

Montrose Activity Center NEWSLETTER

serving the Lesbian and Gay Community of Houston

March 1990

Issue 19

The Montrose Activity Center is a non profit 501c3 organization whose purposes are to increase understanding of social, racial and sexual minorities, and to encourage acceptance and tolerance of alternative lifestyles so that together the citizens of the City of Houston and the State of Texas may work in the spirit of peaceful cooperation to build a better society. The organization acts as an umbrella to other organizations. MAC, PO Box 66684, Houston, TX 77266-6684.

Gay/Lesbian Hispanics Unidos ▼ Team Houston ▼ Names Project Houston
Lesbian/Gay Pride Week ▼ Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

Gays Gain Power

Advances have been steady, although at times it seems little has changed as gays still face a long uphill struggle for respectability

by John Jacobs
from *The San Francisco Examiner*

As the only gay mayor in Orange County, Robert Gentry has made extraordinary progress on gay rights from the heart of Reagan country.

He persuaded his colleagues on the Laguna Beach City Council to adopt laws banning discrimination against gays or people who test positive for HIV, and he's working on a domestic-partners ordinance.

But when Gentry's companion of 15 years died of AIDS this year and a photo of both appeared in the Orange County Reg-

pioneers, at times it seems little has changed.

"When you are talking about a sexual identity that is abhorrent to 90 percent of (straight) Americans, that dampens my perception of our gains," said San Francisco lesbian activist Carole Migden, chairwomen of the County Democratic Central Committee. "It matters to have clout at the ballot box, but you always have to watch your back. That doesn't count for me as a lasting achievement."

Countered Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., one of two openly gay members of Congress, "We are making progress faster than

gay because his voting record is similar to Frank's gave a glimpse of how much more work is ahead.

Writers of the memo, titled "Tom Foley: Out of the Liberal Closet," assumed that being branded as gay could damage the career of even the most powerful politician. And Democrats, including Frank, were put in the position of denying that their new House leader is gay.

And, one gay activist conceded privately that he fears the incident could drive deeper into the closet gay members of Congress concerned that their voting records might

points in gay politics.

"Stonewall brought the hard-line people out," he said. "Anita Bryant brought out the young professional doctors and lawyers . . . and AIDS has done dramatically more than anything I know of in creating a community."

Despite evidence that gay politics still has a long uphill struggle for respectability, advances have been steady, especially in the Midwest, where gay political efforts have exploded out of the closet in the last six to eight years.

In Chicago, for example, a divided City

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He persuaded his colleagues on the Laguna Beach City Council to adopt laws banning discrimination against gays or people who test positive for HIV, and he's working on a domestic-partners ordinance.

But when Gentry's companion of 15 years died of AIDS this year and a photo of both appeared in the Orange County Register, Gentry got what looked like a sympathy card in the mail. Someone had clipped out the photo, drawn a red circle around his lover and a line through him and scrawled on the bottom, "One down and one to go."

It was a reminder that even as gay political power has spread across America in ways that would have astonished its

identity that is abhorrent to 90 percent of (straight) Americans, that dampens my perception of our gains," said San Francisco lesbian activist Carole Migden, chairwomen of the County Democratic Central Committee. "It matters to have clout at the ballot box, but you always have to watch your back. That doesn't count for me as a lasting achievement."

Countered Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., one of two openly gay members of Congress, "We are making progress faster than we thought, but slower than it should be. . . (Even so), the response of this country on AIDS is much more civilized than I thought it would be five years ago."

Yet, the uproar last week over a Republican National Committee memo insinuating that the new House majority leader, Rep. Tom Foley of Washington, might be

work is ahead.

Writers of the memo, titled "Tom Foley: Out of the Liberal Closet," assumed that being branded as gay could damage the career of even the most powerful politician. And Democrats, including Frank, were put in the position of denying that their new House leader is gay.

And, one gay activist conceded privately that he fears the incident could drive deeper into the closet gay members of Congress concerned that their voting records might be used to expose them.

Nevertheless, gay Los Angeles political consultant David Mixner maintains that "gay politics is the strongest it has ever been." Mixner cited the 1969 Stonewall Inn riots in New York, the 1977 Anita Bryant Florida crusade against gays and the onslaught of AIDS as three turning

out," he said. "Anita Bryant brought out the young professional doctors and lawyers . . . and AIDS has done dramatically more than anything I know of in creating a community."

Despite evidence that gay politics still has a long uphill struggle for respectability, advances have been steady, especially in the Midwest, where gay political efforts have exploded out of the closet in the last six to eight years.

In Chicago, for example, a divided City Council—with some members calling gays "sissies" and "animals"—last September rejected 26-21 a human rights ordinance that would have protected gay men and lesbians in housing and employment.

But with the mayor's race in full swing, the council reversed itself three months see **Gays Gain Power** page 4

Southeastern Conference 1990

By Jill C. McCoy

"The feeling we want to create here is like walking in to a gay community—the wonder of realizing that there are things out there for 'people like me.' It's not about politics, or coming out; it's about learning, and having fun, and just like Old Home Week."

Raleigh, North Carolina will play host March 22-25 to the 1990 Southeastern Conference for Lesbians and Gay Men, and Willie Pilkington, co-chair of the event, was searching for words to explain what he and other steering committee members are hoping to bring about at this year's event.

"From its concept, it was wanting to do something good for the Raleigh gay community by bringing the most ideas and the best people in with this Conference. It has been a long time since the Conference has been in the northern part of the Southeastern region," Pilkington said.

"One thought was that people like (United States Senator from North Caro-

lina) Jesse Helms would be running for office this year, and going around the country slandering us, as a people, and slandering our good works," Pilkington added. "They accuse us of being wasted people, of not doing anything good for the communities, all sorts of erroneous things. It's our job to prove they are wrong."

Pilkington said the Conference's theme, "Working to Strengthen Our Southeastern Communities", is a way for gay and lesbian people to do something to stop the slander.

"Our people are not going to accept this. The only story the community at large knows about us is what is being spoken by people who hate us, and who would rather lie about us. This is the climate of the 90's that we're going to have to go in to."

"With us strengthening our gay communities, the focus becomes real clear," Pilkington said. "We need to spread the story of what we are doing to strengthen the region we live in, and we need to tell ourselves, if no one else, that it is all good. It is all right.

It is all about living up to our possibilities as a people."

As a means toward doing that, the Conference will focus on four days of education and recreation designed to help people take positive things back to their homes.

Registration fees for the Conference are \$80 per person, which includes admittance to all activities over the four-day period.

The Conference will open Thursday, March 22 with a candlelight vigil between the Radisson Plaza Hotel and the Raleigh Civic Center, which will be the central location for activities.

Directly following the vigil, the Names Project/National AIDS Memorial Quilt Display will open in the Raleigh Civic Center, and run during the Conference. Volunteers have secured from 72 to 100 12-foot by 12-foot sections of the Quilt, which will cover the 30,000 square foot floor of the Civic Center main arena.

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In This Issue

U.S. Senate Passes

Hate Crimes Statistic Act 2

The bill requires the US Department of Justice to "acquire data about certain crimes which manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity."

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The Invisible Electorate 10

The time is now to demand gay inclusion in election coverage for 1990. This means working hard to organize a vocal and visible presence in elections—and on the streets.

Partisan Politics 11

Many gay and lesbian activists began to work within the established political system of electoral politics (particularly within the Democratic Party), continuing the reformist or civil rights strategy for social change

Election March 13

U. S. Senate Passes Hate Crimes Statistics Act Lawmakers Reject Anti-Gay Helms Amendment

In an historic moment for the gay and lesbian community, the U.S. Senate voted 92 to 4 to pass the Federal Hate Crime Statistics Act. Before voting for passage, Senate lawmakers rejected, by 77-19, a move by Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) to attach a four-part anti-gay amendment to the bill.

The landslide vote marks the first time in the history of the Senate that the pervasive problem of anti-gay and lesbian violence has been addressed, the first time gay-positive legislation has passed the Senate, and the first time the gay and lesbian community has defeated Helms on the up-

or-down, gay-related issue.

"Today the U.S. Senate sent a strong signal to the bigots and bashers in our country that violence against lesbians and gay men is as intolerable as violence against racial, religious and ethnic minorities," said Urvashi Vaid, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) executive director. "It marks the culmination of seven years of work by the Task Force to gain a political response to the enormous U.S. problem of anti-gay violence."

The bill requires the U.S. Department of Justice to "acquire data about certain crimes which manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity."

"This bill in the beginning of the slippery slope downward for homophobic skinhead bigots, violent racists, anti-semites and other perpetrators of hate crimes," said Vaid.

The bill passed with an amendment offered by Senators Paul Simon (D-IL) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT), two major sponsors of the legislation. The amendment reads, "Congress finds that: (1) The American family life is the foundation of American society; (2) Federal policy should encourage the well-being, financial security, and health of the American family; (3) Schools should not de-emphasize the critical value of American family life; and (4) Nothing in this act shall be construed, nor shall any funds appropriated to carry out the purpose of the act be used to promote or encour-

agement.

