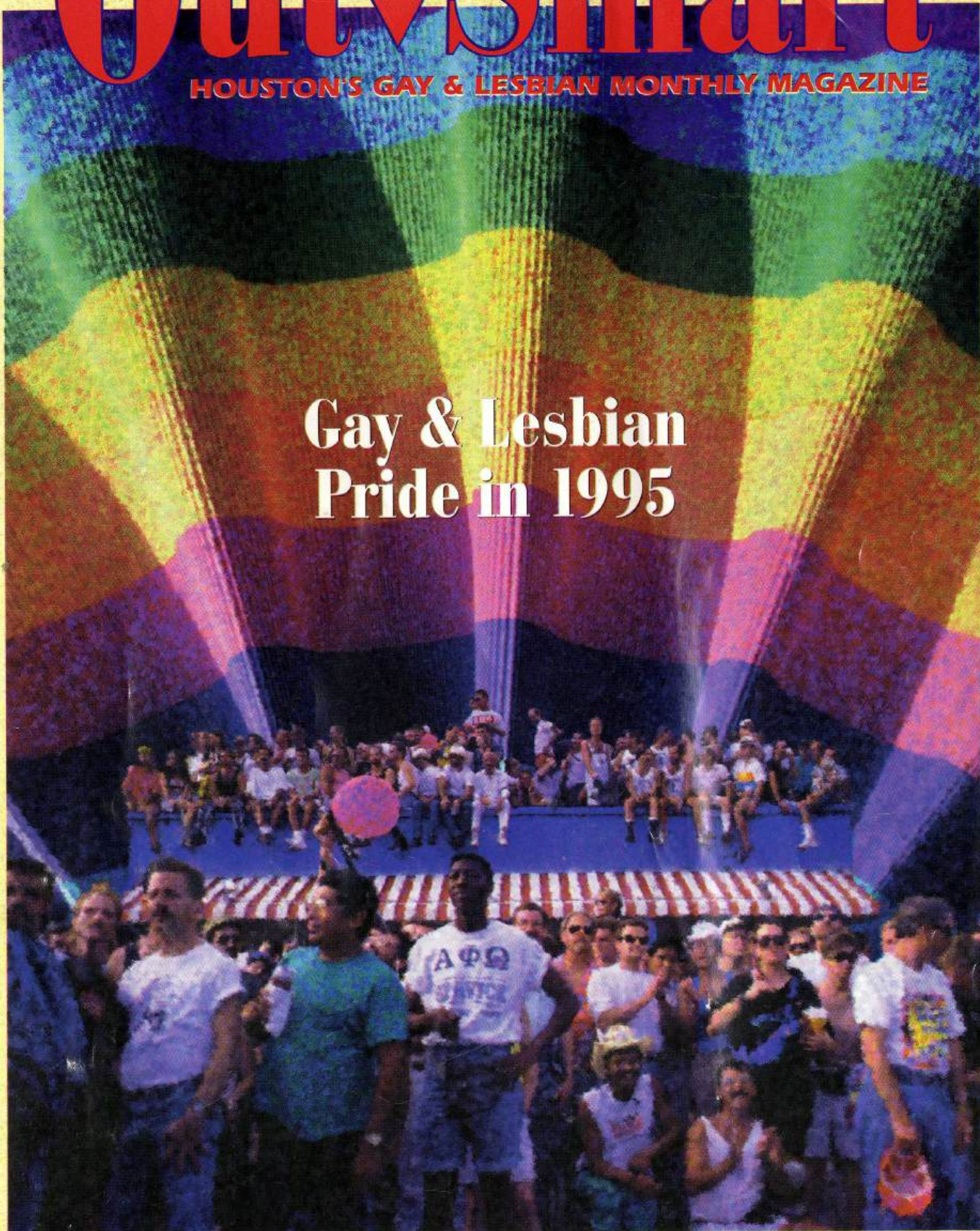


Volume 2 ▼ Issue 5 June 15 - July 14, 1995 Complimentary Copy

Out▼Smart

HOUSTON'S GAY & LESBIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Gay & Lesbian Pride in 1995



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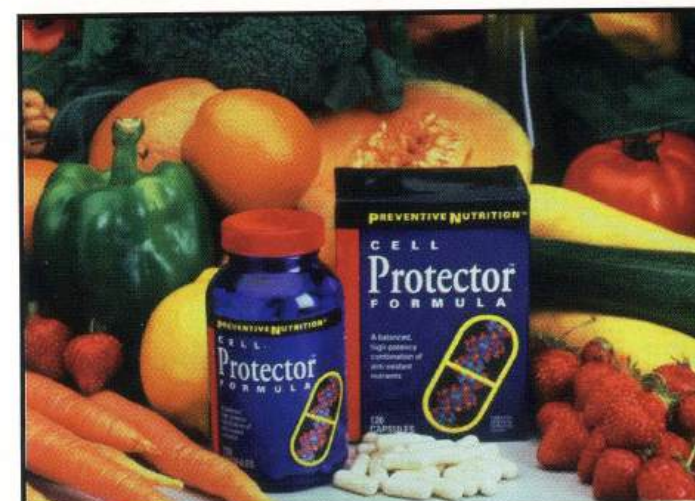
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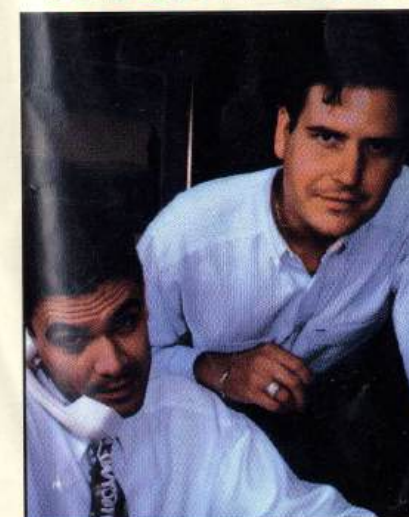
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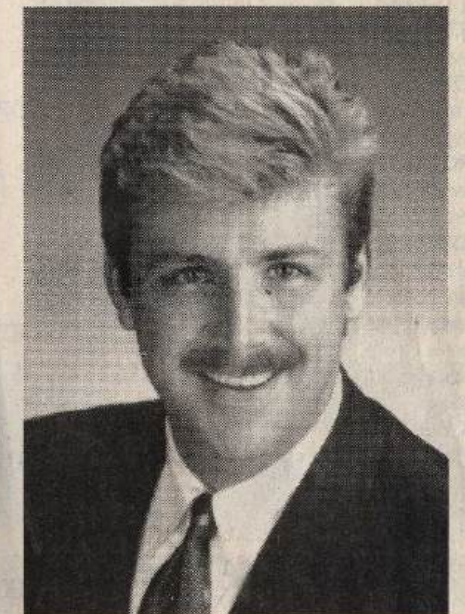
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

OutSmart provides positive information to gay men, lesbians, and their associates to enhance and improve the quality of our lives. Our goal is to build a bridge of communication and understanding between cultural and social communities that are separated by traditions of ignorance and misinformation, thus creating a healthier community for us all.

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OutSmart

HOUSTON'S GAY & LESBIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Volume 2, Issue 5 June 15-July 14, 1995

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BAD MOTHER EARTHA 32

Steven Foster beatifies long-time patron saint to our community and legendary chanteuse Eartha Kitt

SILENCE TO CELEBRATION: A GUIDE TO PRIDE 36

Everything you need to know to get the most out of Houston's Gay/Lesbian Pride Week '95.

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Clinical psychologist and political social worker Michael D. Wilson discusses the gay man's legacy of denial and dysfunction.

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ON THE COVER:

Gay and Lesbian Pride in 1995
Parade Watchers: photo by
Theresa DiMenno Photography (713) 862-4604
Rainbow Fan: photo by Blase DiStefano
Designed by Chris Huffman (713) 523-2213

OutSmart Contributors

Steven Foster divides his time between writing for advertising, film, and frequent contributions to OutSmart. He is currently working on his second screenplay, *Absolutely Positive About Positively Nothing*. For this issue he profiles legendary diva of stage, film, television, and the recording industry—Eartha Kitt.



Eric L. Roland, Assistant Editor, has served on the staff of OutSmart since the magazine's inception in 1994. Last month he profiled Houston Ballet's Mark Arvin and Romanovsky & Phillips, the gay comedic singing duo that will be performing at Spectrum '95's Concert of the Stars. For this issue he writes about the plethora of gay theater in our community during this gay pride month of June.

All of OutSmart's contributors would like to wish everyone a fabulous and festive gay and lesbian pride week! Enjoy, have fun, but remember to drink responsibly and practice safer sex.

Contemporary man

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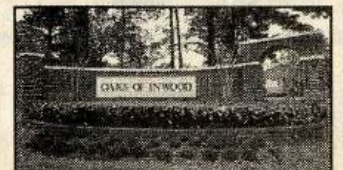
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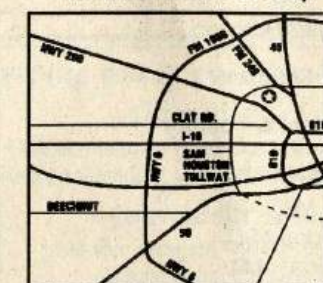
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O U T S M A R T

Communicating Issues

Let me congratulate you in providing Houston with a quality publication. For the past year or so, I have enjoyed watching your magazine become an increasingly valuable tool for communication. In January of this year I moved to Austin, Texas, to assist a local state representative with her legislative package for the 74th Legislature and have relied, in large part, on *OutSmart* to keep abreast of issues important to Houston's gay and lesbian community.

—Francisco Sanchez, Jr.
Democratic Executive Committee, Harris County
Houston, TX

Which Rafts to Rescue

With one exception, the letters in your May 15, 1995, issue ["Inclusion, not Exclusion," #4] condemning Dale Carpenter's column on transgender matters ["The Uneasy Case for Limits," April, #3] were unnecessarily vicious and substantively vacuous.

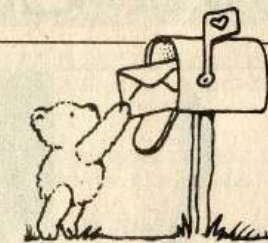
Mitchell Katine labels Dale Carpenter as an oppressor of fellow minorities and a separatist; Christopher Bacon calls Dale a Darwinian and chides him for pandering to the transgendered community (hello?); Robert Rosenberg dismisses Dale as someone who never gets out of his own office; Latisha Frederick, in an embarrassing misinterpretation, accuses Dale of calling on transgendered people to abandon their own goals; and Dee McKellar ends the litany with the judgment of "morally bankrupt." Only one writer, Scott Tillinghast, goes to the trouble of raising an actual argument, i.e., that the gay and lesbian community has a "particular affinity" with the transgendered community which necessitates joint action.

The terms employed by most of the letter writers do not contribute to debate. Perjorative like "oppressor," "separatist," and "racist" are too often used simply to silence discussion. Reactionary people cling to these words with talismanic fervor whenever they don't know what else to say in response to uncomfortable issues.

If, as Christopher Bacon admits, "it will be harder (perhaps much harder) to get pro-gay legislation passed if we insist on the inclusion of the transgendered," are we to casually disregard that consequence in favor of scrupulous political correctness? Is process more important than result? Should our goal be for all sexual minorities to (a) go through the barricade of societal intolerance at the very same time, or (b) go through that barricade as soon as possible, in whatever sequence best suits that purpose?

The kicking-off-the-raft analogy is inaccurate. In typical group-oriented fashion, the analogy consolidates gays and lesbians into one person on the fabled raft, and transgendered people into the other person—the one who gets kicked off. The scene naturally appears evil or, at best, "Darwinian."

Much to the contrary, gays and lesbians and bisexuals and transgendered are all individuals, and



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Got something to say? Send your
comments, suggestions, lucky lotto
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they are on a multitude of rafts. The question for activists is not whom to kick off, but whom to save at a given moment.

The activist who truly deserves to do the most good in the least amount of time will have to consider which raft is closer to shore. It would obviously be foolish for you to bypass a raft that is within your means to rescue for the sake of another one that you have no realistic hope of saving with your limited resources. Or to disregard your own limitations and take on too many rafts at once, endangering all concerned.

Reasonable minds may differ as to which raft is, in fact, closer to shore, or as to the extent of the resources available for rescue efforts. Only unreasonable minds, however, will ignore this question or condemn the one who dares to raise it.

—Bryan P. Vezey
Houston, TX

I applaud the contents of Dale Carpenter's article. His position, I believe, would be reconfirmed by many in the gay community. The feature story should be "must" reading, combined with the story

in *Esquire* (April, 1995, p. 105). It gives us an opportunity to understand the position of transgenders.

There is room for us to hear them out. His article assists us in the process.

—Jerry Furman
Houston, TX

See Dale Carpenter's "reply to the critics" on page 16.—Ed.

OutSmart Meets The Advocate

I was so glad you had time for a meeting when I was in Houston. I had such a nice time with you and your staff. Great group of talented, enthusiastic individuals.

Thanks for taking the time to educate me about Houston and the gay/lesbian community. Obviously, y'all and *OutSmart* are integral parts of what is happening there. You are attracting a lot of attention and a lot of respect. Thanks for everything you're doing to make certain that Houston is more informed about who we are, and at the same time, making certain that we are more informed about who we are.

It was fun to meet you. Remember, if you're ever in LA and have time, I'd welcome the opportunity to get together. Take care and good luck!

—Stephanie K. Blackwood
Associate Publisher, *The Advocate*
Los Angeles, CA

Living in Redneck Country

Thank goodness for this magazine. I lived in southwest Houston for many years, but now I live in East Texas, the "redneck capital." I truly miss the community and all the "happenings."

—Name withheld
Groveton, TX

Corrections

In the May 1995 issue, credit was not given to the photographers for the Feinberg/Pratt article. The Leslie Feinberg photo was by Bill Hackwell, the Minnie Bruce Pratt photo by Doug Lawson.

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OutSmart Calendar

Heaven's A Drag (To Die For), a film about a ghost who comes back from the grave to haunt his promiscuous lover and his new tricks, is a tug-at-the-heart drama that will leave you with an new appreciation for life. Billed as a comedy, the 1994 British film does have its humorous moments but the film mostly features poignant and engaging situations about life in the age of AIDS. Thomas Arkie plays the handsome hunk left behind to pick up the pieces after his lover, played by Ian Williams (pictured here in one of the comedic moments in the film) dies from complications to AIDS. Although the principal characters are gay, the text deals with emotional problems that affect everyone of us at some time in our lives. It is a love story about two youngsters who, facing the tragedy of premature death, are forced to reexamine their relationship and feelings for one another. In turn, it explores bereavement and the associated problems of coming to terms with the loss of a loved one. Directed by Peter MacKenzie Litten, the 96-minute film will be screened Saturday, June 24, and Sunday, June 25, at the Rice Media Center, University Blvd. Entrance #8. Tickets are \$5. Call (713) 527-4853 for more information about Rice Cinema and their summer schedule.



If you are part of a group or have a function that you would like listed in our calendar, please send an announcement by the 1st of the month to: CALENDAR EDITOR, OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon, Houston, TX 77006. Inclusion in the calendar is based upon general interest to our readers, space availability, and the whims of the editorial staff.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND MEETINGS

June

15 WORKS BY TROY BROUSSARD, diverse works of oil on canvas, showing through June 30, 11 am-6 pm, Work of Art Gallery, 2503 S. Shepherd (Artigiani Center), 522-2278.

16 LESLIE FEINBERG/MINNIE BRUCE PRATT, an intimate, intense, and sexy conversation about lesbian life and gender boundary crossing, \$12, 7:30 pm, Hamman Hall, Rice University, 228-0914.

LEORA SALO IN CONCERT, singer/songwriter, 8:30 pm, Cafe Maison.

LESBIANS IN BUSINESS, 6 pm, Innova Building, 20 Greenway Plaza, 529-0077.

17 TALKING GENDER: LESLIE FEINBERG/MINNIE BRUCE PRATT, a dis-

cussion of the new sex and gender theory, \$10, 1-3 pm, Diverseworks, 1117 East Freeway, 228-0914.

BLACK AND WHITE, photographs by people living with HIV/AIDS, The Dizinger Foundation Art Gallery, 214 Avondale.

JUNETEENTH PRIDE CELEBRATION, with Kofi and Tommie Ross, live singing by Charles Dotson and Alicia, sponsored by the African-American Lesbian/Gay Alliance, 5-9 pm, Club XTC, 9200 Buffalo Speedway, 864-2242.

DRAWING BY METAPHOR, with instructor Dolan Smith, free to people with HIV/AIDS, 5:30-7:30 pm, class runs for five weeks, 527-8490.

TONY KUSHNER, playwright of *Angels in America*, will speak before and after the performances, Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Avenue, 228-8421.

18 SPECTRUM '95, Art Expo: 11 am-7 pm in the Exhibit Hall, Business Expo: 11 am-7 pm in the Exhibit Hall, Town Meeting II: 1-5 pm in the Pavilion, Speakers Program: 1-5 pm in Meeting Rooms #2 and #3, Concert of the Stars: 6-11 pm, Astroarena.

JOURNAL WRITING CLASS, lessons on journaling, a creative outlet that encourages a better understanding of your life and can lead to inner healing. Call AFH at 623-6796 for registration/information.

A NEW BEGINNING FOR ALL, benefiting Montrose Clinic and presented by Lady Victoria

Lust, Don Dowden, and Don Gill, 6:30 pm, Chances Bar, 1100 Westheimer.

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION, with guest clergy Rev. Phillip Matthews, 8:30 am and 10:45 am, MCCR, 1919 Decatur, 861-9149.

DOG DIP, sponsored by Pet Patrol, \$5 per dog, 10 am-1 pm, parking lot of Basic Brothers, 1232 Westheimer.

19 STRIVING TO GET THE LOVE YOU WANT, a lecture based on Imago Relationship Therapy presented by Patrick J. Vachon, 6:30-8:30 pm, Montrose Public Library, 4100 Montrose.

20 JANISIAN, folk singer/songwriter will perform songs off of her newest album, *Revenge*, as well as some of her Grammy award-winning songs, Rockefeller's, 3620 Washington, 869-TICS.

DATING & MATING: Erotic Choices in Safer Sex Workshop explores the options of safer sex and sensuality through discussion and games, 7-9 pm, AIDS Foundation Houston, 3203 Weslayan, 623-6796.

21 LEROY AARONS, author of *Prayers for Bobby*, will read and sign copies of his book, 7 pm, Crossroads Market, 610 W. Alabama, 942-0147.

POWER OF ATTRACTION, the conscious and unconscious agenda in the partner selection process with Patrick J. Vachon, 7:15 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 529-0037. Sponsored by Men's Network.

COPING WITH HIV, ALCOHOL & DRUGS, a workshop to explore the challenges facing individuals who use and abuse substances to the detriment of their health, 7-9 pm, Metropolitan Multiservice Center, 1475 W. Gray, 623-6796.

LAMBDA ROLLERSKATING, 8:30-10:30 pm, Dairy Ashford Skating Rink, 1820 S. Dairy Ashford at I-10. Admission is \$5. 942-7406.

22 FOOD FOR LIFE, concentrates on good nutritional habits for people living with HIV/AIDS, 7-9 pm, Metropolitan Multiservice Center, 1475 W. Gray, 623-6796.

23 EARTHA KITT, legendary theater, film, cabaret, television, and recording star, will perform for one night only to benefit Houston Grand Opera Education and Outreach Programs, 7:30 pm, Wortham Center. The concert will be followed by a celebration in the Wortham's Founders Salon. Call 227-ARTS for tickets.

24 BAILE '95, sponsored by Gay and Lesbian Hispanic Unidos, \$20/\$25 at the door, 8 pm, Adam's Mark Hotel, 2900 Briarpark, 225-2301.

A HOT LEATHER NIGHT, benefiting Loving Arms Foundation and presented by the women of F.I.S.T. and Don Gill Productions, 9 pm, Venture-N, 2923 S. Main.

HIV/AIDS CARE TEAM TRAINING, to provide emotional support, companionship, and compassion for the families of people with HIV/AIDS, 9 am-12 noon, Zion Lutheran Church, 3606 Beauchamp, 861-1072.

