Un-American Activities

River brings down the House (Committee on Obscenity)

May 1, 1996 By River Huston

Congressional Committee on Obscenity! What did I say that was so wrong (or maybe so right)? I couldn't believe it when I was told that one of my columns had come under scrutiny by this ludicrous committee. I couldn't imagine it was the piece about loving cellulite, though I suppose it could have caused damage to the billion-dollar cosmetic industry. And what would happen if women loved their cellulite? All those creams, gels and massage sponges would be warehoused along with the little vacuum cleaners they use to suck the offending fat out with.

It must have been my column about how to pick up innocent men in airports. Congressmen do travel a lot. I can see it right now. One of the poor committee members in his pocketless raincoat with some strange woman manipulating him into a dark recess of the airport terminal for a little hot mutual masturbation to pass the time. Now he is guiltridden and cannot maintain a hard-on without a raincoat and the sound of landing gear in the background. But somehow I do not think this was the column.

I know -- some sweet HIV positive woman innocently answered one of Newt's personal ads: *Married man seeks nasty girl, Kemal Ataturk fan a plus, no welfare mothers or cancer patients please!* He was so offended that he decided to stamp out this kind of unruly behavior.

But the culprit turned out to be "Hot for Teacher" (*POZ* No. 8), in which I, the former dominatrix, visit a class of eleventh graders and talk about water sports. Probably the description of the proper way to do a testicle suspension pissed the committee off.

Would the committee punish me for obscenity? My devious little mind couldn't help playing a *River Does Washington* fantasy:

I walk onto the House floor in my thigh-high, patent-leather stiletto boots, tight leather jacket, snug rubber hot pants and Nazi cap? Nope, that outfit no longer fits. I go for the dominatrix-next-door look: Floral print, neat little chignon and no undies.

Carrying my ever-ready case of sex equipment, I sit at that long table and begin:

"Honorable gentlewomen and men of the committee, I am here today to testify in defense of my sexuality. I know that you might have thought that HIV would have curbed my voracious sexual appetite, but it hasn't. I've read your take on how to deal with my sexuality and I must say some

of your slogans are nifty but too confusing. For instance, ’Abstinence is the only safe sex.’ Well, do you classify masturbation as sex? And if so, can I still do the penis-pineapple toss and consider it abstinence? The other slogan that has caused me great angst is, ’Wait until marriage to have sex.’ This one is very difficult to adhere to, since all my husbands are dead and I can’t even get a date. I’ve tried the New York City Board of Education’s idea of writing a spiffy haiku whenever I become aroused, but it only generates more excitement and has started me cruising Japanese men for relief.

"What I *have* found that works is the ability to celebrate my sexuality alone, with a partner or in groups. Condoms are quite effective, when worn on the penis or sliced and diced to customly fit fingers and tongue. The *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* of August 1993 deems condoms safe if used correctly and consistently.

"As you know, however, I find domination to be the perfect outlet for my sexual energy. I don’t expect you to all become converts after one little speech, so I am offering, at a special congressional discount price, a remedial workshop in dominance later at my hotel room. Though I must say, from looking around, some of you look awfully familiar.

"Unfortunately, in your investigation into obscene homosexual literature, you picked *POZ*’s only column directed specifically at the heterosexual community. So, I can only assume that it is the nature of dominance that offends you. I will say, for the record, that with a little rectal stimulation -- I like to stick to butt plugs, vibrators and leather straps, all totally safe -- and maybe a golden shower, you would be able to experience the splendor of safe sexual contact.

“Talking about ways to stay healthy, prevent HIV and allow yourself to be sexually free are not obscene, they are necessary proponents to a healthy and productive society. Please, gentlewomen and men of the House, I ask you to reconsider where you put your efforts and resources.”

In my fantasy, I can see the tears in their eyes even as I am dragged from the floor.

Well, I know this speech will never be given. What a shame it is that we live in a time when our government feels it is necessary to waste time and money on investigating such things. But I tell you, I think I would have found a line at my hotel room later.

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