The Helms amendment, overwhelmingly defeated by the Senate, stated, (1) The Homosexual movement threatens the strength and the survival of the American family as the basic unit of society; (2) State laws prohibiting sodomy should be enforced; (3) The federal government should not provide discrimination protections on the basis of "sexual orientation;" and (4) School curriculums should not condone homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle in American society.

"Senator Simon and Hatch deserve considerable credit for passage of this bill," said Peri Jude Radecic, NGLTF legislative director. "They were unrelenting in their commitment to include gays and lesbians in this landmark legislation."

NGLTF was instrumental in forming a powerful hate crimes lobby coalition that included People for the American Way, American Civil Liberties Union, Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Committee, American Psychological Association, Police Executive Research Forum, Human Rights Campaign Fund and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, among others.

Radecic credits unprecedented, ongoing grassroots lobbying by the U.S. and of gay and lesbian activists and allies, including a last-minute flurry of calls the morning of the bill's passage.

"For the past three years during NGLTF's National Lobby Days, we have

cic.

Voting against the bill were Senators William Armstrong (R-CO), Gordon Humphrey (R-NH), Trent Lott (R-MS) and Jesse Helms.

Both Senators Lloyd Bentsen and Phil Gramm of Texas voted for the bill.

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N E W S L E T T E R

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ed notes

March brings us an important election where we do have a chance to make a difference. We all remember Judge Hampton. Because of endorsements by community groups all the way down the ballot, there is less of a chance that a Hampton could emerge in Houston. But we can't rest on past gains. We must continue to work hard to ensure our future.

In this issue there are three stories relating to elections. Another story on this page, shows the U.S. Senate has voted in a pro-gay way for the first time.

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The Montrose Activity Center continues to grow. We are talking to other groups in the community about ways to network to better serve the community. We have a board meeting scheduled on March 19 at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. Please join us and give your input.

Jack Valinski

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The Simon-Hatch amendment was considered a "pre-emptive strike" by bill supporters in an effort to head off a Helms'

Committee, American Psychological Association, Police Executive Research Forum, Human Rights Campaign Fund and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, among others.

Radecic credits unprecedented, ongoing grassroots lobbying by the U.S. and of gay and lesbian activists and allies, including a last-minute flurry of calls the morning of the bill's passage.

"For the past three years during NGLTF's National Lobby Days, we have led drives to increase co-sponsorships," said Radecic. "Activists have moved their legislators on this issue. This bill shows constituent lobbying works," said Rade-

Joe Watts and C. Williams

NEWSLETTER

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Ray Hill, Jim Owens,
and Jack Valinski

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Starting a New Decade

from *Frontiers*

A new year and a new decade are now upon us. It is difficult for our community to look back on the '80s except in tribute to those who are no longer with us. There is scarcely a gay or lesbian household that has not been touched by the untimely death from AIDS of those who are near and dear. Half a generation of our finest men are either dead or dying.

How do you count the loss? Is it in smiles we will never see and laughs that we will never hear again? Or is it in words that will never be spoken or written? Perhaps it is loves that will never be loved or pictures that will never be painted. It is all the things that might have been . . . For our community, a decade of death is behind us and the new decade shows little promise of much that is better. Still, those of us who have survived have become stronger and more compassionate for the experience. We move forward because we refuse to stand still or, worse, to be pushed back into the closets from which we came.

Will the '90s again be gay? Much of that depends on you! The winds of change are blowing. As a community, we have become politically and financially powerful. If we continue to unite and form coalitions with others, maybe—just maybe—this decade will bring to fruition the life-long dreams of social and sexual equality that we have long pursued.

Use your money and your mind to create change. Then use your voice and your vote to implement it. We live in a political society. A wasted vote is as unforgivable as unsafe sex. Think about it! Then do something about it! 1990 is a major election year.λ

Ban on discrimination in the Courtrooms

National Lesbian and Gay Law Association causes ABA to add Discrimination Protections for Lesbians and Gay Men in Courtrooms

The National Lesbian and Gay Law Association held a press conference on Tuesday, January 16, 1990 in front of the District of Columbia Courthouse to announce the inclusion of a ban against antigay discrimination in the court systems.

Successful lobbying by the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association (NLGLA) caused the American Bar Association (ABA) to include a ban against discrimination based on sexual orientation in its draft Model Code of Judicial Conduct. Specific protection in the code means that lesbians and gay men can expect and demand fair treatment in the judicial system.

The code applies to judges throughout the country and subjects them to discipline if they violate its ethical canons. It will now send an explicit message to judges that they will be held personally accountable if they discriminate against gay people.

In 1988 Judge Jack Hampton told newspaper reporters in Dallas, Texas that he had given a lighter sentence to convicted murderers because their victims were gay. He blamed the victims for their own murders. NLGLA cited this and other outrageous examples of anti-gay discrimination by judges when it testified before the ABA Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility. Judge Hampton has since been censured by the Texas Judicial Commission on Ethics.λ

Relationship financial claim

Q: I plan to live with a man in the very near future and am wondering what steps we should take in order to make sure that neither has a financial claim on the other should we ever decide to split up?

A: You should have a written agreement, signed by both of you, that may be very simple or very complicated depending on your circumstances. But, the agreement should cover the following points:

▼ a description of your relationship as a partnership that is not subject to statutory or case-law provisions relating to marriage.

▼ a description on how property acquired during the relationship should be owned (that is, equally or in separate names.)

▼ a decision on how debts incurred for the benefit of the relationship or to pay for property acquired in the names of both parties to the relationship will be treated.

▼ a decision on how property acquired during the relationship should be divided if you ever decide to end the relationship.

▼ a listing of the property owned prior to the relationship that shall remain the sole property of one or the other.

▼ a breach of contract clause that obliges the party who does not live to the the agreement to pay any legal cost required to get the other party to meet his or her obligations agreed upon in the written agreement.

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TV nix ad

by Marc Stein

from *Gay Community News*

Against the backdrop of the Walt Whitman Bridge, a young gay man says "Hey, I just found out that Walt Whitman was gay . . . you know, the guy they named the bridge after. I wish I had known that when I was in high school. Back then, I got hassled all the time by the other kids, 'cause I'm gay—and the teachers, they just stood around and didn't say anything."

Millions of viewers almost got to see this 30-second public service announcement (PSA) which was produced by the Philadelphia Lesbian and Gay Task Force (PLGTF). However, in what PLGTF Executive Director Rita Addessa and co-chair Larry Gross have labeled broadcast censorship, every local station pulled the plug on the spot. Stations said that the PSA "makes a statement" and "seems like encouragement [of a] lifestyle." The stations also claimed that Whitman's estate could file suit, that assertions of Whitman's homosexuality require "substantiation" and that Whitman isn't alive to defend himself.

Some stations have aired other PLGTF PSAs that dealt with anti-gay discrimination and Lesbian and Gay Pride Month. Gross said the station's refusal to air the spot "continues a pattern in the media of silencing our community, denial, and the erasure of our existence We expect broadcasters to live up to their responsibilities to the communities they serve."

THE SECOND ANNUAL MASQUE FOR AIDS BALL

A MASQUERADE BENEFITTING: AIDS FOUNDATION/STONE SOUP
BERING FOUNDATION • OMEGA HOUSE • PWA ASSISTANCE FUND
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SUNDAY, MARCH 11 3-7 P.M.

2401 SAN JACINTO In the Ballroom at Rich's

TICKETS: \$12 Advance/\$15 Door

CASH BAR MASK REQUIRED (Semi-Formal Attire, Please)

TICKETS MAY BE PURCHASED AT:
Mark Anthony's Hair Salon; We Deliver Videos;
House of Coleman; Club Body Center; Rich's;
Midtowne Spa; Als Formal Wear (Weslayan
Location); Inklings Bookshop; Leather By Boots;
Printex Plus; Pot Pie Pizzeria; Bering Community
Service Foundation; Oh Boy Leather Goods;
Union Jack; The Ruggles Grill; Charlie's
Restaurant; Lobo Bookshop;
& The Bead Artigiani.



Southeastern Conference for lesbians and gays

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"That means a whole lot of material," said Quilt committee moderator Sally Nelson.

Nelson commented that she hopes the NAMES Project exhibit will bring out a crowd of its own.

Friday and Saturday will hold a two day series of workshops, entertainment, speakers, and the opening of a Community Marketplace at 8 AM each morning.

"The Community Marketplace is kind of like a flea market, where you get to see vendors from all over the country, and I do mean all over the country, show their wares. We have room for 100 vendors, on one side of the Civic Center, and they will be there Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning," Pilkington explained.

Entertainment will take several forms over the Conference, with several professional acts highlighted in a concert series Friday and Saturday nights, as well as an ongoing community stage offering a series of professional and non-professional acts throughout Friday and Saturday.

"The Community Stage will have comedians, poets, musicians, a group of Texas two-step dancers, clog and line dance teams, a leather fashion show, and a whole bunch of other community-based entertainment from across the region," Pilkington said.