26 DEB PRICE & JOYCE MURDOCH, authors of *And Say Hi to Joyce*, will read from and sign copies of their book, 7 pm, Crossroads Market, 610 W. Alabama, 942-0147.

THE AGORA, monthly meeting, 7:30 pm, AIDS Foundation Houston, 3202 Weslayan, 729-4267.

LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS of Houston general meeting, 6:30 pm, Sierra Grill, 4704 Montrose, 529-9100.

27 AIDS EQUITY LEAGUE, 12 noon, Charlie's Restaurant, 1100 Westheimer, 871-0092.

DATING & MATING: Erotic Choices in Safer Sex Workshop explores the options of safer sex and sensuality through discussion and games, 7-9 pm, AIDS Foundation Houston, 3203 Weslayan, 623-6796.

28 EXPLORING THE BARRIERS TO INTIMACY, workshop focuses on communication strategies to address issues of intimacy for HIV-positive individuals, 7-9 pm, Metropolitan Multiservice Center, 1475 W. Gray, 623-6796.

WOMEN'S NETWORK for lesbian and bisexual women, 7-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 529-0037.

29 ROBERT BERNSTEIN, author of the book *Straight Parents/Gay Children*, will speak and sign copies of his book, 7 pm, Bering Memorial Church, 1440 Harold, 942-0147.

HIV: A NEW UNDERSTANDING, via a live video teleconference, a national panel of research experts and community advocates will discuss new prospects for battling HIV to stop progression to AIDS, 5-7:30 pm, Westin Galleria, 5050 W. Alabama, 623-6796.

SAFER SEX FOR LESBIANS, seminar sponsored by AIDS Foundation Houston and presented by Nancy Ford, 9:30 pm, Plaza 9200, 9200 Buffalo Speedway, 666-3464.

July

4 HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA! Celebrate the Fourth of July in a festive, safe way.

5 LAMBDA ROLLERSKATING, 8:30-10:30 pm, Dairy Ashford Skating Rink, 1820 S. Dairy Ashford at I-10. Admission is \$5. 942-7406.

SEXUALITY AND THE SCRIPTURES, Rev. Ralph Lasher talks about what the Bible really says about sexual minorities, four consecutive Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, MCCR, 1919 Decatur, 861-9149.

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN POLITICAL CAUCUS, 7:30 pm, 2700 Albany, 3rd floor, 521-1000.

MEN'S NETWORK for gay and bisexual men, 7:15-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 529-0037.

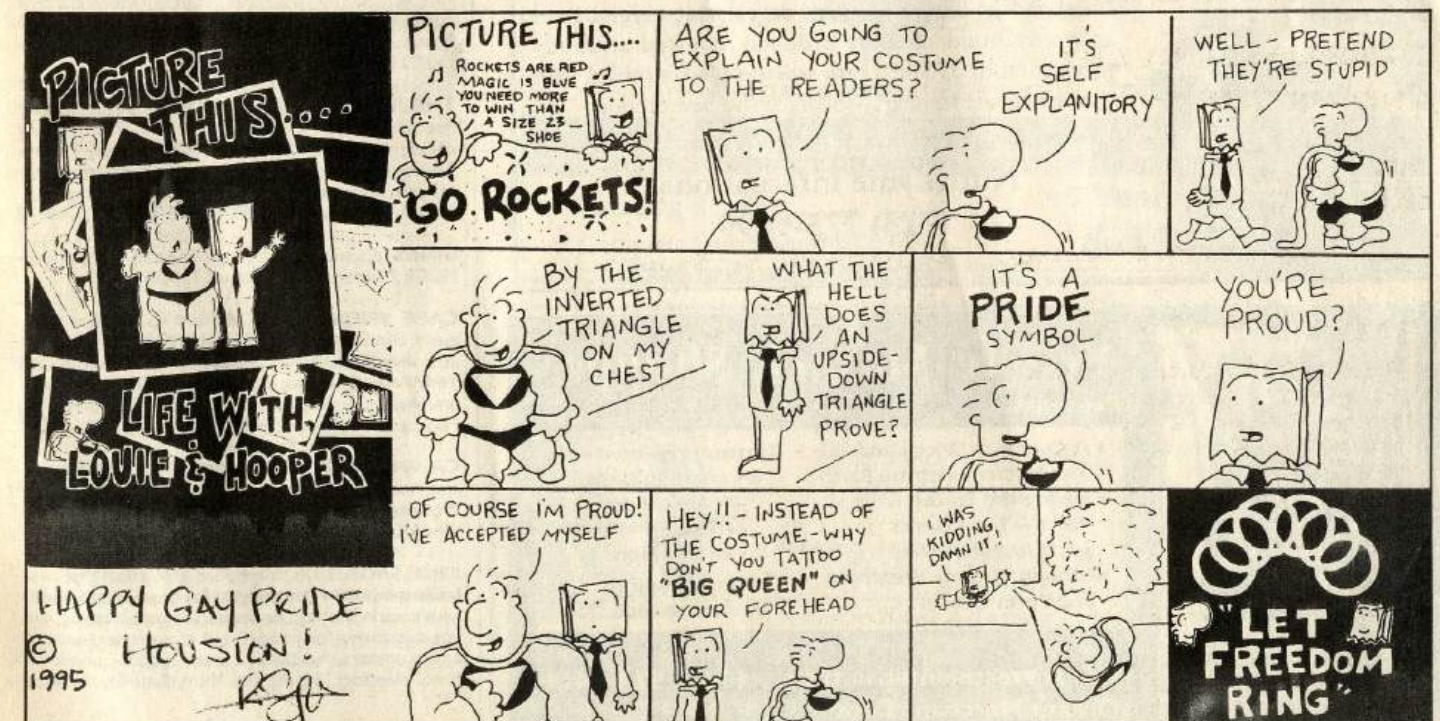
9 P-FLAG general meeting, 2 pm, St. Francis Episcopal Church, 345 Piney Point Road. P-FLAG Houston Helpline: 867-9020.

11 LEGAL PLANNING WORKSHOP for people with HIV/AIDS, 7-9 pm, Metropolitan Multiservice Center, 1475 W. Gray, 623-6796.

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN PARENTS Support Group meets in the library at MCCR, 1919 Decatur from 7-8:30 pm, 861-0885.

AIDS EQUITY LEAGUE, 12 noon, Charlie's Restaurant, 1100 Westheimer, 871-0092.

12 HEALING AND HAPPINESS THROUGH WELLNESS, explores wellness for improving and maintaining health and happiness, 7 pm, Metropolitan Multiservice Center, 1475 W. Gray, 623-6796.





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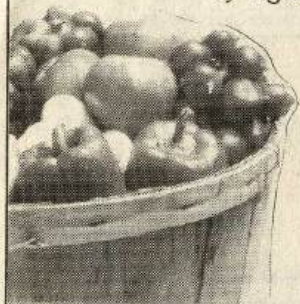
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WOMEN'S NETWORK for lesbian and bisexual women, 7-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 529-0037.

13 MONTROSE ICE PICKS for lesbian/gay ice skaters, 8-10 pm, Galleria Ice Rink, admission is \$4.75 plus \$2 for skates, 629-1432.

COMPLEMENTARY TREATMENTS & ALTERNATIVES, panel discussion on alternative therapies to HIV/AIDS, 7-9 pm, Metropolitan Multiservice Center, 1475 W. Gray, 623-6796.

14 LEORA SALO IN CONCERT, singer/songwriter, 8:30 pm, Cafe Maison.

MINISTRY WITHIN THE GAY COMMUNITY, a workshop by Chris Glaser to explore churches and churchphobia in the gay community, 11:30 am, MCCR, 1919 Decatur, 862-7533.

THE DANCE OF SPIRITUALITY AND SEXUALITY, a workshop with noted author Chris Glaser, M. Div., 7 pm, Kingdom Community Church, 4404 Blossom, 862-7533.

Ongoing

20 SOMETHING, a social group for adults, ages 20 to 29, addresses issues concerning bisexual, lesbian, and gay individuals. For more information, contact Jeff or Cindy at 713/315-6786.

AIDS ALLIANCE OF THE BAY AREA, support group for those infected and affected, Tuesdays, 7-8:30 pm, 17511 El Camino Real, #159, 713/488-4492.

AIDS FOUNDATION HOUSTON, free creative writing workshop for anyone affected by AIDS, with freelance writer Gregg Rodriguez, Mondays, 3-6 pm, Call 713/623-6796 or 713/868-0008 for more information.

AIDS MASSAGE PROJECT, sponsored by AIDS Foundation Houston's Wellness Program, call Jeffery at 713/521-1394 for an appointment.

THE ART LEAGUE OF HOUSTON is offering free art classes for people with HIV. The ongoing course meets every Thursday and Friday from 1-4 pm. Among other media, the course offers lessons in painting, printmaking, and ceramics on a rotating basis. For information, call Patrick Palmer at 713/523-8817.

BINET (Bisexual Network of Houston), Wed., 7 pm, MCCR Church, 1919 Decatur, 713/861-9149.

CAFE ARTISTE Open mic and songwriters night every Thursday, 8 pm (sign-up begins at 7:45 pm). All instruments welcome. Hosted by Cafe Artiste and Tony Asch. Open mic poetry every Wednesday, 8:30 pm. Hosted by Cafe Artiste and Zachary Fox. 1601 W. Main at Mandell near Menil Collection, 713/528-3704.

CARING STEPS is offered to parents, family, friends, and loved ones of someone who is HIV positive. Provided by Montrose Clinic. Call 713/520-2073 for scheduling.

CROSSROADS is a support group for gays and lesbians who are currently in full-time church work, have been in the past, or are pursuing their calling. It is not exclusively for pastors, but is open to chaplains, administrators, musicians or music-, youth- and educational-directors. Meets the third Saturday of each

month for an informal brunch. Call 713/802-1056 for meeting date, time, and place.

DIGNITY HOUSTON, dedicated to the welfare of gay and lesbian Catholics and their friends, meets Saturdays at 7:30 pm and Sundays at 5:30 pm, 1307 Yale, Suite H, 713/880-2872.

THE DIZINGER FOUNDATION offers free classes in art and photography to HIV-positive individuals. The foundation also gives grants to people for their completed works. Please feel free to visit their gallery on Avondale to view the many works on display. 713/522-8660.

EMPOWERMENT FOR LIVING, a weekly HIV-positive and negative support program and potluck supper, Tuesdays, 6 pm, MCCR, 1919 Decatur. For more information, call 713/861-9149.

EN*LIGHT*EN UP, a gay men's spirituality group, Thursdays, 7:30 pm, Sunset Blvd. Call Howard at 713/528-6174 for more information.

GAY & LESBIAN PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP meets to discuss issues pertaining to today's gay families. If you have children or plan to have children, our support group can help with issues like coming out, exposure problems, step relationships, etc. Meets at the Montrose Library, 4100 Montrose, the third Thursday of every month from 7-9 pm, 713/980-7995.

GAY FATHERS of Houston is a support group of gay men who meet every Monday, 8-9:30 pm at Grace Lutheran Church, 2515 Waugh, to discuss problems gay fathers share. For more information or directions, call 713/861-6181.

GLOBAL (Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston) is a social, political, and support group for the university GLB population and its supporters. Everyone is welcome. The group meets weekly on Wednesdays at 4 pm in the University Center. For more information, call Ruben at 713/743-7539 or e-mail at ST586@JETSON.UH.EDU.

THE HOMELESS PET PLACEMENT LEAGUE is a nonprofit animal welfare organization that rescues and rehabilitates stray and abandoned cats and dogs. To inquire about volunteering, foster care, or adopting, call 713/862-PETS.

HOUSTON AREA TEEN COALITION OF HOMOSEXUALS (HATCH) is open to gays and lesbians, age 15-21, meets Fridays from 7:30-10 pm and Sundays from 6:30-9 pm, call 713/942-7002 for location and information.

HOUSTON OUTDOOR GROUP is a social group for gay men and lesbians who enjoy the outdoors. Activities include camping, hiking, horseback riding, canoeing, etc. Day trips, weekend trips (typically a two-to four-hour drive from Houston) and extended trips to places such as Wyoming, Canada, and the Cayman Islands. Call 713/KAMP-OUT or write to P.O. Box 980893, Houston, TX 77098.

HOUSTON PRIDE BAND has formed to provide musical entertainment for the lesbian and gay community. They are seeking musicians of all skill levels and instrumentation. Rehearsals are held at Dignity Houston, 1307 Yale on Wednesdays from 7-9 pm. Contact Russell at 713/524-0218 or e-mail HousTxBand@aol.com.

KOLBE PROJECT is an ecumenical outreach to gays, lesbians, and other sexual minorities modeled after the ministry of St. Francis of Assisi. Potluck and community-concern programs, first Thursdays, 7 pm; Healing Service, second Thursdays, 7 pm; Crossdressers Support Group, Tuesdays, 8 pm; Spiritual Direction by

appointment; HIV/AIDS hospital chaplaincy. For information, call 713/522-8182.

LONE STAR NUDIST GROUP join gay or bisexual men who wish to share nude experiences together. We currently have 72 members in the Houston area. Singles and lovers welcome. Monthly meetings. Nude social events, massage group, and out-of-town gatherings. Call 713/866-8847 for more information.

THE MOVIE CLUB meets on Saturdays, 8-9 pm, in front of a chosen theater and attending a restaurant after the movie. Call 713/867-9454 for more information and meeting time and place.

NEXT STEP is a free confidential program of information and medical testing for persons who are HIV positive. Provided by Montrose Clinic. Call 713/520-2000 for schedule and to register.

PEOPLE IN MEDICINE & HPHR (Houston Physicians for Human Rights), an organization for all lesbian and gay health care professionals, meets monthly, providing socials, speakers, networking, and practitioner referral line. For information or a referral, call 713/523-4700.

PROTECT (People Respecting Ourselves Through Establishing Community and Trust) is an HIV-negative support group providing a safe place to share experiences, strengths and hopes in an effort to remain HIV negative. Tuesdays, 7-8:30 pm, Bering Church Office, 1440 Harold. For more information, call Marty Yaklin, 713/520-7870.

Q-PATROL is an organization dedicated to the prevention of hate crimes against lesbians and gay men. We

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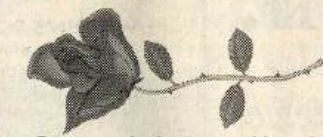
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patrol the bar areas in Montrose and are always on the lookout for volunteers. If you have at least one Friday or Saturday night per month you can donate to the protection of gay men and lesbians, please call 713/871-8519.

RAINBOW RANGLERS is a gay country and western dance club promoting Texas-style couple dancing. The club teaches beginning level country dance every Thursday at 8:30 pm and advanced level dance every Wednesday at 7 pm at the Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos. Dance classes are free and open to the public. Call 713/880-0670 for information.

SOUTHERN COUNTRY HOUSTON promotes pride and unity while providing country and western dance lessons, exhibitions, and charity events to benefit service organizations in the Houston area. Free dance lessons are offered every Tuesday at The Ranch, Plaza 9200, 9200 Buffalo Speedway. For more information, write to P.O. Box 1502, Houston, TX 77252-1502.

SELF-HYPNOSIS FOR IMPROVING HEALTH AND ATTITUDE, hypnotherapist T. C. LeNormand of Behavioral Dynamics teaches self-hypnosis techniques for stress reduction and desired behavioral changes for a healthier, happier life, two consecutive Thursdays. Call 789-0713 to register.

TEXAS GAY VETERANS OF HOUSTON is committed to ending discrimination against gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders in the military services. Meets for business on the first Thursday of the month, 6 pm, 2700 Albany, Suite 304. Write to P.O. Box 66135, Houston, TX 77266-6135 or call Patrick at 713/869-0982 or James at 713/649-8808.



Travis Ammons (right) with George Brock and Jim Coppens are featured in *Inside/Out* Production's presentation of *Orphans*, staged at Houston Skyline Theatre, 1617 Fannin, June 16-July 15. Call 759-0701 for tickets.

TEXAS HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION is a statewide, not-for-profit legal agency that advocates on behalf of the lesbian, gay, and HIV community, and publishes the booklet *AIDS and the Law: Know Your Rights*. If you feel you have been discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation or HIV status and need legal advice or attorney referral, call their toll-free number, 1-800-828-6417.

WOMEN'S ACTION COALITION (WAC) is an open alliance of women committed to direct action on issues affecting the rights of all women, Wednesdays, 7 pm at Toopees. P.O. Box 131148, Houston, TX 77219-1148, voice mail 713/867-9581.

RADIO AND TV

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LESBIAN & GAY VOICES: (Radio) Fridays, 6-8 pm. Features news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM.

GAY 90s: (TV) presented by Monticello Entertainment. Other times are listed in local television guides under Public Access Cable (PAC) channels. For more information, call 949-3119.

OUT! IN HOUSTON: (TV) presented by The Agora on Public Access Cable. Showtimes are listed in local television guides under Public Access Cable (PAC) channels. For more information, call The Agora at 729-4267.

AIDS TALK HOUSTON: (TV) Public Access Cable. Showtimes are listed in local television guides under Public Access Cable (PAC) channels.

LIFE... TODAY: (TV) Public Access Cable. Showtimes

are listed in local television guides under Public Access Cable (PAC) channels.

FEM TV: Public Access Cable. Showtimes are listed in local television guides under Public Access Cable (PAC) channels.

THEATER

ACTORS THEATRE OF HOUSTON, 2506 South Boulevard, 529-6606. Through June 25: *The Old Boy*.

A.D. PLAYERS, Grace Theater, 2710 W. Alabama, 526-2721. July 7-August 13: *I Do! I Do!*

ALLEY THEATRE, 615 Texas Ave., 228-8421. Extended through July 9: *Angels in America: Part I*. Extended through July 9: *Angels in America: Part II*. July 7-16: *The Mousetrap*. July 21-August 6: *I Hate Hamlet*.

THE COMPANY ONSTAGE, 536 Westbury Square, 726-1219. June 23-July 29: *The Fantasticks*.

THE COMPANY WE KEEP, New Heights Theater, 339 West 19th, 523-9000. July 5-31: *Me and Jezebel*.

DIVERSEWORKS, 1117 East Freeway, 223-8346. June 23-24: *unconscious studies* and *The Weekend*.

GOAT SONG, at Stages, 3201 Allen Parkway, 529-5960. June 19-June 23: *They Called Him Michael: A Murder Mystery With a Twist*.

GALVESTON ISLAND OUTDOOR MUSICALS, Amphitheatre at West Beach, Galveston, 1-800-54-SHOWS. Through June 24: *Brigadoon*. June 28-July 29: *Brigadoon*. At The Grand 1894 Opera House—July 6-23: *Monky Business*. July 27-August 13: *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.

THE GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY, Wortham Center, 627-3570 or 236-8310. July 14-23: *Trial by Jury* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

THE GROUP THEATRE WORKSHOP, 3722 Washington, 522-2204. June 9-July 1: *Soul Survivor*.

HOUSTON BROADWAY SERIES, Jones Hall, 629-3700. June 13-18: *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. July 11-23: *Busker Alley*. July 16-September 2: *Miss Saigon*.

INSIDE/OUT PRODUCTIONS, Houston Skyline Theatre, 1617 Fannin, 9th floor, 759-0701. June 16-July 15: *Orphans*.

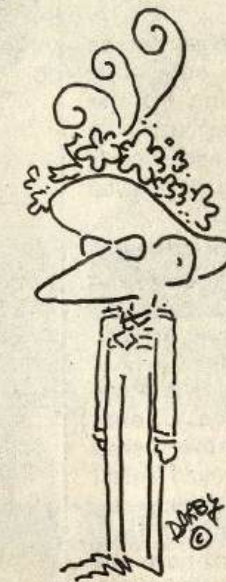
KAPLAN THEATRE, 5601 South Braeswood, 551-7255. June 10-25: *Conversations With My Father*.

MAIN STREET THEATRE, 2540 Times Blvd., 524-6706. June 1-July 1: *Waiting for a Kiss*.

THEATRE LAB HOUSTON, 1706 Alamo, 868-7516. Through June 24: *The Destiny of Me*.

