

movement, but also all who think that such a "salad bar" may be healthier than his preference for carnivore politics as usual.

JOHN A. BUEHRENS
President, Unitarian Universalist Association
BOSTON, MASS.

Commercial Diplomacy

I WISH TO PROTEST THE HEADLINE "THE Root of the Problem" (NATIONAL AFFAIRS), which you wrote for my opinion article in the March 31 issue of NEWSWEEK. I was making a simple point: the commercial diplomacy led by the late secretary of commerce Ron Brown was good for the country and should be continued. Yes, the dealmaking culture brought to the fore some people who may have tried to buy political influence, but this is a very small proportion of what was going on. In fact, commercial diplomacy led to the extension of American influence abroad and to more and better jobs at home. Your headline implied that Ron Brown's stewardship of the Commerce Department and commercial diplomacy was central to the campaign-financing scandals; this was certainly not the case, nor was it implied by what I wrote.

JEFFREY E. GARTEN
Dean of the Yale School of Management
NEW HAVEN, CONN.

Heart and Soul

YOU STRUCK A DISCORDANT NOTE WITH your article about David Helfgott ("The Piano Man," THE ARTS, March 10). You could have limited your critique to stating his piano work is far from world class. Who would expect more, considering his past? Instead the article's tone was one of disdain for Helfgott and those interested in him, his story and his music. You snidely suggest that to enjoy him is pedestrian. However, the fact that something becomes popular doesn't make it bad art.

JEFF S. TODD
FAIRFIELD, CALIF.

AFTER READING THE STORY BY YAH LIN Chang and David Gates, I felt as if I had met Helfgott, attended a concert, purchased a CD and engaged in debate over the significance of his accomplishments and the values of society. You brought me right into the center of it all. Awesome writers, these!

SHERYL EASH HENDRICKSON
GRAND FORKS, N.D.

She Wanted Wings

HAVING SAILED FOR 10 YEARS AS AN OFFICER in the U.S. Merchant Marine with many female officers and crew members, I find it amusing that our military seems to be "choking" on female warriors in their midst ("Falling Out of the Sky," NATIONAL AFFAIRS, March 17). I have found that women are every bit as capable as men in demand-

ing environments, and that teamwork is the primary element in the success of any organization. I honor our armed forces and veterans, and wish the honorable and dedicated majority the courage to continue cleaning the archaic thinkers from their ranks. Women combat pilots are not new in the history of warfare. Russian female pilots flew fighters and bombers with the Soviet Air Force in World War II. As an American, I'm not worried about the capability of our "Vixens" to defend our country. But I am concerned over insecure men who try to live up to warrior ethics.

CHRISTIAN LYHUS
OREFIELD, PA.

A CARRIER SQUADRON IS MORE LIKE A PROFESSIONAL sports team than like a fraternity that refuses to accept female aviators. There is intense competition, symbolism and camaraderie, but little emotional sensitivity to personal proclivities or the sudden tragedy that lurks at every corner. My squadron lost our commanding officer and a popular "nugget" pilot off Haiphong on the same day during the Indochina war, and squadron operations didn't stop for a moment. I find it hard to believe that, with a father, brother and husband who served as navy or marine aviators, Lohrenz went into naval air unaware of its hard realities.

LT. THOMAS W. DRAKE, USNR (Ret.)
MUNSTER, IND.

IT WAS DISAPPOINTING TO READ ABOUT the navy's lack of leadership and organizational will to make its female fighter pilots successful after spending millions of taxpayer dollars training them. All it would take is a directive from the chief of naval operations that the commanders of the women be relieved of duty if the women in their command aren't trained, mentored and valued just like the men, as evidenced by a no-higher failure rate for the women than for the men. The policy decision regarding women in combat was made when women were allowed to be trained to fly fighter aircraft. It was up to the commanders to make it happen, and they failed.

LT. COL. STANLEY J. STEWART, USAFR (Ret.)
SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

IF YOU HAD INQUIRED FURTHER THAN Lieutenant Lohrenz and the stories she told you of the "five female combat pilots" on the USS Abraham Lincoln, you would have found that the other 11 of us women aviators have done just fine. The navy doesn't have room for pilots who can't be counted on to bring back a multimillion-dollar jet when the ship is in the middle of an ocean. Her illusion of being a "target" is ill-founded and only a reaction to the impending administrative action for her poor performance and lack of professionalism. I

fear that your readers will assume that every woman in Air Wing Eleven experienced ostracism from her fellow male aviators. This is absolutely not true. Lieutenant Lohrenz found herself alone among the women because she turned a question of performance into a sexual-discrimination issue and almost none of us concurred. I Lieutenant Lohrenz had put as much energy and time into improving her landing skills and her attitude as she has put into publicizing her plight, then perhaps she would still be flying.

LT. LOREE DRAUDE HIRSCHMAN
USS KITTY HAWK

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