Evening entertainment will feature international musician and entertainer Lynn Lavner, Ohio-based recording artists The

Washington Sisters, and several other artists, Pilkington said.

Workshops will be offered throughout Friday, Saturday, and Sunday mornings in 50 minute time blocks, including two series of 12 and 11 workshops dealing with the subject of AIDS and Sodomy Laws.

"It's real obvious every damn thing we do is overshadowed by the Sodomy Laws," Pilkington said. "No matter how good, how smart, how wealthy, or how poor we are, those laws hang over our heads like a death trap."

"Even though we are doing a lot of good work, these laws are part of our region. At this Conference we want to focus on these laws, and develop a strategy to get rid of Sodomy Laws in our states. If we do that, we have done the ultimate good for our generation," Pilkington said.

The series of AIDS workshops will include several workshops dealing with treatment, care provider burnout, responsible reporting of AIDS in the media, rural health care, and host representatives from, among others, the Whitman Walker Clinic in Washington, D.C., the National AIDS Network, and the National Interfaith AIDS Network.

"The AIDS workshops and the Names Project Quilt complement each other," Pilkington said. "One will act as an emotional outlet and other will show people how to deal with AIDS."

Many of the workshops, he noted deal

with less life threatening concepts, and range from various gay-related business topics, developing community resources, discussing traditional Church concepts of Homosexuality to workshops entitled 'Leathersex 101: Everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask.'

Abby Rubinfeld, co-chair for the National Association of Lesbian and Gay Lawyers, will talk Friday morning about her strategies to repeal sodomy laws in the South, as well as offer one of the workshops dealing with sodomy law enforcement. Ms. Rubinfeld lives in Nashville, TN.

Allen Berube, author of *Coming Out Under Fire*, will present a talk Friday afternoon on the research for his book, which details the stories of lesbians and gays in the military during World War II, and how the wartime atmosphere allowed for the first major changes in attitudes about homosexuals in the U.S. Mr. Berube currently lives in San Francisco.

Ambrose Sims, first openly gay policeman in the South, will talk Saturday morning on coming out in a sensitive job, as well as suggest ideas on how to organize at a local level. He lives in Miami Beach, FL.

Joyce Hunter, director of the Harvey Milk High School in New York City, will talk Saturday afternoon. Milk High School is a fully accredited public high school for gay and lesbian youth, and has proven to be a successful program to get teenage homo-

sexuals back in school and adjusted to their lifestyles. Ms. Hunter will speak about the schools' programs and how others may get involved in serving lesbian and gay youth.

"These are all ordinary people who decided to stand up and do something to make a change," Pilkington said. "They weren't special, just determined that things should be different. That is what we want to emphasize for this Conference. We're going to need ourselves to look around our communities and see what there is, then chip in to make our communities change for the better."

Whereas early registrations are running high for this time of year, Pilkington said he had no real numbers on how many attendees to expect.

"We expect at least 400 people, but we may get as many people as there are on our mailing list, which is 10,000," he said. "The important thing is to register early so we can guarantee space."

For more information or for a registration form contact SECLGM '90 at Box 28863, Raleigh, NC 27611-8863, or call 1-919-833-1209.

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throughout Friday and Saturday.

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Gays gain power

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later, approving the same ordinance 28-17. Mayor Eugene Sawyer, aware of the importance of the gay vote, "prayed" with some key allies on the council. "But I didn't use the Bible. I used this," Sawyer said after the vote, picking up a copy of the city budget.

Sawyer had discovered what other big-city politicians and champions of gay rights like Mayor Agnos in San Francisco, Kathy Whitmire in Houston and Marion Barry in Washington, D.C., have also learned—that in the words of San Francisco Board of Supervisors President Harry Britt, "along with environmentalists and minorities, we are part of the changing face of urban politics."

"The mayor of Baltimore, for example, will meet with gay officials and talk about the gay agenda," Britt said.

Signs of progress

Because the one-man, one-vote 1964 Supreme Court ruling shifted political power from rural areas to the cities, where more gays and lesbians live, urban politicians in state legislatures and in Congress have become increasingly responsive to their gay constituencies.

Other signs of progress:

▼ Nearly 80 communities now have some form of anti-discrimination ordinance that includes sexual orientation, compared with none 20 years ago, according to the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, a

Washington-based lobbying group.

▼ Nearly 30 openly gay officials have been elected throughout the nation, including two members of Congress, Frank and Rep. Gerry Studds, both from Massachusetts. Dozens more have been appointed to powerful local or state boards and commissions.

▼ A sophisticated gay lobby has grown up in Washington, which—coupled with a gay political action committee that contributed more than \$300,000 to members of Congress last year—has access to key politicians and policy-makers.

▼ A group called Gay and Lesbian Democrats of America now lists some 70 gay and lesbian political clubs as members, a huge increase in just a few years, said its director, Chris Riddiough.

▼ No politician who has supported gay rights proposals has suffered at the polls, according to political consultant Mixner.

▼ The 1988 Democratic National Convention in Atlanta included 98 openly gay delegates or alternates, a 30 percent increase over 1984. Many were energized by the Rev. Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign. Jackson was the first major candidate to explicitly seek the gay vote and the only one who consistently visited AIDS clinics.

"The gay community became a resource for us everywhere we went in the country," said Gerald Austin, Jackson's campaign

manager. "One state we had not had as a priority—Minnesota—became one, with (lesbian legislator) Karen Wilson as co-chair. We came in a very strong second there. Lavender was one stripe of the rainbow."

Despite these gains, 25 states and the District of Columbia still have sodomy laws that criminalize some gay sex, making it a felony in 15 of those states. Some of these laws are titled "crimes against nature," "sexual psychopaths" and "deviant sexual conduct." Church groups and conservative politicians often team up to fight repeal efforts.

A national poll conducted by Teichner Associates for *The Examiner* found that nearly one of five voters would not vote for a gay candidate.

And only one state, Wisconsin [also Massachusetts], has a gay rights law, adopted in 1982. When a similar bill passed the California Legislature in 1983, Gov. Deukmejian vetoed it.

Gay rights groups in Connecticut and Massachusetts hoped to pass similar gay rights bills this year. But the Connecticut House defeated the bill 79-71 in March, and one proposed by Massachusetts wasn't expected to pass, despite its reputation as the most liberal state in the nation.

"This is an Irish-Catholic-dominated state and the Catholic Church has a very strong hold over the state Legislature," said lobbyist Arlene Isaacson, co-chair of the Boston Gay and Lesbian Caucus.

Nationally, gays still face problems with the military, with immigration officials who

routinely prevent them from entering the country and with security-clearance guidelines that bar them from certain jobs. At state and county levels, gays often have major problems in child custody fights and in qualifying as foster parents.

Many gay activists see an absence of effective gay leadership, in part because of the toll of AIDS and in part because of the perceived "cost" of coming out.

Not do the various gay groups always work together smoothly.

Dr. Bruce Voeller, a pioneer gay leader and research scientist, said gay groups, unlike the black civil rights groups in the 1940s and '50s haven't agreed on a legal strategy to advance their cause, including which case to pick to push forward to the Supreme Court.

"Too often," he said, there is a parochialism and turf-war aspect to this that we need to outgrow.

"We are so busy putting brush out fires that we haven't done the long-range planning. We need a 10-year plan and 20-year plan, and we don't have it."

The AIDS epidemic has raised a host of problems involving insurance, death benefits, bereavement leave, hospital visitation rights, confidentiality of test results, and statewide initiative campaigns calling for quarantines or other restrictions aimed at people with AIDS.

The disease has diverted resources from other gay civil rights issues and has forced gays and lesbians to better define how government can help them.

see **Gays Gain Power** page 10

Golden Threads

The Fourth Annual Golden Threads Celebration will take place on June 22-24, 1990 at the Holiday Inn in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Lesbians from all over the United States, many from Canada and other countries, will converge in Provincetown to celebrate what they are and their age, whatever that is.

The highlight of the celebration will be a banquet, followed by the internationally known folk singer and Lesbian entertainer, Alix Dobkin. The evening's festivities will conclude with dancing. The evening's festivities will conclude with dancing. During the weekend, rap sessions will be offered.

In existence since 1985, Golden Threads is a worldwide network of Lesbians over 50, and women who are interested in older women—no Lesbian is excluded. A contact publication, Golden Threads, is published four times a year. It lists many self-descriptions of Lesbians, resources, book reviews and an editorial, which addresses the interests and concerns of the older Lesbian.

International Correspondents Needed

Paz y Liberación (Peace & Liberation), a twelve year old publication dedicated to promoting the lesbian & gay movement in Latin America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East, needs two volunteers to help answer correspondence from Latin America (in Spanish) and from Asia (in English). Also needed is a volunteer to handle correspondence with people in USA prisons.