THEATRE SUBURBIA, 1410 W. 43rd, 682-3525. June 2-July 1: *Busbody*. July 21-August 26: *Only an Orphan Girl*.

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Does Jennifer Beals (dancing here in 1983's *Flashdance*) do gay dances?

LARRY KING

(*Entertainment Weekly*, 6/9/95, Bruce Fretts)

Fretts: How would you rate Marlon Brando as a kisser?

King: He's the only man who has ever kissed me on the lips, including family members. I'm a confirmed heterosexual. And I would have to say that I've been thinking about him ever since.

ELIZABETH MONTGOMERY

(*The Advocate*, 7/30/92, R. L. Pela)

Pela: Are you concerned that your involvement in the gay-pride parade will lead people to believe you're a lesbian?

Montgomery: [Laughing] I'm really not worried about that. There are bigger things to worry about. Like the presidential election and finding a cure for AIDS. I did the parade in support of Dick [Sargent, her costar on *Bewitched*]. I mean, in the end, didn't we all?

RUPERT EVERETT

(*Out*, Fall 1992, Brad Gooch)

"The only group I want to be part of is the group of humanity," says Everett by way of expressing his preference for playing complicated characters. "Our sexuality—what makes your cock go hard—is like the surface of what is really going on inside of us.... Put a gay guy with a mustache and a shaved head and a pair of chaps on a desert island with a gay woman and they'd be having sex probably after three months. We don't have personality like we think we have."

Does Rupert Everett (seen here in 1985's *Dance With a Stranger*) have a dual personality?



JENNIFER BEALS

(*Out*, 10/94, by Linda Simpson)

"At Yale the gay dances were the only ones worth going to. The people were much more politically and socially aware, and they played better music."

SHIRLEY MACLAINE

(*The Advocate*, 2/18/86, Kim Garfield)

"Like I told *The Advocate* once, years ago...well, they asked me how I would feel if I were in a lesbian relationship. And I said, 'Gee...I don't have any objection to it except that I don't have the time to have but one good fuck a week with a man!'"

MORRISSEY

(formerly of The Smiths) (*Details*, 4/94, William Shaw)

"Do you mind if I smoke?" I ask. "I don't mind if you do, as long as you don't light that cigarette." "That's okay. If you'd rather I didn't..." "I'd rather you didn't. I don't want to sound like an old prune, but if I get cancer, will you drive me to the hospital?"

SANDRA BERNHARD

(*The Advocate*, 12/15/92, Lily Burana)

"Gays and lesbians have taken on body piercing as a public sport lately. I have no problem with piercings, but it would just be nice to combine body piercing with a nice game of mah-jongg or something...."

Queer Quotes

Compiled by
Blaise DiStefano



Does Shirley MacLaine (seen here in 1986's *Out on a Limb*) have enough time to be a lesbian?

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

(*Details*, 5/95)

"With the world's second-highest percentage of gay residents per capita (after San Francisco), Sydney is rapidly becoming the gayest city on earth. Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, which began in 1978 as a protest march, is now Australia's largest annual tourist event, bringing an estimated \$27 million to the economy. In Australia as a whole, gays are ten times as likely to have graduated from college, and they earn an average of 10 percent more than their straight countrymen. As in America, businesses are learning to tap into gay spending power: A consulting firm recently hosted a conference in Sydney called Chasing the Pink Dollar."

What would Sandra Bernhard (pictured here in 1986's *Sesame Street Presents: Follow That Bird*) like to combine with body piercing?



SARAH JESSICA PARKER

(*The Advocate*, 8/25/92, Mark Miller)

Miller: ...Who will be your bridesmaids [when you get married]?

Parker: Oh, my friends Eric and Adam are definitely two of my bridesmaids. I'm not kidding! They don't have to wear taffeta gowns, but they definitely have to be by my side.

When and if she ties the knot with boyfriend Matthew Broderick, will Sarah Jessica Parker (pictured here in 1991's *L.A. Story*) have bridesmaids?



GREEN DAY & PANSY DIVISION

(*Entertainment Weekly*, 12/23/94, Jeff Gordinier)

"[T]he band does what it can to rebel. Green Day aimed a spitball from the perch in the stratosphere when they asked Pansy Division, an explicitly gay trio, to open recent gigs, giving arenas full of teenybopper punks a heady wallop of homoerotic popcore. The message, says Pansy Division's frontman, Jon Ginoli: 'We're not going to placate those mainstream people, so we're going to get Pansy Division to wake people up.'"

JAN HOOKS

(*The E! Channel*, 2/95, "Q&A" hosted by Eleanor Mondale)

Q&A: If you could be someone of the opposite sex for one day, who would you be and what would you do?

Hooks: I'd probably go to a gay bar and look for a man.

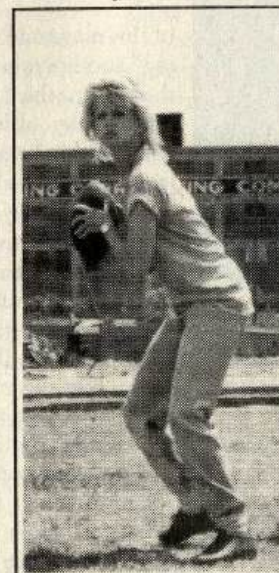
GOLDIE HAWN

(*The E! Channel*, 10/94, reported by Steve Kmetko)

Kmetko: National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's 4th Annual Benefit attended by Goldie Hawn and Ralph Fiennes in L.A.: The task force is dedicated to raising awareness of human rights issues that affects gays and lesbians. The event honored Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota for his stance on gay and lesbian rights.

Hawn: We are all born Americans, and we were told we had all the freedoms that that constitution promised us. So I'm here tonight defending that.

Does Goldie Hawn (seen here in 1986's *Wildcats*) also play ball with National Gay/Lesbian Task Force?



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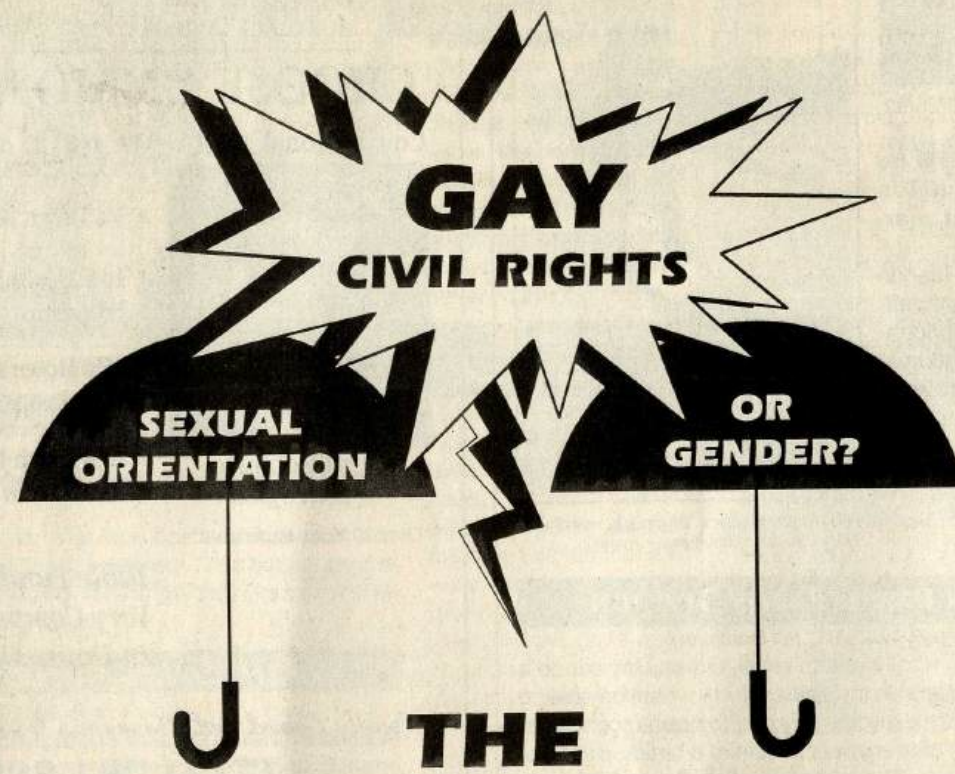
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GAY CIVIL RIGHTS

THE UNEASY CASE FOR LIMITS: A Reply to the Critics



by Dale Carpenter

In April, I argued in this column ("The Uneasy Case for Limits," *OutSmart*, 4/95) that the gay civil rights movement should resist the growing demands from some activists for the full incorporation of transgender issues into gay civil rights organizations, marches, conferences, and other aspects of the movement. I relied principally on two arguments to support that conclusion. First, I argued that issues related to gay civil rights are sufficiently distinct from issues related to transgender civil rights to justify the existence of different movements devoted primarily to advancing one or the other. Second, I argued that, as a matter of strategy and political reality, it would be self-defeating to insist on the incorporation of the transgender cause into *all* gay civil rights legislation and initiatives. The April article welcomed transgender *people* into the gay civil rights movement, but concluded that we should focus on *gay* civil rights.

The April article drew a torrent of hyperbole and name-calling in the form of letters to the editor published in the May issue

of this magazine. One letter said that I was "oppressing" another minority; another letter compared me to the Pope; a third suggested that I spend far too much time in my office (I wholeheartedly agree). Most charged that I was "excluding" transgendered people from the gay civil rights movement. On the contrary, the April article had nothing whatsoever to do with *who* should be in the movement; it had everything to do with *what* the movement is fundamentally about. None of the letters confronted that core issue, except to recite empty platitudes about "diversity" and "inclusion." Indeed, the letters illustrate the very intellectual laziness that has sucked us into this mess to begin with.

Only Sarah DePalma, a transgender activist, has attempted a serious reply ("Gender Outlaws," *OutSmart*, 5/95). Unlike the letter writers, DePalma grapples with the real question presented by the issue of transgender incorporation: What should be the central organizing principle, the focus, of our civil rights movement? DePalma advocates an alternative focus much broader than

a struggle for "gay" civil rights, suggesting instead that liberating people from all gender expectations should be the goal. Why? She concludes that because both gays and transgenders are "gender outlaws" (people who do not meet social expectations about proper gender behavior), we are fighting the same battle. Presumably, DePalma would have us believe that the gay civil rights movement is really a *gender* civil rights movement. Gender, not sexual orientation, is for her the proper umbrella under which we will all fit.

Uprooting gender norms is understandably the central preoccupation of a transgender activist. Profound and comprehensive dissatisfaction with socially assigned gender roles is, after all, the quality that unites the disparate sub-groups comprising transgendered people. As a central organizing principle for a gay civil rights movement, however, it is a questionable foundation. Profound and comprehensive dissatisfaction with gender roles is not, as I argued in April, a characteristic of being gay.

Besides, gender is only one of many possible organizing principles (or umbrellas) we could adopt as an alternative to sexual orientation. We might put ourselves under a banner of general sexual freedom, fighting to remove taboos against many forms of sexual expression in addition to sexual orientation. We might adopt some principle of freedom for all social deviance as our guide. Or we might champion something as amorphous as "cultural pluralism," the apparent choice of one of the letter writers.

There are many more possibilities. They overlap to some extent, but are not coextensive. Each possible organizing principle would "include" many types of people and causes, and "exclude" others. No organizing principle will be all-inclusive. Each may be supportable in some form as an abstract matter. But the issue is: Are any of the alternatives preferable to sexual orientation as the focus of our movement? Do any of them make better sense of the primary concerns of gay people? Are any of them as practical for a movement that must mobilize volunteers, raise money, win votes in legislatures? As I argued at length in April, the answer to each of these questions is no.

None of the letter writers challenges my contention that incorporation of the transgender cause would be a strategic disaster for the gay civil rights movement. For her part, DePalma dubiously claims that transgender activists have succeeded

in pulling some votes away from the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which protects gays but not transgenders. She ignores how many more votes would be irretrievably lost for ENDA if gender identity were included in the bill, or how much harder it would be to sell the bill to those who have not yet signed on. She also notes that some cities and one state have adopted transgender non-discrimination laws. But she ignores the fact that a gay civil rights ordinance preceded the transgender protections in each of those places by as much as 15 years. This suggests that achieving some measure of legal equality for gays will help to pave the way for legal protection for transgenders.

DePalma reserves her hottest rhetoric for what she calls "assimilationists." She charges that assimilationists, made up of gay conservatives, want to hide all the people who are "different" so that other Americans will believe that we're just like them. The assimilationist label is an epithet intended to do the work of an argument, and should by now be a familiar tactic.

If assimilation means that we want people to pretend to be something they're not just so we can be accepted, I don't know an assimilationist on the planet. Our movement draws heavily on the notion of individual autonomy: Within very broad boundaries, we should be free to be who we are. But for most gay people, "being who we are" means leading fairly ordinary lives full of love, hope, boredom, achievement, tragedy, and car problems. Not a very glamorous picture, perhaps, but I think it better describes the way gays actually live than queer rhetoric does. Indeed, it seems to me that our job is to demonstrate to the rest of the world that there is nothing queer about being gay.

Some would distract us from our fight against the tyranny of homophobia and have us instead battle the tyranny of capital, or the tyranny of sexual mores, or the tyranny of gender, or any number of other exotic tyrannies. We must do this, we are told, to placate some false god, like Inclusion, or to smite some imaginary devil, like Assimilation. We should resist the siren call and concentrate our scarce resources on beating the well-fed beast that dogs us daily: homophobia. ▼

Dale Carpenter is a lawyer in Houston and serves on the board of directors of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus. The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily endorsed by the HGLPC or any of its members.

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Challenge Grant Issued for Completion of Montrose Clinic Capital Campaign

A local foundation has issued a dollar-for-dollar challenge grant up to a maximum of \$300,000, the amount needed for the completion of the Montrose Clinic capital campaign for the 215 Westheimer building.

"This challenge lets our donors know that when they contribute to the capital fund, their donation is actually counting twice," said Eileen Hegar, Montrose Clinic president. "For every dollar raised, this foundation will contribute another dollar. This challenge puts the completion of the capital campaign within attainable reach."

OutVote Continues Voter Registration Drive and Elects Board

OutVote, the new voter registration group, continues its first voter registration drive as it gets organized in anticipation of filing for IRS tax-exempt status in late June. At its third meeting on May 17, members elected a temporary board and approved bylaws. Temporary board members are: John Freeman, president; Cicely Wynne, vice president; Ryan Watt, secretary; Steven Emmert, treasurer; and Richard Prawitz, Michael Crawford, David Burleson, Tim Granger, and Pat Gandy, at-large board members. OutVote was organized to register gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people to vote, educate them about the importance of voting, and motivate them to vote in each election. For more information, call 520-VOTE.



Eric Roland

Pictured (l-r): PWCOH's Ray Ramirez and Julie Siska, HGO's Gary Gibbs, Greg Jeu from OutSmart, Pet Patrol's C. Richard Arenschmidt, AHF's Randy Bell, and TAF's Trey Yates.

Milk Money

Pictured here are representatives from Pet Patrol, AIDS Foundation Houston, Pride Committee of Houston, and The Assistance Fund, all sharing a \$3,000 check from Houston Grand Opera's Gary Gibbs. HGO teamed with OutSmart last January to donate proceeds from two performances of the world premiere of *Harvey Milk* to benefit these four worthy organizations. OutSmart wishes to thank Houston Grand Opera, these four organizations, and all those who attended *Harvey Milk* to make this fundraising promotion a successful one.

HGLPC Votes Against the Inclusion of Transgendered People

In a vote of 26 in favor and 16 opposed, a motion to include transgenders in the bylaws of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus failed to receive the two-thirds majority required for amendments to the bylaws. The amendment would have "condemned all discrimination, including that based on gender identity or orientation" and would have required the caucus "to exhibit solidarity and cooperation with transgenderists and bisexuals in their similar mission."

Sarah DePalma, of the transgenderist group It's Time Texas, called the move "transphobic" and said, "We see the refusal to include transgenders in the mission statement as being no different than white country clubs who refused to admit African Americans."

Largest-Ever Quilt Display Set for Columbus Day Weekend 1996

Taking place during the Columbus Day weekend of October 11-13, the 1996 Washington, D.C. display of The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt marks the first time in four years and the fifth time since it started in 1987 that the Quilt will be shown in its entirety in the nation's capital. The NAMES Project Foundation, who recently appointed Mike Smith, co-founder to the Quilt, as director of the 1996 display, expects the Quilt to be over twice as large as the last display in 1992 and over 23 times larger than the first display in 1987.

The time and place of the 1996 display is not arbitrary. Smith states: "Several weeks before critical U.S. elections, when the spotlight is on the President and elected members of Congress, we will display the entire AIDS Me-

memorial Quilt in Washington—to ensure that AIDS and its awful costs are given urgency on the American and international agendas."

Bering Foundation's New Executive Director Gets to Work

William Kersten has undertaken the duties of being the executive director for the Bering Community Service Foundation. Kersten replaced Jody Huckaby, who resigned from Bering in December after five years to accept the position of executive director of AIDS Services New Mexico. Kersten's immediate plans include the completion of the Care Center kitchen renovation and possibly a renovation of the patient waiting areas in the Bering Dental Clinic. He is also interested in collaborating with other agencies in developing a continuum of care for clients.

Montrose Clinic Offers New, Expanded Hours to Decrease Waiting Time

Montrose Clinic has expanded its hours of operation and will restructure its service hours for sexually transmitted disease (STD) treatment, HIV screening, and the Frost Eye clinic to offer these services at the most convenient times for the greatest number of people. More importantly, most services are now offered on an appointment basis to decrease waiting time, although walk-ins are still welcome.

Hours for STD screening are 11 am-8 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and 9 am-6 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Anonymous and confidential HIV counseling and testing is offered Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 5 pm-8 pm, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 pm-5 pm. The Frost Eye Clinic has expanded its hours to 9 am-6 pm on Mondays and Thursdays.

Appointments for services can be made

Executive Turnover for Log Cabin Republicans

During the May 15 meeting of Log Cabin-Houston, the Board of Trustees, after unanimously electing Marion E. Coleman to the position of vice president left vacant by the resignation of Julie Ellis, were surprised by the resignation of its president, Ken Wilk. Gary J. Van Ooteghem was elected to fill the unexpired presidential term, and Scot Hedrick was unanimously elected to fill the unexpired term of the board seat formerly held by Van Ooteghem.

Harris County Health Department Sponsors Contest for Artists with HIV

A contest to design the cover of the 1996 HIV/AIDS Resource Directory was recently announced by The Harris County Health Department HIV Services and The Dizinger Foundation. The theme of the cover should reflect the contents of the resource directory, which includes services that assist persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. The artist with the winning design will be awarded a trophy, as well as being recognized at a public forum. The contest is open to all art mediums, and the deadline for entries is July 15. For more information, please contact Clifton Hazelwood at 527-8490.

Short-Term Counseling Offered to HIV-Positive Individuals

The Montrose Clinic, AIDS Foundation Houston, The Assistance Fund, and SEARCH have collaborated to provide short-term counseling in the Houston metropolitan area for low-income residents who are infected or affected by HIV. Each client may have 12 indi-

vidual sessions with Sally Hubertz, a licensed professional counselor. The purpose of the therapy is to help the client get through the transitions brought on by the disease and return as much as possible to familiar, helpful ways of coping. Services are provided at the Montrose Clinic Community Services location at Montrose and Hawthorne. If necessary, visits can be made to alternate sites including home, hospital, or hospice. To schedule an appointment, call 520-2075.

AIDS Action Ad Campaign Features Houston Woman and Bering Dental Clinic

AIDS Action Council has released an ad campaign featuring the experiences of two women living with AIDS to appeal to members of Congress to reauthorize the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act. One of the ads features Alice C. of Houston who used the services of Bering Dental Clinic, an organization funded by the Ryan White Act. The ads are co-sponsored by Bering Community Service Foundation, as well as a couple of Tampa, Florida, organizations and Log Cabin Republicans out of Washington.

The single most important piece of legislation for thousands of Americans living with HIV/AIDS, the CARE Act is currently up for reauthorization in the Senate. Despite a recent hold placed on the bill (S.641) by Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), the bill is expected to reach the floor for a vote with the 60 co-sponsors necessary to prevent a filibuster. The House bill on Ryan White is expected to be introduced soon.

