athletes make beauty seem effortless, it isn't, Hoenig said.



"Six-pack abs don't just happen," Hoenig said. "These ladies work. Sure, some of their fabulous strides in appearance can be traced back to superior genes, but Mother Nature only gets you so far. Jennie Finch, pitcher for the U.S. Olympic softball team, reported that she spends as many as six hours a day at the gym."

"It shows," he added.

Hoenig also applauded the increased effort women athletes are putting into fashion.

"Serena Williams, with her wide assortment of outfits, exemplifies the changing face of women's sports," Hoenig said. "And don't forget lady jocks like Mary Sauer and Haley Cope. Do you know how difficult it is to be as physically active as these women are and still have long hair? Without it, you aren't likely to get on the cover of FHM."

According to Frank Borne, author of *Great Strides*, younger generations are more willing to embrace good-looking women athletes than are older sports fans. As a result, more sports franchises are now seeking attractive individuals to serve as the faces and firm bodies representing their respective teams.

"It's so refreshing to see more female athletes overcome hurdles," Borne said. "Thanks to their superior facial features and careful attention to hair and clothing, many of these girls are achieving what would have been thought impossible a few decades ago. Perhaps someday, women athletes will be pretty enough to rank among the nation's top actresses and models."

Unfortunately, Borne said, professional sports organizations, by focusing on the women's athletic achievements, sometimes hamper the players' ability to draw a crowd.

"A lot of athletes find themselves hamstrung by the rules of their own teams," Borne said. "It wouldn't hurt the WNBA to come up with sexier team outfits. Do you realize how much their audience would broaden if more of these girls were allowed some time off to model on the side? Tastefully done semi-nude photo shoots bring a lot of attention to the players and the sports they play."

Added Borne: "Isn't that what any athlete really wants—to bring her sport and team more glory? I think it is."

Gays and Lesbians March in South Africa

25.09.2004 - 15:00

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - Thousands of gays and lesbians have held a noisy march to celebrate South Africa's gay rights laws, unprecedented on a continent where many regard homosexuality as an un-African taboo.

South Africa's post-apartheid constitution was the first in the world to recognise the rights of gays and same-sex couples are now allowed to adopt children and be included in their partners' wills.

Marchers wore colourful costumes and their procession on Saturday was directed by traffic police. Dozens of police kept a close watch but the event was peaceful, witnesses said.

"This is celebrating 10 years of recognition and existence," said one marcher, referring to the 1994 death of apartheid and South Africa's first all-race elections that brought Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress to power.

"This celebrates the South African constitution, which respects everyone," said another.



*Nobel Prize
(continued from page 1)*

Maathai has been arrested several times for campaigning against deforestation in Africa.

"Maathai is a strong voice speaking for the best forces in Africa to promote peace and good living conditions on that continent," states the Nobel Peace Prize committee.

In the late 1980s, she became a prominent opponent of a skyscraper planned for the middle of the Kenyan capital's main park, Uhuru Park. She was vilified by president Daniel arap Moi's government, but succeeded in thwarting the plans. More recently, she evolved into a leading campaigner on social matters. She was once beaten unconscious by heavy-handed police. On another occasion, she led a demonstration of naked women. In 1997, she ran for presidency against Moi, but made little impact.

But in elections in 2002, Maathai was elected as MP with 98% of the votes as part of an opposition coalition, which swept to power after Moi stepped down. She was appointed deputy environment minister in 2003.

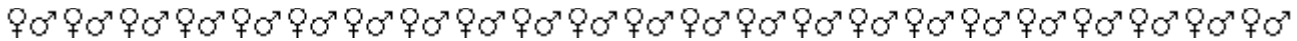
Maathai says she usually uses a biblical analogy of creation to stress the importance of the environment.

"God created the planet from Monday to Friday. On Saturday, he created human beings.

"The truth of the matter is... if man was created on Tuesday, I usually say, he would have been dead on Wednesday, because there would not have been the essential elements that he needs to survive," she told the BBC.

The Nobel Peace Prize committee praised her for taking "a holistic approach to sustainable development that embraces democracy, human rights and women's rights in particular." She thinks globally and acts locally, they said.

She was born in 1940 and has three children. Her former husband, whom she divorced in the 1980s, was said to have remarked that she was "too educated, too strong, too successful, too stubborn and too hard to control."



Peninah began attending Model Primary School in Narok in September. She knows a little Kiswahili and can recite her ABCs.



Peninah's younger sister. She was recently removed from home after her parents circumcised her and began looking for a husband. She will be enrolled in school with Peninah next term.