Many writers are lonely and need a concerned response. PyL also offers a free penpal service so you would be making up ads for correspondents. A few hours a month would be fine. Call John Hubert, Editor, 523-6381 or write Box 66450, Houston, TX 77266-6450 for more information.λ

Montrose Activity Center

For more information please contact: Christine Burton, Golden Threads, Box 3177, Burlington, VT 05401-0031.λ

New Program Targets Young Activists

A new education and training program for young lesbian and gay activists has been launched by the California-based Critical Literacy Institute in the first national effort to locate and encourage the next

14 through July 15, with students having full access to the resources of the Bay Area gay/lesbian community including the 1990 Lesbian and Gay Freedom Celebration, The International Lesbian and Gay Film

Alliance

by Gene Harrington

Faced with a staggering AIDS caseload and mounting criticism of its lack of response, Harris County set up a quasi-public entity to coordinate local AIDS policy and develop an adequate funding plan. Unfortunately the Greater Houston AIDS Alliance has been hampered since its inception by charges of insensitivity and conflicts of interest. Its recent proposal, which would place the burden of indigent health care on the backs of persons with AIDS with private insurance coverage, is so unrealistic that questions have now arisen about the basic competence of the Alliance's board and executive staff. The publicized, but as yet unwritten, plan envisions private businesses contracting with the Alliance for an insurance coverage that would "entice" employees with AIDS to utilize the county's public hospital and clinic. Thus, the county's cost for indigent AIDS care would be offset by the profits realized from these privately insured AIDS patients. Under the guise of innovation and cost management, the Alliance seriously proposes a funding mechanism that would have insured persons with AIDS pay for indigent AIDS costs in lieu of county tax dollars.

The plan, publicized before even being discussed with the alliance's medical committee, ignores the interests of private physicians, the wishes of persons with AIDS, and raises basic questions of legality. Additionally, the plan highlights continuing questions concerning the Alliance's code of ethics.

"The days of the \$500,000 AIDS death should be over" lamented an Alliance consultant. Besides dismissing HIV infection as a pre-wake waiting game and distorting AIDS health care costs, the statement indicates a monetary concern which had obviously distorted the Alliance perception of government's role in society.

Aside from blindly assuming cooperation from private physicians, cynically expecting insured AIDS patients to acquiesce, and distorting the Alliance's role in the private sector, the plan is constitutionally suspect.

Put into the simplest terms, the funding plan is based on the implicit "blame the victim" philosophy which singles out persons with AIDS as the basic source of funding for a societal responsibility that traditionally is shared by the entire community. Since 80% to 90% of the county AIDS patients are gay men, the disproportionate affect the plan poses for one of the most vulnerable sectors of society is frightening. Forcing all AIDS patients into a public hospital system, regardless of indigent status, is akin to quarantine and segregation. (Obviously, the outcry when the Alliance recently segregated the county indigent AIDS caseload from other county patients did little to sensitize them.) A plan of treatment for persons with AIDS, and the funding mechanism for such, which is inherently different and inferior would violate established principles of equal protection.

Would the Alliance's board, under other circumstances, seriously propose under

New Program Targets Young Activists

A new education and training program for young lesbian and gay activists has been launched by the California-based Critical Literacy Institute in the first national effort to locate and encourage the next generation of gay and lesbian leaders. The New Pacific Academy for Lesbian and Gay Community Service Activism will open in June 1990, with a one-month intensive training program at the University of California campus in Berkeley, California. The goal of the program, dubbed "Basic Training," is to provide young lesbians and gay men with the knowledge, practical skills and peer support necessary for effective leadership in the 1990's.

Initial funding of the program has been provided by an anonymous donor and New Pacific expects to cover all costs for participants except travel expenses. Room, board and course materials will be provided without charge. The 1990 "Basic Training" will be offered to 200 young people, 18 to 30 years old, with demonstrated commitment to social service or political activism benefiting the gay and lesbian community. The student body will be half men and half women, with 50% of the students drawn from communities of color. Students will be offered a wide range of lectures and workshops presented by some of the gay and lesbian community's most accomplished activists, academics and artists, balancing theoretical information with practical skills building.

Founded by veteran activist Cleve Jones and youth organizer Luke Adams, New Pacific is governed by a Board of Directors and an Advisory Board composed of activists from throughout the United States. The 1990 "Basic Training" will run from June

14 through July 15, with students having full access to the resources of the Bay Area gay/lesbian community including the 1990 Lesbian and Gay Freedom Celebration, The International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival and the Sixth International AIDS Conference.

While no tuition is required of participants, New Pacific is soliciting donations to help defray travel costs. "We hope that gay and lesbian community organizations will assist us by recommending promising young activists and subsidizing their transportation to Berkeley," said Executive Director Luke Adams. Adams and Jones hope to assemble a student body fully representative of the diverse gay and lesbian communities. According to Cleve Jones, responsible for program planning, "We want these young people to leave our program with a complete understanding of the issues affecting the many different segments of our population." Adams and Jones have opened an office in San Francisco and begun assembling a staff to coordinate the 1990 "Basic Training." Young people interested in enrolling in the summer program should write to New Pacific and request an application form. All applications must be postmarked no later than April 16, 1990. Anyone interested in presenting a lecture or workshop during the summer program should contact Cleve Jones directly at the NAMES Project, Box 14573, San Francisco, CA 94114. Volunteers interested in office support work for the program should contact Donna Ozawa at New Pacific Academy, 2338 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94114 or call 415-252-1690. All donations and in-kind contributions are tax-deductible.λ

poses a funding mechanism that would have insured persons with AIDS pay for indigent AIDS costs in lieu of county tax dollars.

The plan, publicized before even being discussed with the alliance's medical committee, ignores the interests of private physicians, the wishes of persons with AIDS, and raises basic questions of legality. Additionally, the plan highlights continuing questions concerning the Alliance's code of ethics.

The Plan isn't viable.

Any hope for the plan's success requires cooperation from private physicians and privately insured AIDS patients to ensure adequate medical personnel and a sufficient pool of paying patients. The recent short history of the now defunct Houston AIDS Hospital clearly indicates that neither the doctors nor the patients will be forthcoming.

If AIDS specialists were unwilling to join the plush private AIDS hospital, they most assuredly will find less incentive to join a public clinic that does not even have access to public transportation and is already at 300% of its patient capacity. (Ironically the county's own AIDS specialist balked at joining this clinic.)

And private AIDS patients, even under the duress the Alliance proposes, would have even greater reason to decline the proposal. Expecting persons with a life threatening illness with private insurance coverage to accept health care at a county hospital is at best naive.

Additionally, for its success the plan's adoption would require a governmental body to meddle in private employment relationships while attempting to regulate "acceptable" health care costs for private patients.

Gene Harrington is a law professor at Texas Southern University and has served on the Texas Legislative AIDS Task Force.

public hospital system, regardless of indigent status, is akin to quarantine and segregation. (Obviously, the outcry when the Alliance recently segregated the county indigent AIDS caseload from other county patients did little to sensitize them.) A plan of treatment for persons with AIDS, and the funding mechanism for such, which is inherently different and inferior would violate established principles of equal protection.

Would the Alliance's board, under other circumstances, seriously propose underwriting county indigent child care costs by inducing pregnant insured women into the county hospital system? Obviously what would be ludicrous for pregnant women would be acceptable for HIV infected individuals according to the Alliance. Fortunately, common sense and the constitution disagree.

The plan appears so flawed that it poses little real danger of being implemented. Ironically, then, the proposal poses a greater threat to the Alliance's credibility than to the security of persons with AIDS. Besides its obvious shortcomings, the plan highlights conflict of interest charges which have clung to the Alliance since its inception. In this instance, the board consultant initiating this funding proposal is also the Executive Director of the entity that the Alliance proposes to contract with for the system. As the spouse of the chief executive of a major insurance company, she has also defended questionable insurance policies while attempting to stifle AIDS protestors. Bad ethics makes paid policy.

If Houston is ever going to meet the basic health care needs of its growing AIDS population it needs a mechanism which not only understands the economic issues, but also the basic human interests and rights of those affected. One should not have to add that self interest has no place in this government decision making. Unfortunately, with AIDS in Houston, it must be added with emphasis.λ

Montrose Activity Center NEWSLETTER

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March 1990

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

EVERY
WEEK
EVERY
WEEK

Lesbian Incest Survivors (LISA), 4:00 PM, meets at Inklings, 1846 Richmond, call Sherry for more details 527-8712

Lesbian Therapy Group, Therapy group addressing relationships and issues surrounding being a lesbian and a woman, Sharon Stone and Associates, 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM, 3935 Westheimer, Suite 360, call 623-6081 for information

Adult Children of Alcoholics, 7:30 PM, Church of Religious Science, North Houston, call 350-9378 for information

Lone Star Symphonic Band, Rehearsal Night, 7:30 PM to 10:00 PM, 1919 Decatur, for information call 862-5058

The Support Group for Gay and Lesbian Codependents Anonymous, This is a discussion group for the gay and lesbian community with issues related to codependency. No membership required., 6:30 PM, Montrose Counseling Center, Round Room, 900 Lovett, call Sharon J. at 893-0514 for information.