MCCR Selects Interim Pastor

Rev. James Burns was recently selected as the Interim Pastor at the Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection (MCCR). Rev. Burns comes to Houston from

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Continued from previous page

West Haven, Connecticut, where he was pastor of MCC-New Haven from May 1984 to December 1994. He received his education at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, and his master of arts in religion at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut.

Midwest Men's Festival to Be Held in Late July

The 14th annual Midwest Men's Festival will be held from July 18 to 27 at Gaea Retreat Center, located about 45 minutes northwest of Kansas City, Missouri. Attended primarily by gay men, the festival is a celebration of diversity, personal expression, and community participation. The retreat center has cabin space with bunk beds and acres of space for tent camping, as well as a 16-acre lake for swimming, boating, and fishing. The entire gathering site is clothing optional. For more information, please call David or Jay at (913)268-4661.

AIDS Information Now Available via Computer Access

A pioneer collaborative effort by national, state, county, city, and community-based agencies to provide Houstonians with computerized access to the most up-to-date AIDS

information, free of charge, has been implemented by Houston AIDS Information Link (HAIL). A free service to the community coordinated by the University of Texas-Houston School of Public Health, HAIL is available at several Houston sites, including the University of Texas-Houston School of Public Health Library and AIDS Helpline for Health Care Professionals, the Houston Public Library System's Montrose Branch, the Harris County Hospital District's Thomas Street Clinic, and the Houston Clinical Research Network at Montrose Clinic. For more information, contact Stephanie Norman at 792-4350.

Open House for New HIV/AIDS Housing Facility for Women and Children

His Touch Ministries announces an open house celebration for a new HIV/AIDS housing facility for women and children in Pasadena. The public is invited to view the property on July 10 from 2 pm-7 pm. The five-acre piece of property will incorporate a women's transitional housing haven and a hospice care facility, called Wesley House. Michael House, a six-unit apartment, will provide permanent housing for women and children.

His Touch Ministries, a non-profit organization founded under Christian values, offers various services, including Care Teams, support groups, and educational outreach programs. For more information on His Touch Ministries, contact Randy Cupples at 315-7442.

Foundation Marshals Funds for Lesbian Projects

An Uncommon Legacy Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to funding lesbian-specific projects ranging from medical research to television shows. Founded by Vivian Shapiro of East Hampton, Long Island, New York, in 1990 and incorporated in 1993, the foundation provides an opportunity for lesbians to contribute to their own self-interest without having to "come out," where they may face severe discrimination.

In its first full year as a national foundation, An Uncommon Legacy awarded more than \$134,000 in grants, with money going to New York's Hetrick-Martin Institute, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the Audre Lorde Health Clinic in Los Angeles, and the Lesbian Research Network and Woman Vision Video, among others. In 1994 the foundation instituted its scholarship program, awarding a total of 30 scholarships, \$1000 each, to out lesbians attending colleges and universities. For more information about the foundation, write to An Uncommon Legacy Foundation, Inc., 150 West 26th Street, Suite 503, New York, New York 10001.

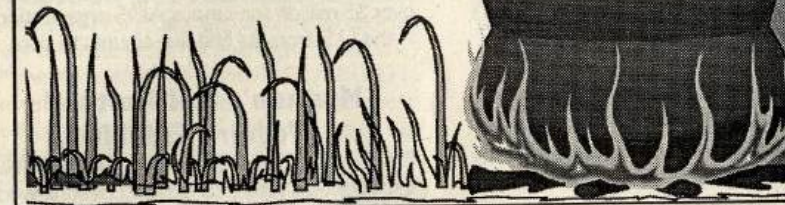
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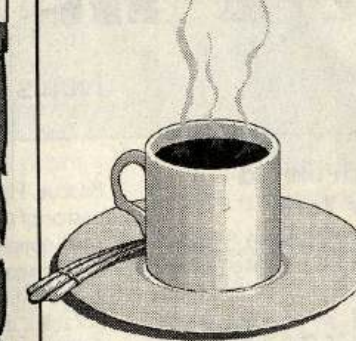
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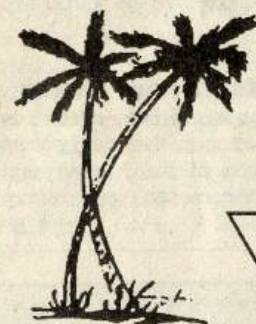
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OUT In Our WORLD

News Briefs from GayNet Wire Service

Dyke March Slated for New York

NEW YORK—New York's Lesbian Avengers is planning another Dyke March, slated as part of this year's New York Gay Pride events on Saturday, June 24. Last year's International Dyke March drew some 20,000 women. The theme of this year's march is "Snatch the Power."

Virginia Library Nixes Gay Pride Display

FAIRFAX, Va.—The head of the Fairfax, Virginia, Library has nixed a gay pride display at the Tysons Corner branch, which has had the display annually for the past nine years. Edwin Clay, head of the Fairfax Library, said canceling the exhibit at the branch library wasn't anti-gay and said it was "time that we move on." Clay acknowledged that the ongoing protest by local anti-gay conservatives had influenced his decision to cancel this year's gay pride exhibit.

Columbia University Nixes S&M Student Group

NEW YORK—The student government at Columbia University has dropped the school's official recognition of the campus organization *Conversio Virium*, that had been organized by Columbia students to discuss bondage, leathersex, and S&M. The group itself defined its purpose as being a place to provide a safe forum for students "grappling with issues of sexuality," but Columbia officials withdrew school support, claiming that the group's stated purpose of being a "humanitarian support group" was misleading and deceptive. "'Humanitarian' relates to the alleviation of pain and suffering," student leader David Linton said. "Any group that advocates the infliction of pain is not 'humanitarian.'"

Phelps Says He'll Protest Gay Day at Disney

TOPEKA, Kan.—Fred Phelps, the renegade Baptist minister who makes headlines by leading anti-gay picketers at funerals of people who have died of AIDS, has said he will conduct a protest at Gay Day at Disney World in Orlando, Florida, on Saturday, June 3. Last year's Gay Day drew some 20,000 lesbians and gay men to the popular theme park and a small group of some two dozen protesters from the American Family Association and Operation

Rescue. Phelps is a disbarred attorney and the pastor of the Wesboro Baptist Church, whose small congregation is primarily composed of his family members. Church members have staged crude anti-gay pickets at the funerals of such notables as Randy Shilts, President Clinton's mother Virginia Kelley, and Pedro Zamora.

Red Hot and 'Generation X'
HOLLYWOOD—Continuing efforts to expand both those it reaches and its fundraising base, the Red Hot Organization has begun

working on another CD—*Red, Hot + Bothered*, aimed at younger "Generation X" listeners. The upcoming album will include less mainstream, fringe rock groups like Noise Addict, Licorice, and The Gifters. Red Hot has raised over \$5 million for various AIDS organizations in the U.S. from its first five albums to date.

Museum's Multicultural Wedding Exhibit
OAKLAND, Calif.—The Oakland Museum has just opened a historical exhibit covering wed-

ding customs from Native American traditional ceremonies to contemporary same-sex holy unions. The multicultural exhibit includes material from the museum's large historical collection of photographs, costumes, and memorabilia, as well as materials on loan from other museums and private collections. The exhibit tracks how couples meet, engagement customs, pre-wedding celebrations, nuptial ceremonies, and honeymoons, with short histories of how the customs evolved. Among the wedding garments, ranging from a Japanese kimono to a 19th century embroidered bridal gown from Turkey, are the matching pair of colorful shirts worn by two men during their wedding.

Mayor, City Attorney Want Gay Couple to Get Marriage License

ITHACA, N.Y.—The *Ithaca Journal* has reported that Mayor Benjamin Nichols and City Attorney Charles Guttman both want the City Council to order the city clerk to issue a marriage license to two gay men who plan on getting married late in June. The couple, Toshav Greene and Phillip Storms, applied for the license in May and ended up meeting with a number of the city's elected leaders, many of whom say they now agree the city should issue the license. Nichols, in fact, urged the City Council to pass a resolution calling on the state to legalize same-sex marriages. It is uncertain whether the license will actually be issued, and perhaps more important, what such a license would legally mean in terms of the couple's legal rights since it would almost inevitably lead to a court case in the state. Greene and Storms say they will go ahead with their planned Jewish wedding ceremony on June 22 whether they get the license or not.

West Virginia University OKs Limited Domestic Partner Plan

MORGANTOWN, W.Va.—The University of West Virginia has approved a school domestic partners policy that will, for the first time in the state, include the partners of registered same-sex staff, faculty, and students. Qualified couples who register their relationship through the university will be eligible for a variety of benefits, including use of school libraries and recreational facilities, child day care services, and other campus programs. The new policy does not currently include health insurance coverage for qualified partners of school employees.

Mixed Ruling from Canada's Supreme Court

OTTAWA—The Canadian Supreme Court has ruled that same-sex couples are not eligible for the same public spousal pension benefits as other couples in the country. The high court ruling, however, also concludes that discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited under Canada's Charter of Rights—the first time the country's Supreme Court has definitively ruled on the issue. The court ruled 5-4 that James Egan and John Nesbit, a British

Columbia gay couple who have lived together since 1948, are not entitled to receive spousal pension benefits under Canada's Old Age Security Act. The court concluded that the refusal to extend the pension benefits to the couple amounted to discrimination in violation of the Charter of Rights, but that the exclusion was justifiable discrimination because the legislature's goal in setting up the country's pension system was to help poorer elderly women. The court also said that Parliament had decided to extend certain financial support to married couples, which the court concluded is by its nature a heterosexual institution.

Buddhist Association to Perform Same-Sex Weddings

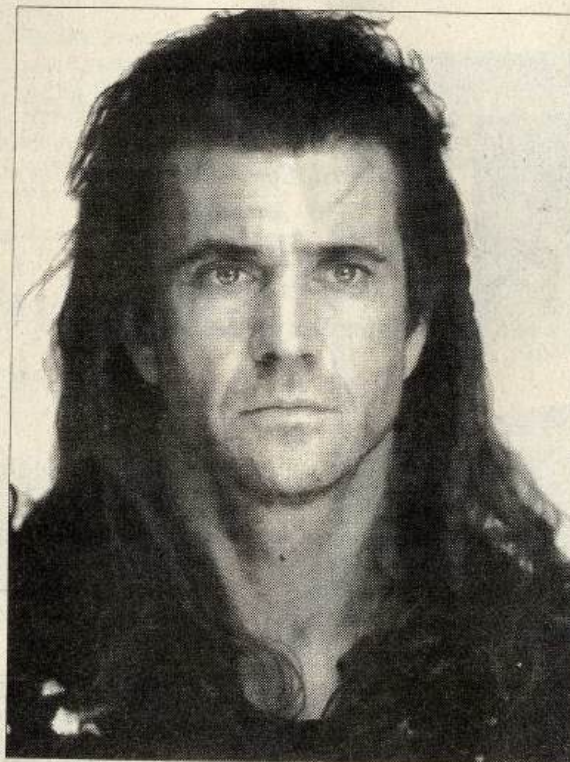
LOS ANGELES—The *World Tribune*, the newspaper of the Soka Gakkai International Buddhist Association, has reported that the religious group will now perform wedding services for same-sex couples, the same as it now does for opposite-sex couples. The newspaper quoted Fred Zaitzu, SGI's general director, who said the change reflected the Buddhist "spirit of non-discrimination and equality." Soka Gakkai International is the largest Buddhist religious group in the United States.

NBA Star's Candid Talk in Sports Illustrated

NEW YORK—Dennis Rodman, the flamboyant San Antonio Spurs player, made the cover of *Sports Illustrated*—in itself not particularly newsworthy, even if the orange-haired Rodman is gussied up in a bright tank top, metallic hot pants, and a dog collar studded with rhinestones. More noteworthy—especially considering the often uptight macho world of professional sports—are Rodman's fairly candid views on homosexuality. The pro basketball hoopster told the magazine that he often goes to gay bars, has no problems hugging or kissing men friends, and, although saying he has never had sex with another man, said, "I visualize being with another man." Rodman is quoted in the magazine as saying, "Everybody visualizes being gay—they think, 'Should I do it or not?' The reason they can't is because they think it's unethical. They think it's a sin. Hell, you're not bad if you're gay, and it doesn't make you any less of a person."

British High Court Rejects Military Ban Challenge

LONDON—Britain's High Court has reluctantly thrown out a bid to allow homosexuals to serve in the armed forces. The court rejected a legal challenge by four service members dismissed for being gay. However, the judge said the British policy probably wouldn't survive much longer because it was "against the tide of history." Jeanette Smith, Graeme Grady, John Beckett, and Duncan Lustig-Prean challenged the Defense Ministry in the High Court, but lost the appeal—although not without moral sup-



GLAAD Takes on Mel Gibson's Latest Film

LOS ANGELES—The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) took to the streets to hand out leaflets outside theaters in a half-dozen cities, protesting the opening of the Mel Gibson film *Braveheart*. Ellen Carton, GLAAD's executive director said, "We can't find any heart in *Braveheart*. There's nothing brave about prejudice and violence." GLAAD said the portrayal of the gay English King Edward II in the film was "a throwback to the classic celluloid 'queer' played for laughs." The film opened at theaters around the country on May 24.



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Out In Our World

Continued from previous page

port from the court. Lord Justice Simon Brown said he was refusing the application with "hesitation and with regret," but said that the decision on the future of the policy must lie with others, specifically with the government and with Parliament. After the court ruling, the four discharged service members and their supporters held a press conference where spokeswoman Angela Mason said they were considering an appeal of the two-judge High Court ruling. The ministry said it was satisfied with the ruling. Defense Ministry spokeswoman Alisa McIntyre said at a press conference following the court ruling, "We are obviously very pleased that the policy of excluding homosexuals from the armed forces has been examined in depth during the judicial review and that the court has concluded that it is lawful."

Gay Albanian Group Wins Official Recognition

TIRANE, Albania—In just over one year, after forming in 1994, the Gay Albania Society has moved from being a secretive, illegal association in what was once the hardest of the hard-line Communist nations, to helping convince the national parliament to repeal its anti-gay

laws earlier this year, to now winning official recognition, the Open Media Research Institute has reported. The Gay Albania Society was secretly formed with an anonymous membership in March 1994. By the beginning of this year, the society had been instrumental in convincing the Albanian Parliament to drop Article 137, which carried a maximum 10-year prison sentence simply for "being homosexual." When the new penal code went into effect at the beginning of June, the Albanian government also extended formal recognition of the Gay Albania Society as a registered citizens' association representing the interests of a class of the country.

Lesbian Parental Case Goes to N.Y. High Court

NEW YORK—The New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, has begun hearings that will decide whether one partner of same-sex couples can adopt the biological child of the other partner. The case involves a lesbian who is attempting to adopt the five-year-old biological daughter of her mate. The two women, identified only as P.I. and G.M. in court documents, have been a couple for 19 years. The women want to have joint parental rights to their daughter because only a legal parent can make certain decisions for a child under state

law. Beatrice Dohm of the Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, which is handling the appeal, said the case was being appealed to New York's highest court because it would "determine whether children with two gay parents may ever have a legally recognized relationship with both their moms or dads." Earlier this year, a lower court refused to grant the adoption, insisting that if it granted G.M. parental rights it would have to deny P.I., who is the biological mother, her rights as the girl's mother.

Country's Largest Gay Magazine Hits the Internet

NEW YORK—Out magazine, the country's largest selling lesbian news publication, has entered the cyber universe of the Internet's increasingly popular World Wide Web that will for the first time in gay publishing history be sponsored by Apple Computer. Out has set up its "Web site" on the Internet in time for June's gay pride celebrations around the country and will include regularly updated pride information from a score of lesbian and gay publications in New York, Washington D.C., Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and other cities. The World Wide Web site address for the publication is: <http://www.out.com> and will include reader forums where Internet readers can carry on discussions with others on the Web.

Group to Protest at Celebration of UN's 50th Anniversary

SAN FRANCISCO—The Coalition Responding to AIDS and State-Sanctioned Homophobia (CRASH), an ad hoc group of activists in San Francisco, has called for a massive protest during ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations' charter on June 25. The group has called the demonstration to protest the failure of global medical authorities to deal with the AIDS epidemic and to draw attention to what it charges is the "denial of basic human rights for gays and lesbians around the globe." Brett Thomas, a spokesman for CRASH, said, "Over 1 million people worldwide are already dead from AIDS. That number will continue to climb if AIDS and hatred of homosexuals are ignored during the UN50 celebration in San Francisco."

Breakaway Slav Republic Bars Gay Lawyers

SKOPJE, Macedonia—In an extraordinary move, the national bar association in the breakaway former Yugoslavian republic of Macedonia has voted to bar homosexuals and alcoholics from practicing law in the small, new Balkan state. The attorneys' group justified its action by concluding that the general public in the country does

not trust homosexuals or alcoholics. The new exclusionary rule applies only to prospective new lawyers. Attorneys already working as lawyers in the nation will be allowed to continue their legal practice.

Annual Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews

NEW YORK—The annual International Conference of Gay & Lesbian Jews will meet in New York, July 27-30, at the New York Sheraton Hotel. Themed "Gay & Lesbian Jews: Taking Our Place in the 21st Century," the conference expects more than 1,000 people to attend, and will feature a keynote address by Yael Dayan, a member of the Israeli Knesset or parliament. The conference will also, for the first time, include workshops addressing transsexual and transgender issues among the Jewish community. The confab is being hosted by New York's Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, and additional information is available by phone at (212) 929-9498.

Second Conviction in Nebraska Killing

FALLS CITY, Neb.—A jury has convicted John Lotter of three counts of murder, use of a deadly weapon, and burglary in the 1993 killings of Brandon Teena, Lisa Lambert, and Philip DeVine. The murders gained national attention because Teena was a preoperative female-to-male transsexual who had been kidnapped,

beaten, and raped shortly before the killings. Teena's gender status was reported in local newspapers after police revealed the information in connection with a bad check charge. Shortly after news reports revealed that Teena was still biologically female, although living as a man in rural Nebraska, Lotter and Marvin Nissen assaulted and raped Teena. After the sexual assault was reported to police, the jury concluded that Lotter and Nissen had gone to Teena's remote home and killed all three people there. Nissen has already been found guilty of one count of first degree murder and two counts of manslaughter in exchange for agreeing to testify against Lotter. Lotter faces a maximum sentence of the death penalty.

Lesbian Rights Group Gets Huge Grant

SAN FRANCISCO—The National Center for Lesbian Rights received a whopping \$450,000 grant from the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation in New York. NCLR is a public interest law group that fights discrimination against lesbians throughout the U.S. The group says it will use part of its new funding to beef up membership, with a goal of 15,000 new members by 1997. Part of the membership drive will include setting up its own home pages on the Internet's World Wide Web where it hopes it can reach thousands of women with access to few support resources.



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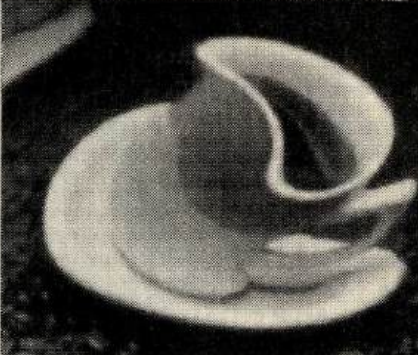


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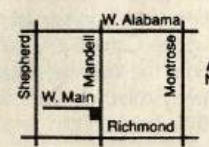
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Out In Our World

Continued from previous page

Rhode Island Legislature OKs Anti-Bias Law

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—Rhode Island has become the ninth state in the country to approve legislation prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation when the state Senate, after 11 years of trying, narrowly approved the measure on a 26-21 vote. The bill, which has already been approved by the state House of Representatives, now goes to Gov. Lincoln Almond, a Republican, who has already indicated he would sign the measure into law. The bill bars discrimination in the state in employment, housing, public accommodations, and credit. Religious organizations are exempt from the state law, and opponents of the civil rights bill attempted without luck to add a series of amendments, including one that would have forced the issue to a state ballot vote and another that would have specifically excluded the Boy Scouts of America.

