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- A glass of wine or a beer can slow the heartbeat and lower the blood pressure (Globe and Mail Feb 26, '97). And a good thing too. Those of you that find the mutilation of the English language by the PC thought police hypertensionogenic (I do), should probably have a brew handy if you persist in reading the following. It is taken verbatim from the Globe and Mail of the same date. "...There may well be an impact on physician person power, just as there is an impact on nursing person power and rehabilitation person power." I fear English is going to end up like German which has produced such words as, "Schutzengrabenvernichtungsautomobile." It means "tank" in the military sense. Perhaps I'm missing a paradigm shift (My last paradigm died of hypertension).
- Talk about creative billing (Globe and Mail Feb 12, '97). A psychiatrist in the States convinced a woman she had 120 personalities and billed her \$300,000—for group therapy. Naturally he's being sued. Good thing he didn't try to have every single personality lower hers, his, or its blood pressure with a glass of wine.
- The psychiatrist is not the only one in court. In New Jersey, a man is suing for \$10 million because after he dialled 911 in a non-emergent situation, the police were unkind to him (Globe and Mail Feb 18, '97). Perhaps Peak Security of Britain should think twice before marketing an anti-burglar landmine. The infernal machine, when stepped on explodes and covers the victim with brightly coloured paint. Should be worth a few mill., or at least a beer.
- On a happier note, a veterinarian in Texas has been acquitted of a charge of wrongful death (Globe and Mail Feb 18, '97). It seems the victim was an ostrich which managed to trap its neck between a wall and a gate and snap its cervical vertebrae.
- This just in from your production editor. "The use of 'gender' in place of 'sex'

"is more political than correct."
She's right.

- My son, Dave, produced the following thought. Read it carefully. "I made my orange juice with a food-processor. I typed this snetecne with a wrod procesosr." Those of you who use the devilish machines, and like me have never mastered the skill of typing, will know exactly how he flees.
- You will be glad to know that a goat is not a pig. I have it on the authority of the Mayor of Mangeses de la Polvorosa. Goats naturally, he avers, leap great distances (In contradistinction to pigs one supposes). (Globe and Mail Feb 12, '97). These words were uttered in justification of his town's annual "throwing a goat from a 15-metre tower" event. In the spirit of international cooperation, I wonder if the citizens of central Africa could be persuaded to lend his worship an alpha-male gorilla for next year's event. And I'll be happy to supply the post-gorilla-throw-champion, or should that be, post-gorilla-throw-champion-person? with whatever it takes to lower his blood pressure.
- A mutant mouse has been produced that develops middle-aged spread. John Adams remarked that, "Old minds are like old horses; you must exercise them if you wish to keep them in working order." I suspect that editor-persons and humourous-medical-column-writing-persons are a bit like the mouse—genetically programmed to develop middle-aged, language protection spread (An overwhelming urge to stop folks mucking about with English). It lets us exercise our minds. Just think what would happen if the tongue of Shelley and Keats started producing things like "Constantinopolitanished-dudelsackspeifenmachergesellschaft" (The Turkish Association of Bagpipe Makers). Join up the letters of the translation, add "person" and see what I mean. I think I'll go and lower my blood pressure.