Lesbian Partners of Incest Survivors, Professionally facilitated, Montrose Counseling Center, 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM, 900 Lovett, call 529-0037 for information

Wilde 'n' Stein, discussion, news, features and opinion on issues in the gay and lesbian community, join Deborah Bell and Jack Valinski, 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM, KPFT, 90.1 FM, call 526-4000 for information

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

MARCH

CALENDAR

WARRIOR

CALENDAR

4

The Women's Group, S.K. Bardwell from the Houston Police Bureau will be the guest speaker, 'Women Making a Difference in Houston'. Reporter Bardwell will convey the history and evolution of the Houston Post's series 'Women in Fear' published last October. Many of us were s, 10:00 AM, at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5210 Fannin, at Southmore, call 529-7329 for information

Mothers' Support Web, A social gathering of mothers/partners and their children, together with womyn interested in supporting their needs (childcare ect.), to find others with common interests and childrearing philosophies so that womyn can spin mutually supportive webs., 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, First Unitarian Universalist Church, 2nd floor, 5210 Fannin, call Nancy at 529-3362 for information.

5

6

Political Seminar, Will cover various political party rules covering the convention delegate selection process, how to participate and how to organize a precinct convention. Knowledgeable individuals from several local and state organizations will give short presentations a, 7:00 PM, Multi-service Center, 1475 W. Gray, call Dennis 741-7401 for information

Wilde 'n' Stein, special discussion about gay and lesbian people running for political office, Ray Hill will talk about his race and Annise Parker will talk about the election process and how to get involved in it, 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM, KPFT, 90.1 FM, call 526-4000 for information



7

Gay &
Metro
Gray,

Montrose Activity Center NEWSLETTER

March 1990

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WEDNESDAY

Women's Hour, Although 'music' isn't part of the name anymore, women's music is still an integral part of the show. Claire and Yoshiko have always played music by, for, and about women. Now they have added interviews, news stories, and a Women's Calendar to their form, 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM, KTRU-FM, 91.7 FM, for information call 527-4050

HIV/AIDS Support Group, 7:00 PM, Unity Church, 2929 Unity Drive, call 782-1090 for information

Women Against Violence Everywhere, WAVE, Violence against women must stop! to help plan rally scheduled for July and other strategies, 7:00 PM, First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5210 Fannin, at Southmore, Call Jacsun Shah for information, 529-7329

Bering Spiritual Support Group, for HIV+ persons, their family and friends. Potluck dinner at 6:45, discussion group follows at, 7:30 PM, 1440 Harold, Call 526-1017 for information

Women's Therapy Group, with special emphasis on Spirituality, 7:30 PM to 8:45 PM, 1807 Lexington, For information call Joyce Gayles at 528-4863

Self Healing and Stress Reduction Class, 8:00 PM to 9:30 PM, Center for a Positive Lifestyle, 1505 Nevada at Commonwealth, call 523-4241 for information.

FRIDAY

Friday Feature, Coffee House Socials, An Alternative Gathering PWArty for PWAs PWArCs and Friends at, 7:00 PM, Bering Care Center, 1440 Harold, call 520-7070 for information

Breakthrough, Womyn's Music, KPFT 90.1 FM with Pokey Anderson and Cherry Wolf., 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM, KPFT 90.1 FM

SATURDAY

The Support Group for Gay and Lesbian Codependents Anonymous, This is a discussion group for the gay and lesbian community with issues related to codependency. No membership required., Round Room, 5:00 PM, Montrose Counseling Center, 900 Lovett, round room, call Sharon J. at 893-0514 for information

HATCH, Houston Area Teens Concerned with Homosexuality, support group for teenagers, 7:30 PM, 5210 Fannin, at First Unitarian Universalist Church, call 526-1571 for information

Dignity/Houston Mass, social hour follows, 7:30 PM, Dignity Center, 3217 Fannin, for information at 528-0111

Shop Elsewhere Campaign, Asking people to shop other than Randall's because of the company's blatant discriminatory policy in matters concerning AIDS, Gays and Lesbians. They refuse to have a written non-discrimination policy. ActUP Houston and the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, at 12 Noon, South Shepherd and Westheimer, Call 521-1000 for information

After Hours, Discussions about Gay and Lesbian community, Midnight to 4:00 AM, KPFT 90.1 FM

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1

The Other Economic Summit, TOES, Meets before the governmental economic summit to present alternative recommendations for economic policy that benefit the people and the planet not the bureaucracy and corporations, 7:00 PM, The Firehouse, 1413 Westheimer, call Prentiss Riddle 668-7974

Texas Size Auction, many items including a weekend for two at Lyle's Deck, tickets to Cats, dinner to several fine restaurants and more, Team Houston, 7:30 PM, Missouri Street Station, 1117 Missouri, call 520-TEAM for information

ActUP Houston 7:30 PM at the Multi-center

2

Car Wash, Team Houston, 7:30 PM, Heaven, Pacific at Grant, call 520-TEAM for information

3

Pride Awards Nominations, last day for community groups to have nominations for this year's Pride Awards, mailing address, Box 542258, Houston, TX, 77254-2258, call 520-8902 for information

AR

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ActUP Houston, 7:30 PM at the, Multi-service Center, 1475 W Gray

Car Wash, Team Houston, 7:30 PM, Heaven, Pacific at Grant, call 520-TEAM for information

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7

Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, 7:30 PM, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray, for information call 521-1000

8

Free Sculpture Lecture, Local sculpture Diana Weeks will demonstrate and discuss artistic conceptualization, 7:00 PM, Montrose Library, 4100 Montrose, for information call Diana Weeks at 523-2802

9

Absentee Voting, Last day to vote absentee, see story on page 4, 49 San Jancito, call County Clerk Office at 221-6411 for information

10

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, ZIP: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Unfortunately, this newsletter must pay for itself. MAC needs your financial help to preserve this community resource. Please consider becoming a MAC supporter by making a donation in one of the categories listed below.

	LEVEL	AMOUNT	BENEFIT
☐	Booster	\$20	Listing in Newsletter
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☐	Business	\$300	12 Listing in Newsletter
☐	Patron	\$1000	
☐	Benefactor	\$5000	

Writers Needed

Do you have a poem, short story or article that you feel would make good reading?. The Montrose Activity Center Newsletter: would like to see it. Mail copies to Montrose Activity Center, NEWSLETTER, Box 66684, Houston, TX 77266-668., We accept printed, typewritten, legible handwritten, or Microsoft Word, Macintosh; ASCII, MAC, Appelworks, Apple II, 3 1/2 or 5 1/4; WordPerfect, IBM, 5 1/4; ASCII, IBM, 5 1/4.

Montrose Activity Center N E W S L E T T E R

Page: 8

March 1990

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

11 FULL MOON

The Women's Group, Lita Fike, poet, educator, occupational therapist and member of the Women's Group will bring to us, sine qua non, information entitled 'Recruiting Your Health Care Partner'. This is based on empirical experiences in Women's lives., 10:00 AM, at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5210 Fannin, at Southmore, call 529-7329 for information

Masque for AIDS Ball, special benefit for: AIDS Foundation/Stone Soup, Bering Foundation, Omega House, PWA Assistance Fund and HL/GPC, Sponsored by Lesbian/Gay Pride Week, 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Rich's, 2401 San Jacinto, 1215.00, tickets available at many locations including: Inklings, Lobo, call 490-4484 for information

12

American Gay Atheists, regular monthly meeting, 7:30 PM, 4 Chelsea Place, call 862-3283 for information

13

Election, For state representatives, county representatives, United States representatives, Governor, etc., 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, check city newspapers for your polling place, call 224-1919 for information

Gay Fathers, 8:00 PM, Dignity Center, 3217 Fannin, for information call 522-6766

Wilde 'n' Stein, join us for election coverage, 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM, KPFT, 90.1 FM, call 526-4000 for information

14

Women's Network, Lesbians and the Law - How can we use the legal system to meet our needs? Connie Moore and Debra Hunt will join Women's Network to discuss legal issues which impact our lives as women, especially lesbians. Bring your friends and your questions., Montrose Counseling Center, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM, 900 Lovett Blvd. 2nd floor, for information call 529-0037

Gay/Lesbian Hispanics Unidos (GLHU), 7:30 PM, Dignity Center, 3217 Fannin, call 880-GLHU for information

Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, board meeting, 7:30 PM, 900 Lovett, for information call 521-1000

this space available
call 529-1223
for more information

18

The Women's Group, Gloria Guardiola, a long time activist and business woman in our community will challenge us with 'Breaking Down Hispanic Stereotypes.' Another forum for us to celebrate our commonalities and differences., 10:00 AM, at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5210 Fannin, at Southmore, call 529-7329 for information

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, discussion on Religion and Homosexuality, Ministering to the Gay Community, Grace Lutheran Church, 2:00 PM, 2515 Waugh, call 952-2525 for information

Lesbians Over Age Fifty (LOAF), 2:00 PM, Autry House, 6265 S. Main

AMIGA de Houston, holds its business meeting with potluck dinner 5:00 PM. Call 529-