North Carolina Film Festival Erupts in Controversy

DURHAM, N.C.—Headed by leaders of the county Republican Party and the Christian Coa-

lition, scores of local anti-gay protesters showed up at the Durham County Commission Monday, May 22, to demand that plans to hold a gay film festival in June at the Carolina Theatre should be halted. Virginia Bunton, secretary of the Durham County Republican Party, told the commissioners, "We would prefer that the community not be exposed to this lifestyle.... We're supposed to be protecting our citizens from some things they need to be protected from, and that includes pornography." Bunton said she had seen none of the films slated to be shown as part of the film festival held in conjunction with the annual North Carolina Pride '95 celebration, June 9-12 in Durham. Even so, Bunton said she intends to ask the state Attorney General to preview the films to determine if they are pornography under North Carolina law. The county commissioners ducked a direct attack of the film festival, and instead passed a resolution asking the Carolina's trustees to provide "parental guidance" for films that had no ratings and to consider "downplaying" its advertising for the festival's offerings.

Double IDs for London Transsexuals

LONDON—With typical British sang-froid, the London Transport system has announced that it will begin issuing two ID cards to transsexuals

who are in the process of changing their gender. One card will show the cardholder dressed as a male, the other as a female, to help ticket-takers in the city's subway system. To qualify for the dual ID cards, the individuals must be under the care of a physician or psychiatrist.

Maine Episcopalians Oppose Anti-Gay Measure

PORTLAND, Maine—At its annual convention, the Episcopal Diocese of Maine adopted a resolution opposing a proposed anti-gay ballot measure that will come before the state's voters this November. The diocese declared "its belief in God's love for all people" and condemned "all things which further hatred, division, and isolation among the children of God" in calling on the state's voters to reject the anti-gay ballot measure.

Human Rights Violations Continuing in Romania, AI Charges

BUCHAREST—Amnesty International, the human rights watchdog group based in London, has strongly criticized what it says are continuing rights violations in Romania five years after the overthrow of the repressive regime of Nicolae Ceausescu. Amnesty condemned what it says are restrictions on the rights of free speech, the ill treatment or torture of prisoners and the detention of homosexuals simply because of their sexual orientation. Amnesty acknowledged that things have improved for many people in Romania since Ceausescu was deposed, but complained that government assurance that human rights would be protected had not been honored and that abuses were continuing in the country.

ALA Group Announces 1995 Book Awards

CHICAGO —The American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Book Awards Committee has announced the winners of its 1995 book awards. The top winners were: *Am I Blue? Coming Out from the Silence* by Marion Dane Bauer; *Skin: Talking About Sex, Class & Literature* by Dorothy Allison; *Uncommon Heroes: A Celebration of Heroes & Role Models for Gay & Lesbian Americans* by Phillip Sherm and Samuel Bernstein. The awards will be formally presented at the 25th anniversary ALA's Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Task Force conference in Chicago on June 24.

Canadian Appeals Court Overturns Sodomy Law

TORONTO—An Ontario appeals court has unanimously ruled that a law making consensual anal intercourse illegal, unless the two

people are married or above the age of 18, is a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The three-judge Ontario Court of Appeals ruled that the criminal code provision violates the charter because it penalizes gay men. Justice Rosalie Abella said in her opinion that the law "arbitrarily disadvantages gay men by denying to them until they are 18 a choice available at the age of 14 for those who are not gay, namely their choice of sexual expression with a consenting partner to whom they are not married."

Researchers Report Anti-Gay Experiences Present Added Health Problems

NEW YORK—According to a report in the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, gay men who directly experience homophobia, anti-gay violence, or discrimination are 2 to 3 times as likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, stress-related sexual problems, suicidal thoughts, and other negative pressures. Researchers at the Columbia School of Public Health studied 741 gay men in New York City and concluded that the men who experienced anti-gay discrimination or violence suffered significantly greater mental distress than those who do not. The study also found that those who also blamed their own homosexuality as the cause of the discrimination or violence were even more likely to experience emotional stress. The researchers also found that gay men who had gone through such anti-gay experiences dealt with the stress more effectively if they "felt connected to the gay community."

Virginia Man May Be Ninth Victim in Serial Murder

CHESAPEAKE, Va.—Police have found the body of a nude man in an isolated cul-de-sac where he was apparently dumped. Authorities say there appear to be similarities to the murders of eight gay men in the same vicinity a year ago. No arrest was ever made in those eight deaths, and police had believed the man responsible for the killings had himself committed suicide. Police initially hesitated to draw a direct connection between the 1994 murders and the most recent victim, identified as Samuel E. Aliff of Richmond. But within 24 hours, police officials said they were investigating Aliff's death as a serial killing. Aliff's death comes little more than a year after Raymond Onley Jr., 24, killed himself with a shotgun blast just hours before police arrived at his trailer to question him about similar murders in the region. Police had believed that with Onley's death the string of killings had ended—until now. Since July 17, 1987, the bodies of eight men have been found in Hampton Roads—six in Chesapeake and one each in Isle of Wight County and Suffolk. Police say striking similarities existed in the killings: most of the victims were found nude; most had been strangled; many had evidence of cocaine in the blood;

and several showed signs they had recently had anal sex. Police have said it could be that only some of the murders are the work of the same person or people—or that perhaps the victims were in fact all gay or bisexual, but simply closeted.

British Police Force

Begins Recruiting Campaign

BRIGHTON, England—The police in the British south-coast county of East Sussex have made history in the United Kingdom by becoming the first constabulary in the country to solicit gays and lesbians to join its force. Sussex police have put ads in Britain's gay *Pink Paper* inviting gays and lesbians to apply for some 350 vacancies currently open in the force. While Britain's military forces exclude homosexuals, the country's police services have no such prohibition. Mark Lamb, head of personnel with the Sussex police, said, "Society is coming around to the idea that the sexuality of an individual is no big deal, and we share that view." East Sussex includes several popular vacation spots, such as Beachy Head, Rye, and Brighton, which has a large and politically active community. The move by the Sussex police followed a meeting between John Smith, head of the Brighton Police, and gay and lesbian activists.

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THEATER REVIEWS

by Eric L. Roland

Soul Survivor

Surviving life is a normal, day-to-day task for most people. Surviving life after your lover has died and trying to make it in the world of dating is, on the other hand, an incredible challenge... especially when your lover's ghost has come back to do more than just haunt you.

Thus goes the plot in *Soul Survivor*, a romantic comedy written by Anthony Bruno and currently being produced locally by The Group (Theatre Workshop). Directed by Joe Watts, the two-act play set in Houston runs almost like it was two one-acts fused together, although the characters, setting, and time period are the same and the plots are inter-connected.

In the first act we meet Jerry, well-played by handsome newcomer Paul Nicely, who has spent the past two years mourning the death of his lover, Brian. His home still bears a few memorial photographs of him and Brian, and no one has spent the night in their bed; however, Jerry has tried to make the best of his life in the wake of his lover's death by committing himself to his career and occasionally dating.

Mark, played by Hunter Dutton, who was last seen in *Scenes From My Love Life*,



Survivors (l-r): Paul Nicely, Hunter Dutton, and Colin T. McLetchie.

has been eyeing Jerry at the Ripcord for months and is extremely anxious about actually being invited over to his home for an evening dinner date. Jerry himself is surprised by the fact that he invited a date to his home, but graciously prepares a meal and margaritas nonetheless. Of course, all of this anxiety makes for an even more uncomfortable "first" date situation than usual, as well as providing a humorous exchange of dialogue.

After the usual get-to-know-each-other discussion, it becomes apparent that Mark wants *dessert* before dinner, but

Jerry is more comfortable with being sexually elusive and preparing garlic bread in the kitchen. However, the ice is broken when Jerry, exiting the kitchen, catches Mark trying on Jerry's leather gear. Mark is fascinated by the feel, the look, and the smell of leather and amusingly admits that he has a pair of leather pants—except his are thinner and have pleats!

Mark eventually convinces Jerry to model his black leather vest and chaps—sans T-shirt and jeans, of course—and what ensues afterward is a highly erotic, voyeuristic love scene with plenty of flesh included.

Whereas Act One presents us with the romantic part of this romantic comedy, Act Two runs with the comedy by introducing us to Brian, who has come down from heaven to visit the lover he left behind. Superbly played by Colin T. McLetchie, Brian is quick-witted, almost to the point of being acerbic, and is interested in having one last sexually fulfilling night with Jerry. On the other hand, Jerry is expecting to have another romantic evening with Mark and believes he is having an acid flashback when he opens the door to find his dead lover on the doorstep.

One funny moment after another, Act Two pulls from the genre of films, including 1989's *Chances Are* and 1992's *Ghost*,

dealing with lovers returning from the dead, except this play has a campy, gay twist. By snapping his fingers, Brian performs tricks, such as turning the lights on and off, turning the stereo volume up and down, and making objects "float," to scare Mark into leaving Jerry's home forever. Brian says—with his finger twitching the end of his nose back and forth—that he enjoys being Samantha Stephens.

The play is also similar to the gay film *Heaven's a Drag (To Die For)* [reviewed in this issue], which is touted as being a campy comedy about an acerbic gay ghost who haunts his macho lover. Unfortunately, the comedic aspects of this film, as well as the plot in general, fall far short of the humor and storyline in *Soul Survivor*. The film is much more sad than it is funny and should probably be categorized as an AIDS drama. However, *Soul Survivor* is comedy through and through. Although the end of the play is poignant, it still leaves you with a smile on your face and maybe a few happy tears.

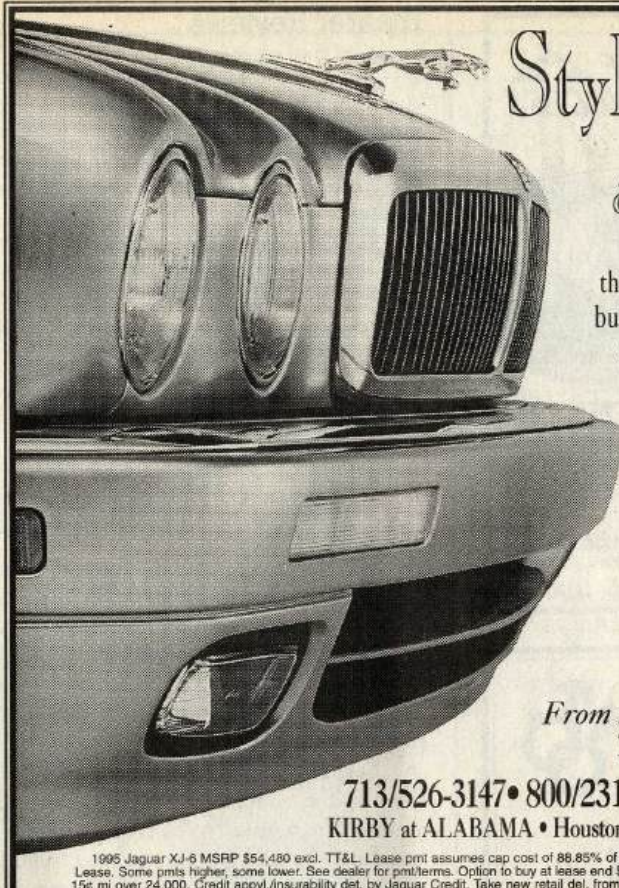
Soul Survivor, presented by The Group (Theatre Workshop) and directed by Joe Watts, runs Friday and Saturday nights through July 1 at Curtains Theater, 3722 Washington. For ticket information, call 522-2204.

Waiting for a Kiss

Love, loss, life, and laughter are the key ingredients in Tim and Kim Powers' comic fantasy. Celebrating the beauty of a loving relationship and the strength it imparts, the play tells the story of a young man who loses his lover to AIDS but finds his own will to live in the most unlikely places.

Kent Johnson plays Perkins, the play's protagonist, whose life seems to lose its meaning with the death of his lover, Bobby, played by Rodney Walsworth. Perkins' painful story, however, is played against a gentle and endearing fantasy world of Bobby's own creation—Tammyland, peopled with characters drawn from the Debbie Reynolds "Tammy" movies. When Perkins makes a desperate escape to Tammyland, Tammy (played by Melody Green Turney) and her housekeeper lead Perkins on an unusual and comic journey of discovery, where he learns that love must be cherished and life must be embraced.

Begun by Tim Powers before he died of AIDS in 1991, *Waiting for a Kiss* was



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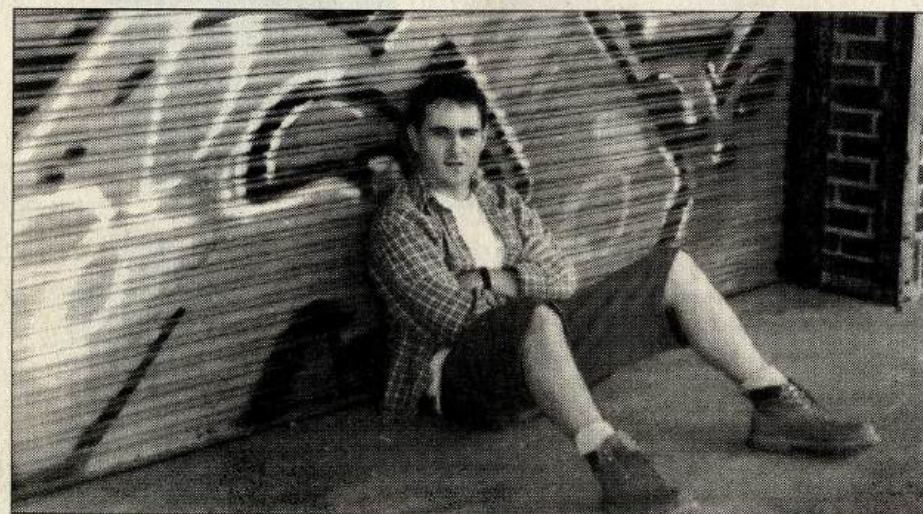
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Playwright/director Travis Mader: unconscious?

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Theater Reviews

Continued from previous page

completed by his twin brother Kim in 1993, when it premiered at Austin College, the brothers' alma mater. The play was also a finalist in Stages Repertory Theatre's Texas Playwrights Festival in 1994.

Waiting for a Kiss, presented by Main Street Theater and directed by Patu Bean, runs Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights through July 1 at Main Street Theater, 2540 Times Boulevard. For ticket information, call 524-6706.

The Old Boy

Written by A. R. Gurney, who enjoys poking fun at the old-boy system that provides entry into all of the right universities, country clubs, and political arenas—closed to most by the simple incident of birth—this 1991 play is a plea for social tolerance.

Set in a posh, ivy-covered prep school, the play introduces Sam, a distinguished alumni who is about to run for a gubernatorial nomination and has arrived to give the commencement address. Played by Kirk Sisco, Sam—who is assigned to guide incoming freshman, Perry, through his first year—has been asked by Perry's wealthy traditionalist mother to announce the gift of a new tennis complex.

When all of the guests have assembled—mentor, mother, widow, and other distinguished aides and educators—closets begin to open, skeletons are revealed, sexual revelations unveiled, betrayals described, and apologies are humbly

and dangerously offered.

The Old Boy, presented by Actors Theatre of Houston and directed by Brandon Smith, runs Friday and Saturday nights with Sunday matinees through June 25 at Actors Theatre of Houston, 2506 South Boulevard. For ticket information, call 529-6606.

unconscious studies: footage from a work-in-progress

From sex to the Internet, Dennis Cooper to Drixoral, and self-bifurcation to shamanism, *unconscious studies* traces the relationship between a middle-aged man and a teenaged boy in a collage of performance, sound, and video written and directed by Travis Mader.

When thirtysomething Pneuman (played by Barry Hall) reads on the Internet an anonymous story called "why i want to fuck dennis cooper," he sends a fan letter to the anonymous e-mail address and gets a response from the story's author, Tony (played by Gregg Rodriguez), a needy and emotional dysfunctional 16-year-old. Gradually their relationship moves from e-mail to phone calls, taking on a pseudo-sexual quality that comes to a head when a distraught Tony appears at Pneuman's apartment late one night.

The evening is one of drinking and drugging, during which video projections show their respective histories—Tony's story is one of abuse and drug problems; Pneuman's story diagrams his bifurcation into the beginnings of schizophrenia. Throughout the evening, each discovers the other holds the key to the final resolution of personal dilemmas.

Originally a long one-act called *unconscious*, playwright Travis Mader submitted it to Edward Albee for the 1994 Albee Workshop, from which he graduated. Exploring the topics of physical and emotional abuse, *unconscious studies* is an unconventional piece of theater that shouldn't be missed.

unconscious studies: footage from a work-in-progress, is part of DiverseWorks' Beyond Desire Gay and Lesbian Performance Series. It runs for two nights only, Friday, June 23, and Saturday, June 24, at DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. For ticket information, call 228-0914. ▼



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Bad Mother Eartha

by Steven Foster



Living diva Eartha Kitt storms into Houston for a one-night-only benefit with the Houston Grand Opera. Proceeds from the show will benefit HGO's Education and Outreach programs, but the show will give something to sing about.

We love our icons.

You know the standards. Marilyn, Joan, Bette, Greta. The Shrine of the Dead Diva. Not content with those, we coronate living ones.

Bette, sainted because she once sang in our bathhouses. Oh-so-PC Barbra who still looks great, sings fantastic, and loves her gay son. Speaking of gay children, Chastity Bono's mother Cher enters the goddess

group seemingly on sheer freakdom alone, but actually because she's been cool as long as we've known her. Hell, we love her sense of fashion so much, we even accept her hypocrisy—she's had plastic surgery on her entire form yet expects us to believe she works out at Bally's and forsakes sugar for Equal. *Right.*

But on the fringe of this group comes another icon, one of consummate class. Eartha Kitt.

No longer a young thing, she is nonetheless ageless. Every feature in her stunning, almost bizarrely beautiful face remains. When Orson Welles first laid eyes on her, he cast Kitt as beauty's epitome, Helen of Troy. Indeed, Kitt's face could launch a thousand ships as well. Wide cheekbones, a mile smile, Siamese dream eyes, with a storm of jet black hair crowning her regal head like a tamed tempest. But the real electricity to Kitt is in her

peerless physique—gams that could send Tina Turner rolling down the river in envy, a dancer's lithe form, sinewy, expressive arms. Oprah slimmed down, wore black leotards, was shot by none other than Richard Avedon, and she wound up looking like some contortionist spider. Kitt slides her slender slip-of-a-girl body into leotards and you start to purr like she does, just not as resonantly nor as famously as her trademark growl. She was and is a class act, a diva worthy of our affections and attention.

Few of the pantheon of preening icons has ever been nominated for all of the Big Four: Tony, Oscar, Emmy, Grammy. Kitt is one of them. And she's bringing all that talent and star power to the Wortham on Friday, June 23, for a benefit for the Houston Grand Opera's Education and Outreach Programs.

While the term legend gets thrown around a lot, it actually carries some weight to it when linked to Kitt. And her embrace by gay culture goes far beyond the cult club smash, "Where Is My Man." She has talent and glamour to spare, and she has never shied away from controversy, overcoming adversity throughout her life and embracing that life's rich diversity. And after all these years, she is still much like a cat. With all the moves, claws, and lives to go with it.

It's one in the morning, and she has just returned to her suite in a posh Frankfurt hotel. She sounds neither fatigued nor spent.

"I'm working here in a cabaret," she offers in her practically patented purr. "I like to keep these kinds of clubs alive, because there are so few of them now. I am supposed to be the Queen of Cabaret, and if there is no cabaret, then how can I be a queen?"

She laughs.

That laugh. It's humble, sexy, exciting, and joyous in one luscious vocal package. And if you want to get her really excited, inquire about her upcoming HGO show. Is she looking forward to it?

"Of course I am," Kitt exclaims. Then, true to her nature, she offers a tease, just enough to spurn you. "I cannot tell you exactly the program," she coos. But then, just as she pushes you away with a subtle, coy shove, she lures you right back in. "But, naturally, [there will be] some old songs, ones the public and I have gotten acquainted with one another through. And maybe some songs we have never heard before."

Anything special?

"Of course," growls Kitt. "That's always included."

