

THIS WEEK ONLINE

WEB EVENTS—JUNE 25-29

6.25 Tune in to **THE HISTORY CHANNEL** at 8 p.m., EDT/PT, for "This Week in History," featuring past NEWSWEEK covers. This week: the pill. Read the full 1964 coverage online.

6.26 Looking for a past NEWSWEEK story? Check out our **ARCHIVE** of stories dating back to 1993.

6.27 **COVER TALK** at noon, EDT. Talk with Susan Greenberg about postpartum depression. Submit questions online any time.

6.28 Log on every Thursday for **ELEANOR CLIFT**'s new column about Congress, **CAPITOL LETTER**.

6.29 Take our **NEXT FRONTIERS** online survey about technology's impact on health care.

WEB EXCLUSIVE

Hip to Be Square | *SpongeBob Cleans Up*

6.22 >> He already has a top-selling T shirt, a "Got Milk?" ad and a juicy Burger King promotion. What's left for "SpongeBob SquarePants" but a spot in prime time? The irreverent Nickelodeon series, about a kitchen sponge living on the ocean floor, has 2 million weekly viewers—one third of whom are over 18. That figure's sure to rise when Nick adds four new 8 p.m. shows, Monday through Thursday, on July 2. (Log on for B. J. Sigesmund's full story.)

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

'We Stand Toe-to-Toe Over Taiwan'

NEWSWEEK: Assess the threat China poses.
ADM. DENNIS BLAIR, COMMANDER OF U.S. FORCES IN THE PACIFIC:

Countries in Asia are worried about China becoming a bully in the region. [But] on the opportunity side with China, there are the tremendous economic prospects. There is hope that China will become rich and benevolent. The fear is that it will become rich and militarily aggressive.

The Pentagon announced recently that military-to-military exchanges between China and the United States would come under review. How important are such exchanges?

Very important. We stand toe-to-toe over Taiwan. When I go to China, about 75 percent of the conversation is me giving lectures on Taiwan and them giving me lectures on Taiwan. You don't want any misunderstandings. (Log on for Greg Beals's full interview.)



TEST
YOURSELF

THINK YOU KNOW WHAT'S NEWS? Take our quiz to see how well you're keeping up with world events. The multiple-choice answers are on Newsweek.MSNBC.com.

1] If New York implements the first statewide ban on holding a mobile phone while driving, how will violators be able to get charges dismissed?

2] Which nation successfully test-fired three U.S.-made Patriot missiles last week?

3] Who ranks No. 1 in Forbes Magazine's new list of the 100 richest people in the world?

4] Mount Holyoke professor Joseph Ellis, who lied about being in Vietnam, won a Pulitzer for his book on what?

5] What role did the late John Lee Hooker play in "The Blues Brothers"?

6] What did a Red Sox fan leave at the summit of Mount Everest in an attempt to break the Curse of the Bambino and help the Red Sox win the World Series?

TO TAKE THE QUIZ, LOG ON TO NEWSWEEK.MSNBC.COM



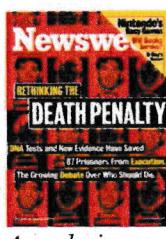
Caring for a new baby is harder than it looks

BYLINES

For Parents, a Tragedy's Larger Personal Lessons

Postpartum depression (PPD) became widely recognized in the 1980s. But it was only in the past five years or so that the ailment really came out of the closet. "There's a myth that says taking care of an infant is purely joyful," says **Susan H. Greenberg**, who wrote a story on PPD as part of our coverage of the Yates tragedy in Texas. "For a very long time, women who didn't feel that way experienced guilt and were embarrassed to ask for help." As Marie Osmond acknowledges in a story about her own struggle with the illness, she waited a full five months to seek treatment. That period, Osmond writes, was the "darkest place I've ever been." Greenberg, who has two young children of her own, says she now actively encourages new mothers to discuss their feelings. "And it's getting easier to get them to open up." (Page 26)

An Issue of Fairness



Within days of NEWSWEEK's June 2000 cover on DNA and the death penalty, the then Gov. George W. Bush issued his first and only stay of execution and helped kick off a national debate on the subject. At the time only

New York and Illinois had laws on their books offering DNA testing to inmates. Since then 10 more states have approved various kinds of DNA reform legislation and action is pending in six states. "We saw the issue as one of fairness," says **Jonathan Alter**, who coauthored our coverage with **Mark Miller**. "Why execute someone without using the latest science to prove guilt beyond any doubt?" The NEWSWEEK stories took first-place honors from the American Bar Association, the New York Press Club and Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism.

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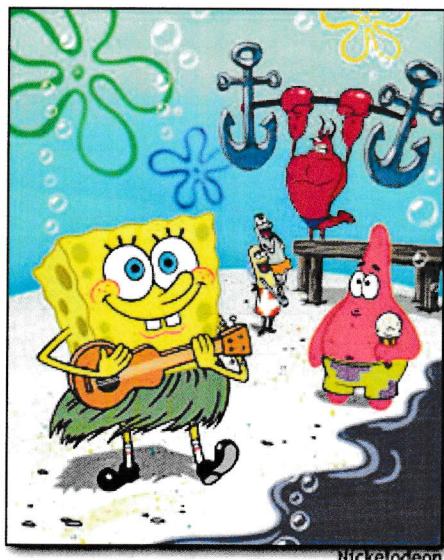
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Little, yellow, different

SpongeBob Cleans Up

The successful Saturday morning show has soaked up a big adult audience. Now it's headed for the 8 o'clock hour

By B. J. Sigesmund
NEWSWEEK WEB EXCLUSIVE

June 22 — He already has a top-selling T shirt and a videogame. You've seen the "Got Milk?" ad and the juicy Burger King promotion. What's left for "SpongeBob SquarePants" but a spot in prime time?

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FREE VIDEO **START ▶**

June 22 — Click to see a video clip from "SpongeBob SquarePants"

THE IRREVERENT Nickelodeon series, about the life of an earnest, unambitious kitchen sponge living at the bottom of the Pacific, has 2 million viewers a week. Those numbers beat the pants off the WB's "Pokemon" and make the show the second-highest-rated children's TV program behind "Rugrats."

"SpongeBob" also has something a lot of other cartoons don't: adult viewers, even those without kids. One third of the audience is older than 18—a figure sure to rise starting July 2 when Nickelodeon adds four new shows a week, Monday through Thursday, at 8 p.m.

What's the cartoon's appeal to college students and other adults? "It's a weird world, not another dog or cat show," says Steve Hillenburg, the program's creator and a former marine biologist. "It's new terrain and unfamiliar characters."

Indeed. SpongeBob lives in a two-story pineapple and works as a short-order cook at The Krusty Krab. His best friend's a slothful starfish, his neighbor is an embittered octopus called Squidward and he's got a crush on a squirrel in an oxygen mask.

How did Hillenburg dream up the show, which debuted in July 1999? "I wanted to do a comedy about an innocent character, sort of an oddball. And a square sponge seemed to squeak innocence." Forty episodes later, he can't pick a favorite, but will note the most outrageous: the one where Squidward gets stuck in the freezer and in trying to escape, gets sent forward in time.

Is there a "SpongeBob" movie in America's future? "There's a little talk on that one. It's a wait-and-see thing," Hillenburg says. "My dream is that the show remain funny and not get distracted from the main focus, which is this little world and this little character."

Not to mention a big, new time slot.

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