19

Montrose Activity Center, Board meeting, public is welcome, 7:00 PM, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, call 529-1223 for information

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, organization meeting, 7:00 PM, to be announced, call 523-6109 for information

Strengthening the Body Through Nutritional Support, by Lorna Jean Arnold, a nutritional consultant with the Wellness Center, her discussion will focus on alternative methods of enhancing the immune system through concentrates of Whole Food Extracts. "Everything you put into your body either strengthens or weakens your system," states Ms. Arnold. The pres-

20

Wilde 'n' Stein, Linda Morales joins us in discussion about minorities in the gay and lesbian community as she talks about AMIGA and her involvement in 21.06 case, 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM, KPFT, 90.1 FM, call 526-4000 for information

Kundalini Yoga, a monthly class of Yoga for Life by Satya Khalsa, an introductory level class is offered on at the AIDS Foundation of Houston, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, 3927 Essex Lane, call 623-6796 for information

21

Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, 7:30 PM, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray, for information call 521-1000

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Gray, call 529-1223 for information

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her involvement in 21.06 case, 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM, KPFT, 90.1 FM, call 526-4000 for information

Kundalini Yoga, a monthly class of Yoga for Life by Satya Khalsa, an introductory level class is offered on at the AIDS Foundation of Houston, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, 3927 Essex Lane, call 623-6796 for information

25

The Women's Group, Jacsun and Iris present 'Exploring Feminist Ethics'. When we name ourselves as 'Feminists', what does that mean to us individually and what can others expect of us? There will be time for open group discussion about and for creating our ethics as feminist, 10:00 AM, at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5210 Fannin, at Southmore, call 529-7329 for information

American Gay Atheists Brunch, 11:30 AM, to be announced, call 862-3283 for information

26

NEW MOON 27

Gay Fathers, 8:00 PM, Dignity Center, 3217 Fannin, for information call 522-6766

28

Lesbian/Gay Pride 1990 Meeting, Planning for the 1990 events, 7:00 PM, Dignity Center, 3217 Fannin

Women's Network, Women in Recovery - A panel of recovering women will share their experiences of healing with the help of 12-step programs. How do they work, how do they help, and how do feminists resolve the philosophical conflicts which can arise?, Montrose Counseling Center, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM, 900 Lovett Blvd. 2nd floor, for information call 529-0037

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Karen J. Hanson

ACSW, CSW-ACP

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Montrose Activity Center N E W S L E T T E R

March 1990

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THURSDAY

15

ActUP Houston, 7:30 PM at the, Multi-service Center, 1475 W Gray

Sensuality/Sexuality Class, this class will explore the fun and excitement of safe, sensuous sex through lively discussion and game-playing. Ti's purpose is to help eliminate many of the fears and uncertainties regarding HIV transmission and promote safer sexuality in the 90s, 7:00 to 8:30 PM at the AIDS Foundation, 3927 Essex Lane, call 623-6796 for information

22

March 22-25, 1990, **Southeastern Conference**, the oldest regional conference in the nation is now in its 15th year. Workshops already scheduled on 'Sodomy Laws' and 'The Effect of AIDS on Society.' Also covered will be topics concerning the conference theme: Working to Strengthen our Southeastern Co, Raleigh, NC, write Box 28863, Raleigh, NC, 27611-8863, or call 919-833-1209

FRIDAY

16

Breakthrough, Womyn's Music, KPFT 90.1 FM with Pokey Anderson and Cherry Wolf. At 8:30 AM a special interview with Patrica Hynes ecofeminist and author of EarthRight, how on a personal level one can take positive steps on the environment, 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM, KPFT 90.1 FM

Montrose Activity Center Newsletter, Deadline for April, Montrose Activity Center, Box 66684, Houston, TX 77266-6684, or call 529-1223.

23

SATURDAY

17

Casino and Auction, Loan Star United Sport Association, 7:00 PM, EJ's, 2514 Ralph, call 621-4270 for information

Body Electric School of Massage, open to all men, regardless of age, size, HIV status, and preference. This experience is about male bonding and creating community. It also is about reclaiming our sexuality in a positive, nurturing environment., 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM, 3703 Yoakum, Suite 204, \$195.00, Call Dipam at 520-6853 for information

Nutrition and HIV Infection, AIDS Foundation Huston sponsors a presentation by Richard Elbin, Director of Dietary Services at HCA Belle Park Hospital, discussing the major components of nutritional health as well as the particular nutrition concerns for the HIV positive individual. Topics will include nutritional intake, eating patterns, supplements, food contamination, fluids, food drugs, stress and exercise, plus an opportunity for questions, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Montrose Library, 4100 Montrose, call 623-6796 for information

24

A H E A D

APRIL 12-15

Second Annual Gulf Coast Women's Festival, in Gulfport, MS, call 601-896-6453 or 601-896-3196 for information

APRIL 13-15

National Women's Recovery Roundup, a first of its kind to celebrate women's recovery in all 12-step program, Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray, \$35.00, call 868-3919 for information

MAY 18-19

Lesbians in the 90s, 'Speaking Out,' third annual, Texas Lesbian Conference., call 512-828-1761

JUNE 20-24

Sixth International Conference on AIDS, Theme will be "AIDS in the Nineties: From Science to Public Policy." Box 1505, San Francisco, CA 94143, for information call 415-550-0880

JULY, 18-22

The Third International Lesbian and Gay Health Conference and Eighth National AIDS Forum, Co-sponsored by the National Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation and The George Washington University. For more information: NLGHF Programming Committee, 1683 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009

OCTOBER 6-7

Second Lavender Law Conference, This second national gathering of lesbian and gay attorneys, legal workers, law students and activists will feature a special focus on sodomy laws in the Southeast., in Atlanta, For information call Abby Rubinfeld at 615-269-6778

now in its 15th year. Workshops already scheduled on 'Sodomy Laws' and 'The Effect of AIDS on Society.' Also covered will be topics concerning the conference theme: Working to Strengthen our Southeastern Co, Raleigh, NC, write Box 28863, Raleigh, NC, 27611-8863, or call 919-833-1209

Forum, Co-sponsored by the National Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation and The George Washington University. For more information: NLGHF Programming Committee, 1683 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009

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29

30

31

Laurie Freelove, formerly with 2 Nice Girls, now with 50 Words for Snow, 9:30 PM, The Showbar, 5605 Washington Ave, tickets at the door, call 868-9542

NEWSLETTERS BROCHURES

COMPUTER TRAINING OR SETUP

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Gays Gain Power

from page 4

"There was always a notion in the late '70s and early '80s," said Larry Bush, a former journalist for the gay press and now a speech writer and advisor to Mayor Agnos, "that gays wanted nothing more than for mayors to sign gay pride declarations, for government to bless them and say, 'You're OK.'"

"Now, we need very concrete things — early release of new anti-AIDS drugs, presumptive disability for Social Security, provisions for the handicapped to get housing or protection for a lover in a will."

Added longtime San Francisco gay leader Jim Foster. "Gay politics has done a 180-degree turn since 1979. It's gone from getting the government off our backs to getting the government to cooperate."

"That's a very significant change. The people we need in leadership today are grant writers, lobbyists, people who create cooperative relationships with government. The people we needed 10-20 years ago were those who could slap government across the face."

Foster cited longtime activist Cleve Jones as an example of a gay leader whose political evolution mirrored the times, who moved "from anarchy to community, from the streets to the AIDS quilt."

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"In the past few years, the gay community has been very narrow in its interest. It tends to be active around gay issues almost exclusively," said Jim Harvey, a black gay activist and potential City Council candidate in Washington.

"I don't think you win political battles by being single-minded. You win by coalescing with other groups. . . . If there is a call for a demonstration or a letter-writing campaign or testimony on nongay issues, the gay community representatives are often not to be found."

"Creating real coalitions," agreed gay Los Angeles attorney Thomas F. Coleman, who has pushed domestic partners legislation there, "means we work on their issues and they work on ours, as opposed to fake collations, where . . . we don't reciprocate."

Different goals

National gay leader Virginia Apuzzo, New York Gov. Mario Cuomo's top adviser on gay and lesbian issues, agreed.

"If the lesbian and gay community achieved immigration reform, a lesbian and gay federal civil rights bill, an anti-gay violence bill, funding and federal commitment to comprehensively address the problem of HIV infection, even after all those victories," said Apuzzo, "would we have ever challenged the system in a fundamental way? I'm not sure the answer is yes."

"Look at the AIDS example. Yes, we need adequate funding, but the larger issue is health care in America. AIDS highlights the gross deficiencies, the discrimination . . . of the American health system."

By Stephen H. Miller
from GLAAD Newsletter

The unabashed failure of the media, with only a few exceptions, to report on gay candidates and issues (excluding AIDS) should come as no surprise. The same media which ignored the 1987 National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights (the nation's largest-ever civil rights demonstration) just don't get why gays and lesbians should be covered as a "real" minority.