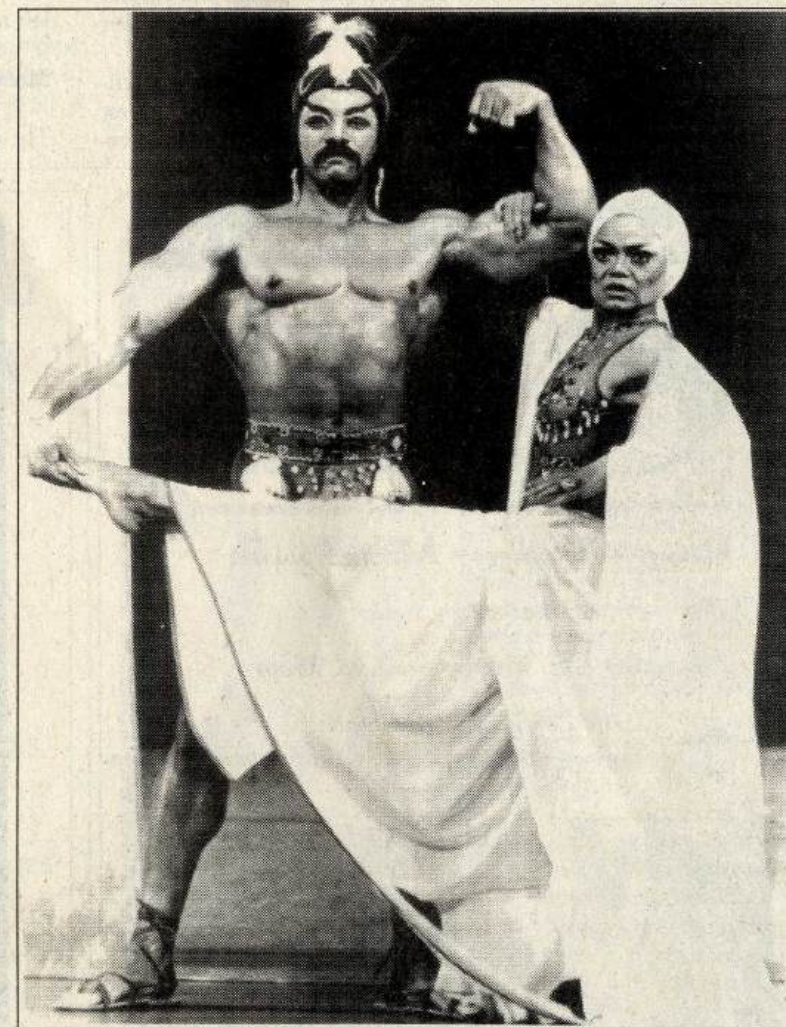
Amere eight years after her birth on a cotton plantation in South Carolina, Eartha Kitt's mother sent her away to live with an aunt who lived in Harlem. Like many rough roads we're shoved on in life, this one helped her pave a path to fame and a glorious future. But this road was more akin to the fast lane.

Before the age of 20, she was a featured dancer and vocalist for the legendary Katherine Dunham Dance Troupe. An international touring company, Dunham took her to Paris, where Kitt was spotted by a nightclub owner and immediately signed to appear in her first cabaret performance. It was the era of martinis and manhattans, sequins and style, and Eartha Kitt fit the mood of the moment as smoothly and seductively as her ebony hand would slide into a silk ivory glove—a glove that just kept grabbing the next rung on the stellar ladder of success.

While in Europe, a captivated Orson Welles cast her to star with him as Helen of Troy in his notorious production of *Dr. Faust*. Back in the States, producer Leonard Stillman cast her in his "New Faces" revue where her crowd-goes-wild performances of "Monotonous" as well as classics like "Santa Baby" and "C'est Si Bon" halted the show on Broadway for more than a year. Then it was records, records, records. *Love For Sale*, *St. Louis Blues*, and the Grammy-nominated *Folk Songs of Africa*. In 1954, she cranked out her first autobiography. (There were two more to follow.)

Whereas many current divas have MTV to manipulate the mass pop, Kitt's era was up-close and personal. You couldn't fake it. And in this age of nightclubs, Kitt reigned supreme, owning the infamous Persian Room, Latin Quarter, Empire, and Talk of the Town in London. Smack back on Broadway, she tackled drama in *Mrs. Patterson* and nabbed a Tony nod. Other plays followed: *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *The Owl and the Pussycat*, *Shinbone Alley*. In film, she was paired with Sidney Poitier in *The Mark of the Hawk* and with Nat King Cole in *St. Louis Blues*. She netted an Oscar nomination for her turn in *Anna Lucasta* with Sammy Davis, Jr. In television, Kitt starred in Omnibus' *Salome*. She did the guest shot deal on *I Spy* (Grammy nom) and *Mission: Impossible*. But mention Eartha Kitt to most people, and they cannot forget her kitschy little bit she did on a certain 60s classic. She was the original Catwoman

Eartha Kitt received her second Tony Award nomination for her role as the scheming Sahleem-La-Lume in *Timbuktu*!



Eartha Kitt

Continued from previous page

on the campy *Batman* series. Quite racy having an African-American seductress going after white bread white boy Bruce Wayne. But that was and is Kitt. Racy. Fast-moving. She was going, going, going...

And then she was gone.

This is what our parents remember about Kitt: she wasn't Eartha Kitt the Star, she was Eartha Kitt the Communist. She got culturally napalmed worse than Hanoi Jane, and she never sat on one gunner to deserve it.

"They put me out of work in my own country," Kitt roars, the memory of it still smarting to this day. "It hurt my feelings. It made me angrier than hell. It made me very disturbed. It made me angry because this kind of thing is not supposed to happen in my country. You tell the truth and you get ostracized. We're not supposed to be afraid of America, are we?"

Her voice, still strong and going strong, breaks a bit here. "No, we aren't," she says assuredly.

It was January, 1968. At a White House luncheon hosted by First Lady Lady Bird Johnson, the normally polite tea time discussion turned to the Vietnam War. Kitt made her opinion known, and not even her trademark purring voice could soften the blow of her words.

"I was specifically asked a particular question by my government officials, because I thought they wanted to hear honest opinions. And when I gave my honest opinion about our involve-

ment in Vietnam, I got ostracized from my own country, which of course makes me very disturbed, because I don't understand that."

But just like the government—hell, like a lotta people—they really didn't want to hear honest opinions. Still gung-ho on the war, Kitt's honest, sharp criticism of American involvement in Vietnam exploded right in her gorgeous face. Newspaper shrapnel flew, and it burned right into her skin, branding her a traitor. It didn't help any that the Administration PR machine went into overdrive to run her down. They succeeded with frightening success, having Kitt blackballed by the majority of the U.S. entertainment establishment. Years later, columnist Jack Anderson helped uncover the CIA papers that proved the lies and

slander tactics the administration used to derail Kitt's career. The government set out to punish her, and she didn't know anything about the covert plans to do so.

"I wasn't aware of anything until 1974," explains Kitt. "That's when I realized why I was not working, why I'd been asked *not* to work in America."

But since her popularity never diminished in Europe, she found work there, performing and living in European countries that embraced her while her own country basically disowned her. When Kitt left America...

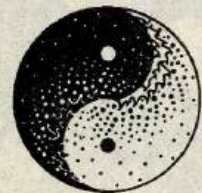
"Wait a minute," she snaps. "I never left America. America left me."

Now this is a kitten with a whip. She turns Ann-Margret into Meow Mix.

"It wasn't American people, it was American government. The government never accepted me again. Am I still on the list?"

She turns Ann-Margret into Meow Mix.

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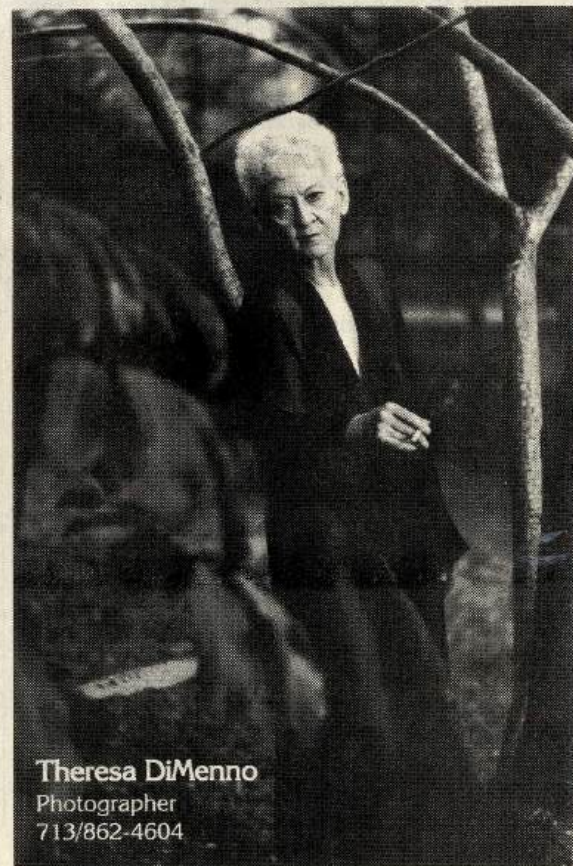
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Obviously. Once you're on a CIA list, do you ever get off?"

Still on the list or not, Kitt did step back on Liberty's shores, and this time she stomped stiletto heels onto the American stage with a caged cat's feline vengeance, wowing the world in 1974 with an SRO concert at Carnegie Hall. Two years later, she penned her second autobiography, *Alone With Me*, and in 1978, she received what was as close to a political reprieve as she would ever get when President Jimmy Carter invited her to the White House. Also that year, she snatched her second Tony Award nomination for the Broadway blockbuster *Timbuktu*!

Mother Eartha was back. And she was bad before the King of Pop discovered skin peels.

Christian Blackwood produced the critically-acclaimed documentary on her life, *All By Myself*, in 1982 that covered everything from her rough-and-tough childhood to her European exile. Also in the 80s, she released the smash *I Love Men* album (her first U.S. release in over 15 years) that contained the dance hit "Where Is My Man." If there was ever any doubt of her gay following before, after "Man" there was never another. For Kitt, however, it wasn't a question of a disco tune that gays identified with. It was something more.

"Endurance. I cannot say exactly, I can only give you an impression of what I feel. That as I am different, so they are different. The point is that if we are different, we must recognize the fact that we are different. You do your thing. Let me do mine. Let's not disturb each other in this behavior, as long as it doesn't affect my style of life."

Worlds away from military or right-wing policies regarding sexual preference, isn't it? And that's where we saw ourselves in her. She knew our differences, identified with them, respected them, and spoke to them in eloquent, entrancing song.

To close the decade, she published her third autobiography, penned with an appropriate title.

I'm Still Here: Confessions of A Sex Kitten.

As if she wasn't busy enough, Eartha Kitt is the national spokeswoman for Project On Growing program that teaches homeless families to farm their own food to feed themselves. She has also found time to send out the collector's CD set Eartha Quake and the get-it-it's-awesome Back In Business CD from late 1994 that features a something old, something new, something borrowed and blue from Steven Sondheim.

To see her most recently, you could have caught Kitt as one of the gorgeous women of color in Eddie Murphy's underappreciated sex and sexism comedy Boomerang which had every stunning African-American woman on the planet in it except Iman, presumably because she was too busy with Bowie. You can catch a glimpse of Kitt in the sharp and witty Isaac Mizrahi fashion scene documentary Unzipped, to be released next month. You could wait until her next book, a Harper-requested philosophy book, "Something uplifting," smiles Kitt. "I don't live by negativity. I live by positivity."

But the best place to see the Eartha move is at the Houston Grand Opera show this month.

And what excites Eartha? Intelligence. It's what she looks for in people and what she wants people to see in her.

It's also what she looks for in a man.

"Intelligence," growls Kitt. "Someone whose mind is willing to play with mine."

Steven Foster is a freelance writer and a frequent contributor to *OutSmart* magazine.



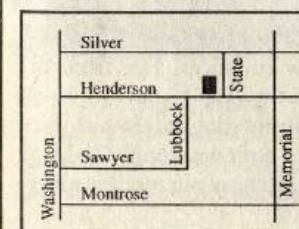
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Silence to Celebration

Houston & Lesbian Pride 1995

E · V · E · N · T · S

FRIDAY, JUNE 16

Houston Gay and Lesbian Pride Week

Friday, June 16, is the official beginning of 10 days of celebration. ☎ 713-529-6979, fax 713-529-1223.

HGLPW Official Kickoff Party

Join the Pride Committee for food, drinks, and entertainment. The Lovett Inn, 501 Lovett, ☎ 713-529-6979.

Decoration Contest

The 1995 Houston Gay and Lesbian Pride Week Committee is having a contest for the best decorated bar or business. This year's theme is "Silence to Celebration, Houston Gay and Lesbian Pride Week 1995." Go ahead—decorate both inside and outside! Prizes awarded in three categories: 1) large bars, 2) small bars, and 3) businesses. There will be a trophy and press coverage for the winners. June 16-25, ☎ 713-527-9305 or 713-529-6979 (ask for Brian Keever).

The Destiny of Me

Destiny continues with the story of Ned Weeks (first introduced in *The Normal Heart*). Now HIV-positive, he checks himself into a hospital to begin experimental treatments and, while there, battles not



Theresa DiMenno

only the medical establishment but the memories of his past. \$15, 7 pm or 8 pm, Theater LaB Houston, 1706 Alamo (just off the 2100 block of Houston), ☎ 713-868-7516, through June 18.

Angels in America

Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* is a gay fantasia on national themes. Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning play directed by Michael Wilson. Alley Theatre, 615 Texas (at Louisiana), ☎ 713-228-8421, Tuesdays through Sundays, through July 9.

Charlie's...Still Here, But Out and Proud!

The new owners, Nick and David, invite you to experience a new dining attitude at Charlie's. Diversity is the spice of our community, and the new decor as well as the new menu exploit our wide variety of taste! 1.5% of all sales to Montrose Clinic during Pride Week. Charlie's Coffee Shop, 1100 Westheimer, ☎ 713-522-3332.

The Artist Eye: Silence to Celebration

An art show opening, featuring select pieces of art by local gay and lesbian artists. Free, 6-10 pm, The Hyde Park Gallery, 711 Hyde Park, ☎ 713-526-2744.

"Lesbian and Gay Voices"

A special show broadcast live from the Lovett Inn with the kickoff party for Pride Week '95, it features a look at the history of Pride Week and our community. We look back on the beginning of our modern move-

ment and where we are now. We also look at some of the many other events that will happen this week. ("Lesbian and Gay Voices" airs weekly with such segments as Womyn's music, reviews of gay and lesbian cultural events, and news from "This Way Out.") 6-10 pm, KPFT 90.1 FM, ☎ on-air line 713-526-KPFT, fax 713-529-1223.

SATURDAY, JUNE 17

Black and White

The Dizinger Foundation presents a collection of photographs by people living with HIV/AIDS. The original works and smaller reproductions will be for sale. Masks made by Dizinger artists will also be on sale. Refreshments provided, donations accepted, 2-6 pm, 214 Avondale, ☎ 713-527-8490.

Mr. Venture-N Contest

Enter or watch the fabulous men of Venture-N strut their stuff to become Mr. Venture-N. All entertainment tips will be donated to HGLPW. The entry fee of \$10 goes to the LVL Holiday Fund. A Don Gill production. The Venture-N, 2923 Main, ☎ 713-522-0000.

Freedom Dance 3

With a live performance by Pussy Tourette at midnight. Ms. Tourette will perform *French Bitch*, *Kiss*, and more. Heaven, 810 Pacific, ☎ 713-521-0107.

Tony Kushner Personal Appearance and Book Signing

The Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright of *Angels in America*, Tony Kushner, makes a personal appearance and signs books. (His visit to Houston is underwritten in part by the Omni Houston Hotel.) 2-4 pm, Border Books, 9633 Westheimer (at Gessner), ☎ 713-782-6066.

Destiny of Me (see entry for Friday, June 16)

Angels in America (see entry for Friday, June 16)

SUNDAY, JUNE 18

Spectrum '95

Featuring Town Meeting II, business expo, art show, speakers' forum, and an evening concert of gay and lesbian performers such

as Romanovsky & Phillips, Lynn Lavner, the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston, and the Turtle Creek Chorale. \$15 and up, Astroarena, Kirby and South Loop, ☎ 713-526-2853.



Lynn Lavner is one the headliners at Spectrum '95, Sunday, June 18.

A New Beginning for All!

A variety show benefiting the Montrose Clinic. The show will encompass the "Best of the Best" performers in both drag and live presentation! Our Masters of Ceremony will be Lady V & her two Dons. Free, 6:30 pm, Chances, 1100 Westheimer, ☎ 713-523-7217.

Pride Night at Fitzgerald's

Some of Houston's hottest up-and-coming bands are playing. Monster Soup, Violent Blue, Starbelly, Clover, Boy Girl, and Objection will be playing a benefit for the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Houston. \$6, 7-12 pm, Fitzgerald's, 2706 White Oak (at Studemont), ☎ 713-529-3211.

2nd Annual Miss Life Today Pageant

For female impersonators. Titleholder agrees to assist in fundraising and awareness promotion for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders who are affected or infected by HIV/AIDS. Benefit for River Oaks Health Association, donations, 8-10 pm, EJ's, 2517 Ralph, ☎ 713-977-4101.

Destiny of Me (see entry for Friday, June 16)

Angels in America (see entry for Friday, June 16)

MONDAY, JUNE 19

Striving to Get the Love You Want

Lecture based on Imago Relationship Therapy developed by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., author of the best-selling books, *Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples* and *Keeping the Love You Find: A Guide for Singles*. Sponsored by MCCR and P-FLAG. Free, 6:30-8:30 pm, Montrose Library, 4100 Montrose, ☎ 713-529-1913.

They Called Him Michael

Goat Song A Theatre Group presents the world premiere performance of the new work by local playwright K. David Cochran. Opening night proceeds go to People With AIDS Coalition. \$25. Opening night, \$15, 8 pm, Stages, 3201 Allen Parkway, ☎ 713-525-5960.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20

Make a Joyful Noise V

Local churches unite to celebrate Jesus! Each church submits talent to this tremendous event, sponsored by Community Gospel Church. 7:30 pm, Community Gospel Church, 501 E. 18th (at Columbia), ☎ 713-880-9235.

The Miss Houston Pageant

Beauty pageant for female impersonators. \$5, 10 pm, Heaven, 810 Pacific, ☎ 713-861-4667.

Grand Marshals' Reception

Food and beverage. Come meet the grand marshals and Pride Committee at the annual reception, sponsored by The Royal, Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star. 7-9 pm, Gentry's, 2303 Richmond.

Angels in America

(see entry for Friday, June 16)

They Called Him Michael

(see entry for Monday, June 19)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21

Bring Your Money Out of the Closet

Financial advisor Julie LaRue, LUTCF, discusses financial planning for gay men

Pride Calendar

Continued from previous page

and lesbians. *Limited seating, RSVP. Free, 6:30-8:30 pm, The Acacia Group, 9 Greenway Plaza, Ste. 300, ☎ 713-888-3500, fax 713-888-3501.*

Rolling With Pride

Lambda Rollerskating Club will be hosting their 4th annual Pride skate night. \$5 (includes skates), 8-10 pm, Dairy Ashford Rink, 1820 Dairy Ashford, ☎ 713-933-5818.

Pride Week Bear Night Out

Join the Men of the Mine as they host a celebration fit for a bear. 5 pm, Montrose Mining Company, 805 Pacific, ☎ 713-529-7488.

Shiela Lennon— A Country Kind of Gal!

Lennon is a versatile singer whose performance is both entertaining and danceable. All moneys donated to the Montrose Clinic. \$1, 9 pm - 12 am, Chances Bar, 1100 Westheimer, ☎ 713-523-7217.

