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Dear Abby Warning: Bigotry May Be Hazardous to Your Health

DEAR ABBY: I wish you would repeat this item. I have carried it around for several years and often take it out to read to friends.
MRS. G. BLUMENTHAL, SEATTLE

DEAR MRS. BLUMENTHAL: The piece you enclosed was published in my column on Oct. 29, 1983. And here it is:

DEAR ABBY: My 24-year-old sister is a wonderful person. Everyone who knows her thinks she is tops.

She has been in love with a very fine man for four years and they want to get married, but there is one problem. Our parents don't want him in our family because he's Jewish.

You once had something in your column about how much the Jews have given to the world. Will you please run it again?
HER KID BROTHER

DEAR BROTHER: This must be it. It was written by the late Sam Levenson:

"It's a free world; you don't have to like Jews, but if you don't, I suggest that you boycott certain Jewish products, like the Wassermann test for syphilis; digitalis, discovered by a Dr. Nuslin; chlorhydrate for convulsions, discovered by Dr. Lifreich; the Schick test for diphtheria; vitamins, discov-

ered by Dr. Funk; streptomycin, discovered by Dr. Z. Woronan; the polio pill by Dr. A. Sabin and the polio vaccine by Dr. Jonas Salk.

"Good! Boycott! Humanitarian consistency requires that my people offer all these gifts to all people of the world. Fanatic consistency requires that all bigots accept syphilis, convulsions, malnutrition, infantile paralysis and tuberculosis as a matter of principle.

"You want to be mad? Be mad! But I'm telling you, you ain't going to feel so good."

Shortly after that item ran, I received this one, which I also published:

DEAR ABBY: Your recent column, in which you quoted the late, beloved Sam Levenson, contained an error.

In listing some outstanding contributions to medical science made by Jews, Levenson credited a Dr. Z. Woronan with the discovery of streptomycin.

Abby, I hope the Nobel Committee in Sweden doesn't hear about this, because in 1952, they awarded the Nobel Prize for medicine to Dr. Selman Abraham Waksman of Rutgers University for discovering streptomycin!

However, Dr. Waksman belongs

on that list because he, too, was Jewish.

ARTHUR ISBIT, PH.D., CHULA VISTA, CALIF.

DEAR ABBY: I am writing this to keep others from making the same mistake I made. All through the years I have saved every letter, valentine and card sent me by my children. Now they are grown, I am a grandparent and my parents are deceased. I have realized too late that I should have been saving letters and notes written by my mother and father, which would have been a lovely way to preserve family history, and for future generations to "know" their forebears, since a person's handwriting and the way he expresses himself are an important part of him.

I cannot rectify my mistake, but others may appreciate this suggestion.

JOANNE MILES, GLENVIEW, ILL.

DEAR JOANNE: Your suggestion is a good one. One warning, however — nothing potentially damaging or hurtful to innocent people should be kept. Everything "in writing" is not necessarily true. And perpetuating vicious untruths benefits no one, and could possibly harm the innocent.

Roger Ebert's: Video Alert

by Roger Ebert

Universal Press Syndicate

Leaving Normal (R, 118 m., 1992) stars Meg Tilly and Christine Lahti as Marianne and Darly, a road company of "Thelma & Louise." They meet by chance in Normal, Wyo., and head out for Alaska, escaping their unhappy pasts and finding offbeat characters along the road. The performances are engaging, the supporting characters are allowed the space to become interesting, but we never really understand why Marianne and Darly have joined up together, we don't know what they're looking for, and we're not sure they've found it. Rating: Two and a half stars.

Highway 61 (R, 102 m., 1992) is

a road movie that begins in Ontario and ends in New Orleans, as a small-town barber (Don McKellar) agrees to transport a corpse for a rock roadie (Valerie Buhagiar), who claims it is her brother. While Satan trails them down Highway 61, the two meet strange people along the way, in a movie as engaging as it is finally insubstantial. Rating: Three stars.

The Playboys (PG-13, 109 m., 1992) is set in 1957 in a small Irish village, where the beauty (Robin Wright) has borne a child out of wedlock and will not name the father. The constable (Albert Finney) stands eager to marry her, and then some traveling actors come to town, including young Aidan Quinn, who catches her eye and then her heart.

Good local atmosphere, some charm and humor, but also many loose ends and missed opportunities. Rating: Two and a half stars.

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