Perhaps the clearest example of the media's blind spot to our issues could be seen in immediate post-election coverage. The news media provided its usual "comprehensive" roundup of which blocks of voters went for which candidates. These roundups were quick to analyze the various minority and interest groups that coalesced to give David Dinkins his victory in the mayoral race—except for one group, that is. The *Daily News* alone, among the city's media, included gay voters in its breakdown of how various groups voted: 64% of the gay vote went to Dinkins, who won the election by less than two percentage points.

Dinkins, by the way, was supported by all the city's gay and lesbian democratic clubs (again, only noted by the *Daily News*) and by all the city's lesbian and gay papers.

Even *New York Newsday*, generally considered to be "liberal," succeeded in making the lesbian and gay electorate invisible. *Newsday's* cover story on Nov. 9th, "With the Numbers So Close, Every Constituency Mattered," included every major group of voters: blacks, Jews, His-

views on gay and lesbian issues in its summary of each candidate's positions. After GLAAD organized a letterwriting campaign directed at the *New York Times*, it ran one solitary article on the gay electorate.

4. The existence of credible (though ultimately unsuccessful) races by gay candidates. Many New Yorkers, including gays and lesbians, never learned that two openly gay candidates ran for City Council: Tom Duane in Chelsea, and Dave Taylor on the Upper West Side (Note: in other parts of New York State, two openly gay candidates ran and won: Tim Mains in Rochester, and Keith St. John in Albany). With the exception of the *Village Voice*, these campaigns were virtually ignored in terms of serious coverage, although the *Times* did endorse Duane and note that he's gay.

5. Giuliani's alienation of the gay community. An August 19th story in the *New York Times* on problems in the Giuliani campaign reported that the Republican candidate had lost support among Jewish voters and women, but ignored his problems with the gay community. The *Washington Post* did a much better job on this story.

6. The *Times* again. A several part series of articles on how reform of the New York City Charter would affect minority communities ignored you-know-who. This despite the fact that spokespeople from lesbian and gay political groups testified at the charter reform hearings, along with black, Hispanic and Asian-American spokespeople who the *Times* did quote.

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Future of gay politics

As gay leaders assess their progress and plot their future, some worry whether gay politics will become "just another special-interest group" politics, in Bush's words, or "return to its origins as a social change movement."

Does it, for example, use domestic partners legislation just to make a statement about legitimizing gay relationships? Or does it broaden its political reach and talk about benefits for the extended family, gay and straight. Having successfully educated its own community about AIDS, can it then take the same skills and apply them to black or Hispanic drug abusers?

Or, at a time when the AIDS crisis has pushed other issue off the table, should white male gay organizations demand every dime possible for AIDS research in Washington, D.C.? But when that conflicts with, say, a strapped city budget and an infant mortality rate higher than some Third World countries, black gays who know most of the babies who die are black tend to get annoyed.

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However, Barney Frank, the gay congressman, sees it as "left romanticism" to suggest that gay activists should carry the banner for other social causes or disadvantaged groups.

"Most people," said Frank, "get involved in politics to defend their own interests. You hope it will be as broadly defined as possible . . . But if the assertion is that gays and lesbians have an obligation to be radical social reformers and restructure American society, that's nonsense."

Yet others say that how the gay community has responded to the greatest medical crisis of the 20th century has political implications far beyond "special interests."

"We have created institutions for dealing with the sick and dying," Mixer said, "that are revolutionary and will benefit society for years to come."λ

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Here are a few other stories that the media, for the most part, missed or misreported:

1. Dinkins' appearance at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, which was attended by a standing-room only throng. Dinkins gave an impassioned speech affirming his support of gay issues. The papers ignored the rally. WABC aired tape of Dinkins outside the Center, but the voice-over reported simply that Dinkins had been campaigning "in Greenwich Village."

2. Dinkins' appearance, two days before the election, at the Human Rights Campaign Fund's annual dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria. WABC showed a brief clip of Dinkins shaking hands with Elie Wiesel (with whom he shared the podium), while the voice-over stated "Dinkins courted the important Jewish vote at a human rights dinner in midtown!" *The New York Times* covered the event but failed to mention that HRCF is a gay organization (although an Op-Ed piece later in the week did).

3. Candidates' positions on our issues (primary coverage). Of the city's dailies, the *Daily News* alone provided the Democratic and Republican candidates'

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7. Finally, with the exception of the *Village Voice* (which has a large number of openly gay editors and reporters), the progressive press wasn't much better. A post primary story in *The Nation* titled "Gotham Rainbow" noted that in New York City's Democratic mayoral primary David Dinkins won more than 90% of the black vote, more than 50% of the Hispanic vote and more than 25% of the Jewish and white Catholic vote. Unreported was the fact that gays and lesbians were also part of the Dinkins coalition and that Dinkins received over 60% of their vote.

The pattern is clear; the media as a whole simply refused to validate our existence as a legitimate "minority" group.

This was made explicit when GLAAD asked *Newsday* how they would have covered the campaigns of the first blacks for the Council, or the first Hispanic candidates, from districts with large minority populations. Would so little recognition have been given to the historic importance of these races? Notwithstanding a solitary article on gay voter clout that appeared in July, *Newsday's* political editor Thomas Curan told GLAAD that he doesn't consider gays to be a minority constituency in the way that racial and religious groups are. A letter from *Newsday* editorial writer Joseph Dolman was more to the point: "being gay is not directly analogous to being Hispanic or black Gays and straights often live in the same neighborhoods, attend the same schools and exist as

Partisan Politics: *Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life*

by Warren J. Blumenfeld
and Diane Raymond

Many gay and lesbian activists began to work within the established political system of electoral politics (particularly within the Democratic Party), continuing the reformist or civil rights strategy for social change. People began to work for candidates sensitive to their personal issues and hoped for the time when more open lesbian and gay candidates could themselves run for public office. They also lobbied for statutes protecting individuals on the basis of sexual orientation. On the other side of the coin, they began to expose politicians whose policies were contrary to their collective interest and worked to overturn laws and ordinances denying them equal rights.

One form this new force would take was the gay and lesbian Democratic club. These clubs arose out of the need to channel and coordinate activities and to pull more people into the political process. The first of these was the Alice B. Toklas Gay Democratic Club of San Francisco in 1971. (Toklas

was the longtime lover and companion of writer Gertrude Stein.) Members of this group and the many others soon to follow were keenly aware of the strong anti-gay forces in the country and worked to counter them within the established political process.

At the 1972 Democratic Party Convention held in Miami, Florida, Jim Foster, then chairperson of the Society for Individual Rights and founder of the Alice B. Toklas Gay Democratic Club, formally presented the first open gay rights address to that party. It was covered live on national TV and read, in part:

We do not come to you pleading your understanding or begging your tolerance. We come to you affirming our pride in our lifestyle, affirming the validity to seek and maintain meaningful emotional relationships, and affirming our right to participate in the life of this country on an equal basis with every citizen . . . there are millions of gay brothers and sisters who will say to the Democratic Party, "We are here. We will not be still. We will not go away until the ultimate goal of gay liberation is realized, the goal that all people live in the peace, freedom, and dignity of who we are."

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dential hopeful Hubert Humphrey attempted to delay Foster's speech and were against a proposed Gay Rights plank.

(Jim Foster's address was actually the second time an openly gay person appeared in front of a political convention on the issue of gay and lesbian rights. The first occurred in February 1970 at the Peace and Freedom Party State Convention in Long Beach, California, where Harry Hay called from the floor for the creation of a gay caucus and helped to draft a seven-point gay rights plank which was read to the full membership of the party.)

At the 1976 Democratic Presidential Convention, no speaker was given permission to address the delegates on issues of gay and lesbian rights, though there were three openly gay and lesbians delegates.

To insure that they had more clout at the next convention, the organization Gay Vote 1980 came into being with the goal of pushing for a gay and lesbian rights agenda during the national presidential conventions of 1980. Though having very little influence at the Republican Party Convention (helping to elect only two openly gay delegates, both of whom were committed to John Anderson's campaign), they fared much better at the Democratic Party Convention held in New York City. They were instrumental in the election of seventy-seven gay and lesbian delegates, alternatives, and permanent committee people, and also helped to establish the gay and lesbian caucus at the convention. Also, for the first time, a gay rights plank was in-

The first open lesbian or gay man to be elected to public office occurred in 1972. Since that time, many other lesbians and gay men have attained elected office. A partial list includes:

Mayors

West Hollywood, California
Santa Cruz, California
Key West, Florida
Bunston, Missouri

County Supervisors

San Francisco, California
Dane County, Wisconsin

City Council

Boston, Massachusetts
Madison, Wisconsin
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Laguna Beach, California
Santa Cruz, California
Rochester, New York
West Hollywood, California
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

State Senate

Minnesota

United States Congress

economic equals The issues that separate gays and straights aren't nearly as profound as those that separate other groups from the mainstream." (Ed.: this comment is as racist as it is wrong.)