Angels in America

(see entry for Friday, June 16)

They Called Him Michael

(see entry for Monday, June 19)

THURSDAY, JUNE 22

Legal and Financial Planning for People with a Life-Threatening Illness

Attorneys Mitchell Katine, Connie Moore, and Debra Hunt, along with financial advisor Julie LaRue, will discuss legal and financial planning tools for living with a life-threatening illness. *RSVP. Free, 6:30-8:30 pm, The Acacia Group, 9 Greenway Plaza, Ste. 300, ☎ 713-888-3500, fax 713-888-3501.*

Lesbian & Gay Pride 4th Annual Ice Skating Celebration

The rink will be open to the general public, so community people are asked to wear their favorite lesbian or gay T-shirt. Sponsored by Montrose Ice Picks. \$7 (includes skates), 8-10 pm, Galleria Ice Rink, 5015 Westheimer, ☎ 713-629-1432.

Broadway Show Tunes

Celebrate 50 years of gay and lesbian contribution to the theater. Sing along to some

of the best known show tunes of the century. Emcee Randall Jobe. 9 pm - 2 am, JR's Bar and Grill, 808 Pacific, ☎ 713-521-2519.

Angels in America

(see entry for Friday, June 16)

They Called Him Michael

(see entry for Monday, June 19)

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

Absolutely Fabulous Pride Party

A party fashioned after the hysterical Britcom that has become a gay phenomenon throughout the U.S. Win *Absolutely Fabulous* T-shirts, books, and more. Heaven, 810 Pacific, ☎ 713-521-0107.

"Lesbian and Gay Voices"

A special show on the future of Pride Week and our community, community leaders will discuss where our future lies. ("Lesbian and Gay Voices" airs weekly with such segments as Womyn's music, reviews of gay and lesbian cultural events, and news from "This Way Out.") 6-10 pm, KPFT 90.1 FM, ☎ on-air line 713-526-KPFT, fax 713-529-1223.

Soul Survivor

Play billed as "a heavenly, romantic comedy for the 90s," written by Anthony Bruno, it is a farcical love triangle with a ghostly twist involving a gay man, his new boyfriend, and his deceased lover who returns from heaven to check out the new relationship. \$12, 8 pm and 10:30 pm, Curtains Theater, 3722 Washington (at Waugh Drive), ☎ 713-522-2204.

Houston's Hot VII: A Night in Black Leather

National Leather Association/Houston's traditional kickoff party for Pride Weekend open to the public. Leather/Levi and fetish wear are encouraged. Throughout the evening, a variety of leather scenes and demonstrations will be played out. Free, 10 pm - 2 am, The Venture-N, 2923 Main, ☎ 713-527-9666.

Destiny of Me

(see entry for Friday, June 16)

Angels in America

(see entry for Friday, June 16)

About Houston Gay & Lesbian Pride Week 1995

Houston Gay/Lesbian Pride Week was founded in 1979 by a small group of Houston gay and lesbian activists to coordinate a formal program and celebration each year for the gay and lesbian community of Houston.

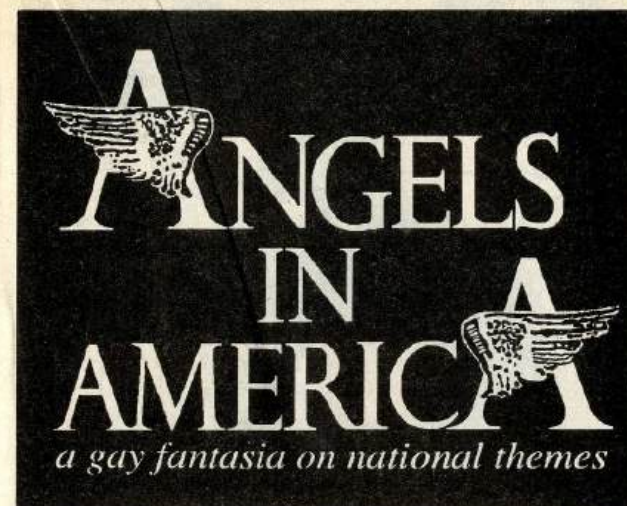
In 1975, an estimated 200 people held a march in downtown Houston to commemorate the Stonewall riots (June 25, 1969), which was sponsored by the fledgling Gay Activists Alliance of the University of Houston. Singer and former beauty queen Anita Bryant's appearance as featured entertainer for the Texas Bar Association convention in 1975 brought an estimated 5,000 angry gay women and men down Houston's streets in protest. The heavily publicized march, headed by such notables as gay publisher David Goodstein and Rev. Troy Perry of the Metropolitan Community Church, was in vivid reaction to Bryant's ordinance then in effect in Miami, Dade County, Florida. A few weeks later, Houston's gay community held its first Gay Pride Rally in Cherryhurst Park to celebrate what has become a national holiday for lesbians and gay men.

Three years later in 1978, over 4,000 community activists met at the Astrodome for Town Meeting I, the first organizational gathering in Houston that included gay men and women from every aspect of Houston society. Former state legislator and vice-presidential nominee Frances "Sissy" Farenthold was the keynote speaker, and the meeting was chaired by Virginia Apuzzo, a leading gay activist who became executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in New York. Many of Houston's gay services, including the Montrose Counseling Center and the Montrose Clinic, were formulated and organized at the first historic meeting.

During the 1980s, the AIDS epidemic hit the gay community. With little federal and almost no state or local help, the community responded first by dealing with its own morality, then by building community institutions dealing with AIDS.

Since 1979, the gay community of Houston has celebrated Gay Pride Week with a full schedule of events spanning 10 days in late June.

In the wake of the 1993 March on Washington for Gay, Lesbian, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation, and with this year's flood of positive media portrayals of gays and lesbians, it would appear that pride, diversity, and being Out are good for us all. We have reason to celebrate. But now is not the time to compromise ourselves back into a closet of obscurity, even a padded one with a view. We make positive strides and withstand negative aggressions from silence to celebration.



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Roberta Walters 529-6660 x114

They Called Him Michael
(see entry for Monday, June 19)

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

**A Front Row
Seat for Pride Parade**

Chances Club will have an enclosed beer garden with bleachers all weekend. Seating will be available for \$5 donation to Montrose Clinic. 10-2 am, Chances Bar, 1100 Westheimer, ☎ 713-523-7217.

**The Leather
Forum & Symposium**

A three-hour educational symposium covering such topics as tattooing, piercing, bondage, flogging, creating scenes, uniforms, and other fetishes. Safe, sane, consensual play and sex, fantasy vs. reality. Tools of the trade will be on hand. Question and answer time will be available with experts. \$1, 1-4 pm, ☎ 713-527-9666.

Beer Garden Blowout

Susan Masar and the Family Connection will be performing all afternoon for your pleasure. The multi-talented, bilingual lead

City Men's Chorus, MCCR-Houston, and MCCR-Austin for a gala concert. \$10 to \$25, 7 pm, Cullen Theater, Wortham Center, 500 Preston, ☎ 713-743-5904.

HATCH Prom

The Houston Area Teenage Coalition of Homosexuals will host its third annual prom event as a major fundraiser for the organization. \$15, 8 pm, Majestic Metro, 911 Preston, ☎ 713-942-7002.

Destiny of Me

(see entry for Friday, June 16)

Angels in America

(see entry for Friday, June 16)

SUNDAY, JUNE 25

Pride Sunday at MCCR

Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection (MCCR) and Cathedral of Hope (Dallas MCC) chorus will perform *God Be With Us* at this service. Free, 10:45 am, 1919 Decatur (off Washington), ☎ 713-861-9149.

to Taft, ☎ 713-529-6979, fax 713-529-1223.

PrideFest '95

Join us immediately following the parade for a concert with Fem 2 Fem and Dajae. Donations benefit AVES, Stephens House, Lesbian Health Initiative, 20-Something, MCCR, and Pride Committee of Houston. Afterward, join the Pride Party '95 at Numbers (see next entry). Free (donations accepted), Lovett Street (between Whitney and Taft), 4-7 pm, ☎ 713-529-6979, fax 713-529-1223.

Pride Party '95

After PrideFest '95, DJ Jon Sims will be spinning records from the late 70s and early 80s. Donations given to selected charities. Donations accepted, Numbers, 300 Westheimer, 5-11 pm, ☎ 713-529-6979, fax 713-529-1223.

**Loading Dock
Party '95**

In celebration of Pride '95, a post-parade dance co-hosted by NLA/Houston and Pacific Street for Houston's leather and Levi community. Doors open immediately after the parade, Pacific Street, 710 Pacific Street, ☎ 713-523-0213.

**Absolutely Fabulous After-
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**After the Parade
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Escape from the heat with the Men of the Mine and ice cold Miller Lite Draft. 5 pm, Montrose Mining Company, 805 Pacific, ☎ 713-529-7488.

Angels in America

(see entry for Friday, June 16)



Theresa DiMenna

singer, Susan Masar, has been performing for our community and various AIDS-related benefits for the last 10 years. Proceeds go to the Montrose Clinic. \$1, 3-8 pm, Chances Bar, 1100 Westheimer, ☎ 713-523-7217.

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(see entry for Saturday, June 24)

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HOUSTON GAY PRIDE



Hollie Hollister



Annella Harrison
Honorary Grand Marshal
(Interview on page 47)

"When everyone was so scared to do anything about the conditions of PWAs and the way companies were laying off those who had the HIV virus, the gay community really got busy.... That's been quite inspiring."

Hollie Hollister



Don Gill
Co-Grand Marshal
(Interview on page 46)

After a few years setting hair, he burned out. "After five years at the company, I quit when I saw Farrah Fawcett and Dorothy Hamil shakin' that hair on TV. I knew that's the kind of hair I wanted to do."

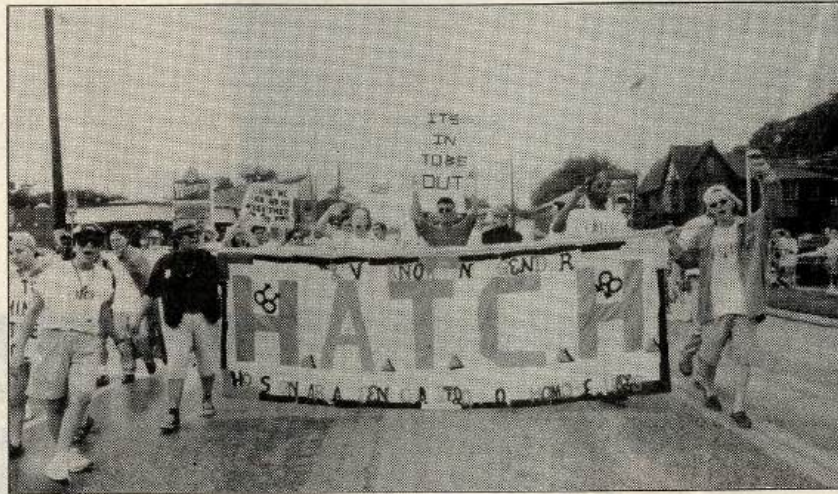


Suzanne Anderson
Co-Grand Marshal
(Interview on page 45)

"It got me to thinking when I was elected grand marshal. I consider myself too radical. I think I'd just like to say thank you. I'm really grateful to the community. Even for someone like me, it was very humbling."

Honorary Grand Marshal —Organization—

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (HATCH)



Theresa DiMenno

HATCH is "in" by being "out" in Houston's 1993 Gay Pride Parade.

Silence to Celebration: My Personal Journey

by Quincy J.

(Reprinted with permission from The HATCH Newsletter)

Thinking of "Silence to Celebration" reminds me of the miracle of life and the journey we all make just to be born and become a living, breathing, visible human being. That in turn takes me back to my own childhood, in

which, to say the least, the silence was practically deafening. I lived in a rural area on the outskirts of Houston from the time I was a pre-schooler until I was 16 years old.

Given that environment (which was not very exposed to much change or diversity), it should become quite apparent that for a young boy or girl in that situation—who may later come to realize that he/she is homosexual or at least "different"—silence can easily become a way of life, especially since as young children we are so aware of the sense of "not OK" when it comes to certain "differences."

One of the saddest things I have ever experienced was realizing that my own sense of "not OK"—that I originally felt about my difference—easily translated onto my sense of "not OK" about myself. So, I went through my elementary, middle, junior high, and high school years with this overwhelming sense of "not OK."

Needless to say, that does not do any good and, in my case,

actually did much harm to my sense of self. I had a horrible self-concept; my self-image was worse; and my self-esteem was practically non-existent. That was how I lived the first 17 years of my life.

Luckily, when I was 17 years old, I came across the phone number for the Gay & Lesbian Switchboard, from whom I got the phone number of Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (HATCH). It took me about seven months after I got the phone number to make that initial call. By then I was almost 18, at which time I went to my first meeting. Now, it is almost three years later, and—thanks to everything HATCH has given me—my life is much different now. HATCH showed me that I was OK just as I was. HATCH provided positive adult role models who happened to be gay. HATCH pointed me in the direction of finding that

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Suzanne Anderson

by Nancy Ford



"It's an opportunity to be who we are with our people, to just express ourselves. The neat thing about Gay Pride Week is that there's so many choices and ways to celebrate. It doesn't matter whether you want to do drag or do a reading. It's a celebration..."

was a real adventurous, against-the-grain type of thing to do. The most money I ever made, and probably ever will make, was in the 'burbs, but I was so bored. I was so bored. It was just a way to make a living. And really, it was just a way to sell out.

"I started out with my ad saying 'Focusing on Our Community,' and putting 'Our' in italics, and finally deciding 'That's really chicken shit.' She changed 'Our' to 'Lesbian & Gay.'" "That was a real out, different thing to do, and now it's not. That makes me happy, but at the same time, it's like, 'Well, now what do I do?'"

What, indeed? How about being one of the founding members of Lesbian in Business, Houston's leading networking and social monthly consortium for corporate dykes. How about key organizational involvement with H.A.T.C.H., Houston's progressive support group for gay, bi and lesbian teens? How about not only marrying her life partner Judith Meyer at the 1993 March on Washington mass commitment ceremony, but then allowing HBO to film the event for its *Why Am I Gay? Stories of Coming Out* prime-time special? How about her realty firm, Suzanne Anderson

Properties, being named one of *Victory* magazine's 50 fastest-growing gay/lesbian-owned enterprises in the U.S.? Sound like a lot of responsibility for just one person? That's why it's called *activism*.

Continuing this pattern of leadership, on June 28 Anderson will be found at the front of Houston's Pride Parade as co-grand marshal with Don Gill. No one was more surprised at this honor than Anderson herself. "It really got me to thinking when they elected me grand marshal. I consider myself too radical. I think I'd just like to say thank you. I'm really grateful to the community. Even for someone like myself, it was very humbling. It was very affirming. I didn't expect it, and it really made me feel good. And Ms. Meyer is just delighted at the thought of being First Lady."

But she does recognize what possibly may have been the reason for her nomination. "Visibility. I'm a salesperson. I'm a promoter. And sometimes, it's the P. T. Barnum style. And that's fun."

Oh, God. Surely she wasn't referring to Barnum's famous credo, "There's a

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Don Gill

by Hollie Hollister

"Studies show the incidence of teen suicides, among gay teens, has dramatically dropped. And that is because we are out there, showing these young people they are not alone in the world."

articles that have been in the gay press and what I have been able to accomplish as a fundraiser this year. One of the organizations, The Royal Sovereign Imperial Court of the Single Star, submitted my name, and the gay community voted on it and I won.

Is fundraising a primary function of the parade's activities?

Not per se fundraising. Anyone that I have known to be grand marshal in the past, male or female, it is what they have done to assist as a positive role model for the community. Suzanne [Anderson, co-grand marshal '95] is a business owner, as am I, and we've employed gay people in our businesses. Even though I am only a one-man shop now, that has only occurred in the past four years. I owned a much larger salon [Hair Plus, by Don] with gay employees as well. You become grand marshal not just for the fundraising but for how you assist people in the community.

Gill, who has lost two lovers to AIDS, has taken into his home numerous PWAs, and given them the opportunity to live with dignity in a homelike atmosphere. "When my friends are ill, I bring my friends here. They like my chicken and dumplin's, my black-eyed peas, my turnip greens, butter beans, and my cracklin' cornbread. I'm just

a country boy living in a big city."

Gill moved to Houston in May of 1970 after graduation from high school in Leesville, Louisiana, just the other side of the Texas-Louisiana border, on the road to Alexandria. "I wanted to move away from home. I was the youngest child, very protected by my family. We were dirt poor, but we had lots of love," reflects Gill.

Gill wanted to make something of himself and enrolled in beauty school. After a few years setting hair, he burned out (pardon the pun) and went into the corporate world, where he worked his way up from mail room to salesman for a major Houston industry. "After five years at the company, I quit when I saw Farrah Fawcett and Dorothy Hamil shakin' that hair on TV," he says. "I knew that's the kind of hair that I wanted to do."

Don, where were you in June of 1970?

Probably sitting on a pew in the Pentecostal church.

Care to explain?

I didn't accept my homosexuality until January of 1973. When I moved here from Louisiana, my life was the same—I was in church four days a week.

What does someone do in church four

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Annella Harrison

by Hollie Hollister

"I had seen enough discrimination and harassment," remembers Harrison. "Before I went to the City Council, I had a talk with my son and his lover. I asked them if they would mind if I did this."

For Annella Harrison, honorary grand marshal for the Gay Pride Parade '95, community involvement has been a way of life. Harrison is a veteran of World War II, a former Registered Nurse, retired caseworker for the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, and the parent of a gay son. Annella became involved with the struggles of the gay rights movement in the mid-70s, when to live Queer in Houston meant risking jail when the cops raided the gay bars seemingly for their personal entertainment.

In the 1970s, homosexuals were the target of the police, churches, and teenagers who drove into the Montrose from other parts of town to bash queers—going out on a Saturday night had become a death-defying act.

During the McConn and Whitmire administrations, Annella went before Houston City Council to plea on our behalf for equal protection under the law. "I had seen enough discrimination and harassment," remembers Harrison. "Before I went to the City Council, I had a talk with my son and his lover. I asked them if they would mind if I did this." Annella went before council with little fanfare and no press coverage—she guesses gay rights was too hot a topic. By the second time she

appeared before council, she was active in P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), and that time she sought out the press. She represented P-FLAG on Houston community "talk shows" and was sought out for comment whenever the gay community was in the press.

Hollister: Annella, tell us about your first Gay Pride celebration.

Harrison: It was much smaller, though well attended, and very joyful. I remember there was a rally near the Dome Stadium, I think the Astroarena. Sarah Weddington was there and a speaker from New York. It was quite something. I guess we have Anita Bryant to thank for all of this. [Anita Bryant, former Miss America, singer, and performer, has been credited over the years with causing so much hatred against the homosexual community, that she forced us to pull together.]

How has the celebration changed?

It is certainly much larger, many more activities going on. And I feel good that the Gay Pride celebration is not just a parade only.

Do you see a need for Gay Pride celebrations?

Oh yes. People need to know about some of the things people are doing. People



in different professions—the law, medicine. People need to see that gay people are people, too.

Is there anything you would change about the celebration?

Well [laughing a little], I would have it in cooler months! Texas in June is very, very hot. Other than that, no I like it the way it is.

What do you think has been the biggest detriment to our movement?

I hope your readers will understand that I am from another generation, and I have different ways of dealing with things. I guess my time was different, inasmuch as I feel one can better gain one's goals by appealing to everyone. So I do not mean to single out any one group or thing, but I feel some of the actions taken by some politically involved groups might be better served with less offensive actions.

What exactly do you mean?

I mean that some of the political actions are offensive, and I feel that closes

continued on page 48

photo by Steven David

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DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH BY REV. JANET PARKER



Grief is described as intense emotional suffering caused by loss, disaster, misfortune, etc. It is acute sorrow and deep sadness. This is probably one of the most difficult emotions for any person to experience. It is an emotion that reaches down to the very pit of your soul. It doesn't feel good. It hurts. It is painful. It can be a scary and lonely feeling.

For some of us, grief is too painful to bear. Because of the intensity of our pain, we want to walk away from it and not let it run its course. The course that it may run involves several stages: Bargaining, Denial, Anger and Acceptance. These stages can be experienced rapidly or over a long period of time. There are no right and wrong ways of handling our grief. Each person must simply recognize that they must deal with this intense emotion at some point in time. The sooner we face it the sooner it will be behind us.

In our community we sometimes face what is called "serial grief." We may have many intense losses at one time and get confused about whom we are grieving. Sometimes there just isn't time to fully grieve over one loss when suddenly we have another upon us. That is when the emotions can get the best of us.

