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# Toilet humor leaves officialdom cold

**T**HE VILLAGE OF Schaumburg is buzzing over a controversy involving bathroom humor.

At the Hyatt Regency Woodfield hotel, there is a disco called the Playground. Several weeks ago, workmen installed video screens above each of the three urinals in the Playground's men's room.

When a man walks up to a urinal, he trips an electronic eye that causes a film to be projected onto the video screen above that urinal. The films feature attractive, scantily clad young women saying naughty things.

"The idea was for it to be funny," said Larry Sode, technical director for the Playground. "It was supposed to make people laugh; it was supposed to be one more reason for them to come to the Playground."

Each film lasts between 10 and 30 seconds. The women are dressed in negligees, in bikinis, in low-cut gowns, in leotards. The screens are positioned so that the women seem to be looking into the eyes of the men in front of them.

THERE ARE about 25 different things they say. Some of the milder samples:

"Aren't you the Lincoln Park flasher?"

"Nice try."

"Do you know what a woman says when she's sexually satisfied? [Pause] I didn't think so."

Larry Sode said that response from the Playground's customers has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

"They love it," he said. "Everyone out here is talking about it. People are lined up trying to get into the men's room. We haven't advertised it or anything, but people are coming to the Playground just to go to the men's room."

"We've even caught women trying to sneak in so they can see the films."

Unfortunately, some other Schaumburg residents have also dropped by to see the films—Mayor Herb Aigner and police officers dispatched by him. They are not amused.

"Look, I like a good joke as well as anyone else," Mayor Aigner said. "But a lot of this stuff isn't funny. It's just dirty."

"Yes, I paid an inspection call on the Playground's men's room last week. Frankly, I find the whole thing sleazy. A lot of this isn't good-natured humor; it's sleazy humor. I asked our police chief to have a look, too."

"I MUST CONFESS, I do not find this kind of thing in keeping with the image of a Hyatt hotel. We look for certain institutions to maintain a level of

taste above the average, and Hyatt hotels are one of those institutions.

"We in Schaumburg have worked very hard to keep certain elements out of our village. You won't find pinball machines or video parlors out here. You won't find adult bookstores out here. And now we have the Playground doing this kind of thing. I find it upsetting."

The mayor said that he has determined there is nothing legally he can do to make the Playground stop featuring the risqué jokes on the video screens above the urinals.

"It's not a case of forcing them to stop," he said. "There's nothing we can do. This is America, and in America we have something called freedom of speech. There is no Schaumburg ordinance they are violating."

"But are you asking me if I would prefer that they took those screens down? Yes, I would. I wish they would get the message and stop doing it. I would feel better if those screens weren't there."

"It lowers the prestige of the hotel, and more importantly, it lowers the prestige of Schaumburg. If a man goes into the men's room and sees a woman on a screen above the urinal saying sleazy things, what does he do next? Maybe he goes back out into the bar and starts looking around to see if he can find any hookers."

AT THE HYATT Regency Woodfield, general manager Helmut Brenzinger said the purpose of the video screens was not to offend anyone.

"There is no nudity on the part of the women in the films," he said. "And there is no profanity. It is more double-meanings, not profane words."

"I was born in Germany, so I probably do not understand all of the phrases. But the customers seem to like it very much. They realize it is strictly fun. Maybe they're a little shocked at first, but they end up realizing it is all in good fun."

Brenzinger said he did not mind if the Village of Schaumburg wanted to keep sending police officers to monitor the video screens.

"I have no problem with that," he said. "I like having the police here. It helps to keep the rowdies out."

"I KNOW THAT Schaumburg is a very conservative city; the city administration is very strict about what can happen here and what cannot happen. Believe me, I support them 100 percent. I want what they want. But this is just good fun."

In the meantime, Larry Sode—as technical director of the disco—is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the video screens in the bathroom. He has no interest in the political ramifications of the controversy.

"That's between the village and the hotel," he said. "I just happen to be very proud of the job we've done in setting this up. Do you realize that we have a JBL speaker over each urinal? When the women on the films speak, the sound quality is excellent. This is a very high-class operation."

DO SOMETHING!

## WORDS OF LOVE CASE STUDY No. 10

This last case study is different from the previous nine. Next week when we're discussing this case, I don't want to discuss what we should do like we've discussed in the other cases. I want to discuss what we HAVE done! We are supposed to be the salt of the earth. If the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted. We should each AT LEAST write a letter to the manager of the Hyatt Regency Woodfield telling why we feel this practice is not good.