What can we do? In 1990, every member of the U.S. House of Representatives will be up for reelection, along with many Senators (including our arch enemy Jesse

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What can we do? In 1990, every member of the U.S. House of Representatives will be up for reelection, along with many Senators (including our arch enemy Jesse Helms), several Governors and holders of many local offices across the nation. No longer can we tolerate being relegated to third-class "issue-group" status in political reporting. Gay people are historically one of the most discriminated against minorities, and the only minority toward which prejudice is still tolerated by Church and State.

The time is now to demand gay inclusion in election coverage for 1990. This means working hard to organize a vocal and visible presence in elections—and on the streets (and supporting efforts by groups such as the National Visibility Campaign for the Lesbian and Gay Vote). But it also means demanding that the media give us the same coverage as other minority groups receive, and protesting loudly and continually when they don't. And it means pressuring gay and lesbian journalists to fight for coverage the same way black and Hispanic journalists must fight. Working together, we can demand gay *glasnost* and bring the "invisible electorate" out of the closet.

A final note. There is one story all the papers did cover: the sickening homophobia of New Jersey gubernatorial candidate Jim Courter. Not only were his bigoted campaign tactics widely reported, they were also uniformly condemned, and even elicited a *New York Times* editorial. However, almost none of this coverage quoted any of the Garden State's well-organized gay/lesbian political community.λ

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One of the leading forces who helped Foster gain a position at the 1972 convention was George McGovern, who was the Party's presidential candidate. Gays were instrumental in helping secure McGovern's strong showing in the nationwide primary election of 1972. For example, they collected over one-third of the northern California signatures needed to place McGovern's name atop that state's primary ballot. The technique was simple: gay civil rights activists went into the bars and registered everyone to vote, then had them sign a McGovern petition to have his name placed on the ballot. Gays also proved to be effective fundraisers to help fill McGovern's political coffers.

Even with McGovern's support, though, the 1972 Democratic Party Presidential Platform did not include a gay rights agenda. Rumors abounded that backers of presi-

dent influence at the Republican Party Convention (helping to elect only two openly gay delegates, both of whom were committed to John Anderson's campaign), they fared much better at the Democratic Party Convention held in New York City. They were instrumental in the election of seventy-seven gay and lesbian delegates, alternatives, and permanent committee people, and also helped to establish the gay and lesbian caucus at the convention. Also, for the first time, a gay rights plank was included in the 1980 Democratic Presidential Platform and written into the Charter and By-Laws governing the National Democratic Party.

In the 1980 platform, the equal protection clause focused on ending discrimination, especially in the area of immigration. The language read:

We must affirm the dignity of all people and the right of each individual to have equal access to and participation in the institutions and services of our society. All groups must be protected from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, language, age, sex or sexual orientation. This includes specifically the right of foreign citizens to enter this country. Appropriate legislative and administrative actions to achieve these goals should be undertaken.

Another precedent was set at the 1980 Democratic Convention. As a purely symbolic action, the lesbian and gay caucus at the convention nominated a vice-presidential candidate. They chose Melvin Boozer, a thirty-five-year-old black gay activist who was at that time an alternative delegate from Washington, D.C., and president of the D.C. chapter of the Gay Activists Alliance. As millions of TV viewers watched, he addressed the Convention and raised the issue of lesbian and gay rights.

After the momentum gained during the 1980 political season, many gay and lesbian political activists felt that a national organization was needed to encourage communication between local gay Demo-

Minneapolis, Minnesota
Laguna Beach, California
Santa Cruz, California
Rochester, New York
West Hollywood, California
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

State Senate
Minnesota

United States Congress
Massachusetts

Municipal Government
Lunenburg, Massachusetts
(City Clerk, Tax Collector,
Treasurer)
Republican Numerous
Judgeships
Nationwide

cratic clubs and maximize their impact. The National Association of Gay and Lesbian Democratic Clubs was established in Washington, D.C. in June 1982 to help make the gay and lesbian community a permanent part of the American electoral political process.

Not all gay activists are on the left of the political spectrum. For example, one group, Concerned Americans for Individual Rights (CAIR), was organized in the spring of 1984 to influence policy in the Republican Platform of the party's National Convention that year. Most of its small membership is made up of Republicans or Libertarians whose goal is to counteract the hostility toward homosexuality by the party's "New Right" wing and to provide a place for gays to organize. Their approach is not primarily legalistic or combative, but rather they use education to improve the "public image" of the homosexual. In part CAIR's *Statement of Purpose* reads:

It has long been evident that moderate-to-conservative gay and lesbians need a

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Montrose Activity Center NEWSLETTER

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March 1990

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national organization through which they can express their views. Despite the persistence of negative stereotypes, the vast majority of homosexual Americans are decent, productive, law-abiding citizens who contribute substantially to the betterment of their communities. In common with heterosexual Americans, we share the traditional values on which this country was founded, including patriotism, religious faith, personal and economic freedom, and hard work.

Until now, we have been unrepresented by the gay extremists, and misrepresented by the religious right. It is time to speak for ourselves. We will present an accurate picture of gay Americans, reflecting the many positive contributions that we make to society. By this means we will break down the prejudices that oppress homosexuals in our nation today.

As pressure politics strategies increased, The Human Rights Campaign Fund—a gay- and lesbian-organized and operated Political Action Committee (PAC)—was created to raise and distribute money for politicians sensitive to the needs of lesbians and gays and to help defeat candidates perceived as homophobic. In addition, the Fund supports lobbyists in Washington, D.C. to push the Congress on AIDS-related issues.

Any substantial list of openly gay and lesbian elected officials would have been virtually impossible at the time of the Stonewall demonstrations. Due mainly to the

grass-roots nature of the gay and lesbian movements, no nationally recognized leader emerged, unlike other movements. There were and are, however, well-known personalities who wield a good deal of influence, including movement pioneers such as Harry Hay, Frank Kameny, Morris Kight, Del Martin, Phyllis Lyon, and Barbara Gittings; organization leaders such as Jean O'Leary and Bruce Voeller (first chairpersons of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force) and Virginia (Ginny) Apuzzo (former NGLTF chairperson); elected officials such as Harry Britt and, before his assassination, Harvey Milk; Elaine Noble, Gerry Studds, and Barney Frank in Massachusetts, and Karen Clark in Minnesota; writers such as James Baldwin, Jane Rule, Arthur Bell, Rita Mae Brown, Sally Gearhart, Edmund White, Larry Kramer, and Armistead Maupin; poets like Allen Ginsberg, Audre Lourde, and Adrienne Rich; entertainers such as Robin Tyler and Holly Near; scholars such as John Boswell, John D'Emilio, and Jonathan Katz; and founder of the Metropolitan Community Church, Reverend Troy Perry.

By the mid-1970s a grassroots network was tightly in place to facilitate communication and coordinate activities. Lesbians and gays had not only attained "minority" status, but also were well on their way to constituting a genuine political constituency. In the area of pressure politics, their voice was becoming louder. The voice would be sorely tested in the 1980s.

Conclusion

Gay historian and political theorist Dennis Altman tells the story of a San Francisco Gay Pride March in 1981 in which he overheard two gay men complaining about the presence of so many overtly political slogans. This story suggests that, though gay and lesbian people have been politically active in a variety of contexts, many others do not make political activity a high priority in their lives. Indeed, if it is true that one out of every ten people is gay, then it is likely that only a very small percentage of gay people are actively and visibly political.

But at the same time, one should note that this is probably true in all minority communities in which a small fraction of the members of the group are activist. Being politically active requires that one be able to undertake certain sorts of risks, for the political arena is first and foremost a public one. For many gay and lesbian people who

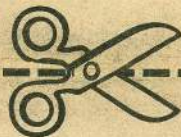
lack job protections, rights to child custody, or are not "out" to their families, it is simply not possible to engage in political activism. Further, political activity should not be construed in an overly narrow way, that any open affirmation of homosexuality in a predominantly heterosexual society is a political act. Finally, the fact that there are so many openly lesbian and gay organizations, political groups, and service agencies testifies to the success of these political struggles. Indeed, the sense of identity and community which has grown out of this movement, though taken for granted today by some, is a radical change from the early days prior to the homophile movement where gay people felt alone, isolated, and starved for culture.

Though gay people may disagree about political strategies for liberation, there is nonetheless a gay and lesbian identity, or, as sociologists refer to it, a "consciousness of kind."λ

“QUOTABLES”

Country singer **k. d. lang** says she'll keep her androgynous look, thank you, even if that does mean fewer record sales. "The country industry is traditional regarding the looks and roles of men and women," lang says. But "it would be detrimental for me to compromise. I sing because of the way I am. I don't want to endanger my soul and my voice because of my physical looks. It wouldn't be worth it." How the spiky-haired singer describes her look: "I like to pretend I'm a farmer and sort of dress for chores ... always ready to feed the cows, drive the tractor, fix the truck."λ

Free listing of community events
in the MAC NEWSLETTER

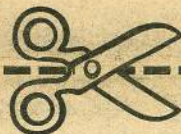


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Free listing of community events in the MAC NEWSLETTER **CALENDAR**

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