With grief you may experience withdrawal, sadness, and crying without any warning. You may also go to the extremes and find yourself covering up and filling in your day so that you don't have to face your emotions.

There is One to turn to in times of grief and that is to God. The Psalmist tells us that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." God promises to comfort us like a mother comforts her child. When Jesus went into the Temple on the Sabbath and was asked to read the Scripture, He spoke from Isaiah 61. "The Spirit of the Yahweh is upon me, because God has anointed me to tell the good news to the poor. God has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken, to tell the captives they are free, and to tell the prisoners they are released. God has sent me to comfort all those who are sad and to help the sorrowing people: I will give a crown to replace their ashes, and the oil of gladness to replace their sorrow, the clothes of praise to replace their spirit of sadness."

This chapter goes on to tell us how Jesus will rebuild our lives again. After great periods of grief and loss, God can restore our joy and our gladness. Turn to God for comfort. It may come in the guise of a friend, a lover, a stranger, or an angel! The important thing to do is RECEIVE IT!

Don Gill

Continued from page 46

days a week?

Lots of praying on my knees that I wasn't who I was, a homosexual.

What did you do?

I went to the pastor of my church and confessed to him I was homosexual. And he told me he couldn't advise me on that subject.

Why?

Four years later he came up to me in a gay bar and said, "This is why I couldn't advise you on your sexual identification."

I don't know why this doesn't surprise me! When you were coming out, who did you look up to or admire?

My best friends—Larry Miller, Jerry Wayne Smith, and David Sawyer—some of the first gay people I met.

What was it about these three people that you admired?

They saw my innocence. I was very "country" and trusting, and people made fun of my speech. I said lots of over-yonders, the slow dragged-out speech of a country boy. I was very fortunate to meet these three men who protected me and wouldn't let anyone hurt me or abuse me.

Do you remember your first Gay Pride celebration?

Yes, I do. It must have been 1975, '76.

What do you remember about it?

How happy everyone was, all those smiling faces. Finally, we could stand up and be counted, even if it was only amongst ourselves.

Is there anything you would change about the celebration today?

No, there isn't. You know, Gay Pride is different from other parades or celebra-

tions. Where other celebrations involve something everyone can be in, Gay Pride is for us. The few, the proud...

The gay?

Yes, exactly.

What do you think is the biggest deterrent to our civil rights movement?

Our fractionalization—one group refusing to accept and work with another. This causes confusion; it certainly causes division.

So I gather you see unity as the most important goal we must achieve.

Yes, I do.

What do you think has been our "finest hour"? What have we done right?

Our visibility, and our involvement with each other. Studies show the incidence of teen suicides, among gay teens, has dramatically dropped. And that is because we are out there, showing these young people they are not alone in the world. We have a big heart—we take care of our own. There is a lot of solidarity in the community. I am just so proud of that—it's unique.

Is there anything you would like to see the gay community achieve in the upcoming years?

Let me draw you a picture; it's a little "country," but it works. Our lives are like a wagon, and it is full of hay. When that wagon reaches the barn, there will be hay for the winter, enough to keep everyone alive through the darkest hours. If we can manage to pull ourselves together—the "Polos" with the leather community, the lesbians with the gay males, the transsexuals, the bisexuals, the drag queens—all of us must pull together so that we can achieve equal rights. We have to fill the barn, so to speak, with resources, so we can weather even the worst of times. ▼

Annella Harrison

Continued from previous page

some ears that might benefit from the "message" and could help the cause. Some of those ears, whether you like them or not, close up tight when they see things that illustrate the very worst behavior in anyone.

You mean to say then...

I mean some behaviors are offensive, and those behaviors illustrate the things some politicians say are truths about the homosexual lifestyle in general. People only see what they want to, and when they see things that offend them, they remember that, and they use that as an excuse to not listen.

Why do you think you were chosen as honorary grand marshal?

I guess because of my actions with P-FLAG and being one of the few parents of a gay person willing to speak out.

Were there any role models you admired, who were out and vocal?

When things started up, no, things were pretty much closeted. No one in particular—I do admire the community as a whole! I think that the gay community is the best example of a group committed to having civil rights, and I admire the dedication I see.

What do you think has been our finest hour?

The AIDS crisis: When everyone was so scared to do anything about the living conditions of PWAs and the way companies were laying off those who had the HIV virus, the gay community really got busy and moved into real action to get the PWAs the insurance that they had paid for and the medical attention needed. That's been quite inspiring.

Where do you see the gay rights movement going to in the next century?

Well, it's anybody's guess, what with the political feeling in Washington these days.

Are you saying there is a real force in Washington that might very well put down all that we have accomplished?

I am saying that things are going to be rough, and we'd better get ready to fight for rights on every "shore"!

Kind of like the fight for human rights in WWII?

Hopefully not that bad.

Annella, what accomplishment in your life are you most proud of?

I guess living well, and living to the age of 85! ▼

Suzanne Anderson

Continued from page 45

sucker born every minute..."

"No, I'm talking about not being shy. One of the things that I have always felt comfortable with was talking about my strong points, [though] I'm not without weak points. I've never understood people who, when you ask if they can play softball, say, 'Oh, I'm okay.' Say, 'I'm an ace! I can knock the shit out of that ball!'"

She transfers this confidence and positive attitude to her commitment with the lesbian/gay community by "just knowing who I am and being comfortable with who I am. That's a real movement in our community. More and more people are coming out. They're showing other people that they can come out and they can survive. They can still be gainfully employed—some of them. Not all of them."

Though a young lesbian growing up hardly has a wealth of role models to emulate, Anderson managed to identify one. "As much of an old biddy as she is, my mother would have to be one [of my role models]. She was a mean old thing. Even though she gave up a lot of her life to be a traditional mother and wife, it was obvious that she wasn't happy about it, and she thought it was wrong. She let me dress like a boy if I wanted to. I never had any sense that, because I was a girl, there was anything that I couldn't do, or that I was limited. I got that from her."

Even if she weren't pre-designated royalty for this year's Pride celebration, Anderson looks forward to the week of June 18-25 as though they were Queer High Holy Days. "It's an opportunity to be who we are with our people, to just express ourselves. The neat thing about Gay Pride Week is that there's so many choices and ways to celebrate. It doesn't matter whether you want to do drag or do a reading. It's a celebration. It's a way of honoring yourself. We don't get honored much."

As one of Houston's most vocal and effective activists, what, in Anderson's eyes, is the main problem facing our community?

"We've got to quit tearing at each other. It's real hard for me, being very out, to not be critical of people who aren't. It's going to be a tremendous challenge fighting the Christo-fascists who are out there today. They're organized and they've got money and they're dangerous. They are fucking dangerous. People right now just love to hate. I grew up in the Southern Baptist Church, and I know how pious these people are. Things are going to change.

Things could go either way. I mean, people are nuts. A hand-gun bill? How can people justify something like that? Statistically, they say that straight, white militarized men carried the election last time around. I think this is just their mentality."

White, straight, militarized men—? —and the women who love them."

P.S.—In case you ever have lunch together, Suzanne Anderson likes her charra beans extra spicy. Now there's a bulletin. ▼

HATCH

Continued from page 44

sense of "OK" for which I had been so desperately longing. The downward spiraling path of my life stopped, then turned much more positive. HATCH enlightened me to the fact that I could be whatever I wanted to be, in spite of what society told me about what I had to be—or couldn't be—because of my sexual orientation.

Now, I am 21 years old. I am a nurse, as well as an instructor, at a nursing assistant academy in Houston. Without HATCH, it would be very hard to picture myself at the place to which I have progressed in my life. Because of the age range of the group—15 to 21—I will soon be leaving the group. If it were not for HATCH, I could not have made it this far or have had the self-worth to continue to make plans to go further. HATCH has given me enough of a good sense of myself to go forward with great enthusiasm, excellence, integrity, leadership, and compassion. If nothing else, I will take these qualities with me as I exit HATCH to make my mark on the world.

To HATCH, thank you. ▼

Quincy is a member of the HATCH Steering Committee, Outreach Program, and a regular contributor to The HATCH Newsletter.

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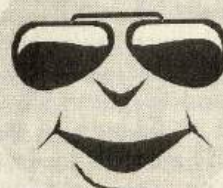
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O U T ▼ S M A R T

HIV: DEFEAT OR



Did you just learn that you or your loved one got an HIV-positive diagnosis? Are you HIV-positive and experiencing a new round of symptoms? Are you getting to interact daily with the "mother-in-law" or mother you previously visited only twice a year? You used to frequent the gym, and now your only runs are to the bathroom? Your knowledge of social service agencies and public health clinics was supplied by movies and television, and now you're facing the real thing? You slept through high school and college, and now you couldn't even act the part for money in a TV commercial? You thought lepers lived only in Biblical times, and now you feel like one? Has HIV knocked you down several rungs on the economic ladder?

HIV tests the limits of one's coping skills. Each phase of the disease ushers in a new set of problems to deal with. You can respond by using tried and true patterns. Or you can modify and improve methods already shown to be useful. Or you can learn new skills.

There is an old adage making the rounds of recovery circles that goes something like, "If you keep doing the same things, you will keep getting the same results." There are no licenses or required courses for chronological adulthood, just the randomly appearing lessons presented by life.

by Sally Hubertz, M.A., L.P.C.

You can rock along pretty well with low self-esteem, poor nutrition, little self-awareness, no daily exercise, isolation, reckless living, constant high stress levels, ignoring life's daily resentments, indifference to value of life—until you meet HIV. Those with the more positive responses to the disease tend to have advanced levels of communication skills, assertiveness, problem-solving, decision-making, stress management, self-care (exercise, nutrition, safer sex), and a deepened spiritual life.

Besides which, they like themselves. How did they get there?

It is generally accepted that an HIV-positive diagnosis is not an imminent death sentence, and the better care you take of yourself, the more prolonged the quality of life can be, perhaps even until a cure is found. Learning the skills referred to above takes motivation and courage. If you didn't

get the advanced courses in life skills before the diagnosis, there may be several barriers to acquiring them or even remembering to use ones already available.

A trained counselor can help you identify your strengths, resources, and belief systems that may be blocking progress, and

OPPORTUNITY?

can teach such skills as assertiveness, communication, relaxation techniques, problem-solving, and decision-making. Of course, processing your reaction to the disease is the domain of psychotherapy also. Counseling can help you see avenues to gain nurtur-

ing and support that may have been overlooked in the emotional response to the news or symptoms.

So, HIV presents an opportunity to grow, to use your creativity to expand your abilities. Short-term individual counseling (12 sessions) for those infected or affected by HIV is now available to low-income persons as a collaborative of the Montrose Clinic, AIDS Foundation Houston, The Assistance Fund, and SEARCH. The project is funded by the Ryan White grant. Services are provided in the Montrose/Westheimer area or at home, hospital, or hospice, if necessary.

Sally Hubertz, M.A., L.P.C., is a psychotherapist with the Montrose Clinic. If you would like to inquire about the nature of services, you may call her at (713) 520-2060. If you would like to schedule an appointment, call the Montrose Clinic Community Services line at (713) 520-2075.

The Ryan White CARE Act Texas needs it now more than ever!

"Ryan White was truly a life saver," says Alice C. of Houston. "My teeth were so bad that I couldn't really chew my food. There are so few dentists

that treat people with AIDS that I was going to have to wait months just to get an appointment. I couldn't afford to wait. My T-cells were dropping. I was losing weight. I would have whittled down to nothing. The infections could have killed me. Then I found the Bering Dental Clinic that the Bering United Methodist Church started. Doctor Nichols said we're going to get your smile back soon and you'll feel fine. I was skeptical that they could do it, but their service was so quick my teeth were fixed before the holidays. I was able to eat my Thanksgiving dinner—with all the trimmings. It made my holidays and saved my life."

Saving Lives and Saving Money

For five years, the Ryan White CARE Act has saved lives while saving money. By sending emergency funds to cities, states, communities and families hit hardest by HIV/AIDS, the CARE Act provides medical and social services to thousands of Americans.

The Houston area has received \$37 million since 1991 for indispensable services that not only ease the suffering of Texans with HIV/AIDS, but keep them healthier longer and prevent expensive, unnecessary hospital care.

Ryan White Works

Ryan White CARE Act is not a welfare program but a down payment on hope. Its "seed money" inspires public-private partnerships that deliver primary health care, prescription drugs, dental, housing and transportation services. Planning councils in each community ensure CARE Act funds go where they are needed most and used best:

- With \$389,000 in Ryan White funds as a base for a year of services, the Bering Dental Clinic and Bering Adult Day Care Center help over 2,000 indigent individuals manage their HIV/AIDS infections. By encouraging a higher level of health and preventing malnutrition, these two programs reduce the need for hospital visits and save the city of Houston over \$4 million annually in taxpayer dollars.
- The number of patients served by the Thomas Street Clinic has grown from 765 in 1991 to over 3,500 in 1994, with an average of 75 new patients per month and a total of 26,676 medical visits in 1994.*

We Need It Now

AIDS is the leading cause of death for Americans between 25 and 44. In Houston in the last two years over 4,451 AIDS cases were reported, six new cases a day. Any delay in reauthorizing the CARE Act and anything less than full funding would mean an interruption or loss of life-extending services, causing needless suffering and costly hospitalization for thousands of men, women, and children in Houston and across the country.

Congress must show it cares, by swiftly reauthorizing and fully funding the CARE Act. Failure to act now would be a national catastrophe. We cannot afford to keep people like Alice waiting.

*Division of HIV Services, Health Resources and Services Administration

Please call your members of Congress now and urge them to support reauthorization and full funding of the Ryan White CARE Act:

Senators

Phil Gramm (R-TX)
Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX)

Representatives

Bill Archer (R-TX), 7th District
Tom DeLay (R-TX), 22nd District
Jack Fields (R-TX), 8th District
Steve Stockman (R-TX), 9th District

Ken Bentsen (D-TX), 25th District
Gene Green (D-TX), 29th District
Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), 18th District

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Bering Community Service Foundation
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Houston, TX 77254-0517
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HIV Health Watch

Briefs from GayNet Wire Service

Possible Major Breakthrough in HIV Fight

SAN FRANCISCO—Researchers with the University of California at San Francisco reported at the annual convention of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology that a "designer drug" known as a protease inhibitor may help keep HIV from replicating and mutating in the body. Dr. Charles Craik told the convention that the computer-designed drug, which has only been tested in laboratories so far, apparently blocks a crucial enzyme in HIV, making it impossible for the virus to reproduce itself and mutate. In laboratory tests, the drug kept HIV from infecting new cells in test tubes and prevented it from duplicating itself in already-invaded cells. If the protease inhibitor works as effectively in humans as it has in the laboratory, Craik and his UCSF colleagues believe it could be the most important breakthrough in fighting HIV and AIDS to date.

Parasite in Water Supply Reported

WASHINGTON—Environmental activists have warned that cryptosporidium, a parasite that can be fatal to the elderly, children, people with HIV/AIDS, and other seriously ill people, has been detected before and after treatment in the country's water supply. Some cities do not test or filter their drinking water, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Environmental Working Group said in published reports that urge the United States to invest in better water filtration and to start testing for the microscopic parasite. The reports call for a national standard for cryptosporidium, which was blamed for sickening more than 400,000 people and killing at least 100—mostly people with AIDS—in Milwaukee in 1993. Currently, the parasite is not regulated, in part because there is no reliable way to monitor it.

Dating Service for People With HIV Starts in Germany

BERLIN—Europe's first dating service for HIV-positive people has been formed, its head announced in June. Stefan Wehner, who started the PV Dating Service, said such services are needed because people who are infected with HIV often have enormous problems finding partners. "Healthy people want nothing to do with HIV-positive people, and that makes the search for a partner very difficult," Wehner said. To join the service, people pay a little over

\$1,500 to get listed for a year in PV's dating roster. Wehner said that to prevent abuse of the service, potential members must contact the service via mail and must provide the agency with a doctor's certification that they are HIV-positive. A similar HIV dating service started in the U.S. earlier this year.

HIV Reporting Measure Passes California Senate

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—The California Senate has passed a measure that would require the state health services department to notify physicians and patients when HIV test results are positive in any survey the department conducts to determine the prevalence of the virus among childbearing women or newborns. The measure, SB889, was introduced by Sen. Tim Leslie (R-Carmel-by-the-Sea) and was approved by the state Senate by a 27-4 vote. The bill now goes to the state Assembly where passage is considered likely as well.

HIV-Infected Women at Higher Risk for Cervical Cancer

TORONTO—Early data from the Canadian Women's HIV Study Group indicates that women infected with HIV are at greater risk of being stricken with severe cervical cancer than uninfected women. The study group's preliminary data found that half of some 300 women infected with HIV that were examined also had HPV—the human papilloma virus associated with cervical cancer. Dr. Catherine Hankins, one of the study's chief investigators, also said that a fifth of the women examined had squamous dysplasia, an early indicator associated with the cancer. The rates found in the study were at least double those expected in the general population.

Lawyer Wants Murder Investigation in Hospital Worker's Death

BUENOS AIRES—The lawyer for a hospital worker at the Hospital Muniz says he will ask for an official murder investigation over the death of his client, Sergio Salguero, who died in late May from an AIDS-related illness. Salguero was accidentally infected with HIV after being stuck with a needle bearing the virus two years ago at his job as a cleaner at the hospital. Without being told he had been infected, Salguero was fired from the hospital after testing positive for the virus. He learned he was

carrying the virus only after his wife became pregnant.

'High Five' Ball Player Dies of AIDS

OAKLAND, Calif.—Glenn Burke, the openly gay former Oakland Athletics and Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder, has died of complications related to AIDS. Burke was widely believed among teammates to be gay when he started playing pro baseball in 1976, and after quitting the game under duress in 1980, he said he believed he had been shoved out of the game because of homophobia in pro sports. In addition to a short but impressive career with both the A's and the Dodgers, Burke is credited with starting one of the most popular and common signals of victory in professional sports today—the "high-five" sign.

Republicans Jump on White House AIDS Director

WASHINGTON—Republican legislators and GOP activists, including the mostly gay Log Cabin Republicans, have pounced on remarks by Patricia Fleming, President Clinton's AIDS public policy director, who said the Republican health care budget proposals were as dangerous to people with AIDS as the virus itself. Speaking at a health care conference, Fleming said, "The Republican budget proposals pose a grave threat to the lives of people living with the AIDS virus. In fact, they are as much of a threat as the virus that is in their bodies." Rich Tafel, executive director of Log Cabin Republicans, said the administration was playing "partisan politics with the lives of people suffering from HIV/AIDS. Until now, there has been a strong spirit of bi-partisanship, and the Republican leadership was extremely careful in not cutting but maintaining and increasing funding for AIDS programs throughout the budget resolution." Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wisc.), who is the only openly gay Republican in Congress, called Fleming's comments "cruel, callous, and insensitive." The House and Senate Republican health budget proposals call for cutting Medicaid spending by \$1.87 billion and \$1.75 billion respectively over the next seven years. The proposals, however, give spending authority to the states, which GOP leaders say will encourage cost-cutting measures.

Hospital Costs for AIDS Patients Spiral

WASHINGTON—According to a study by the National Public Health and Hospital Institute, the hospital costs of individual patients with AIDS can be as high as \$260,000 per year, and in some urban hospitals can occupy more than seven percent of the available beds daily. The study also found that patients with AIDS average 12 hospital days per stay, significantly above the 7.2-day average stay for other patients. Because many patients with AIDS depend on Medicaid, Medicare, or other public funds to

pay for their care, the study concludes that, if Congress makes large cuts in Medicaid/Medicare funding, many hospitals will have to restrict care of AIDS patients.

HIV Infecting More Blacks and Hispanics

ATLANTA—The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention has reported that the number of new AIDS cases among white gay men has fallen off between 3 and 20 percent in three U.S. cities hardest hit by the epidemic—New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco—during the past five years. The number of AIDS cases among black gay men in those same cities, however, has risen dramatically in the same period. In San Francisco the number of infections grew 53 percent, in New York 49 percent, and in Los Angeles 48 percent since 1989. Nationally, the number of new cases among gay men grew 31 percent during the past five years, the CDC data indicates, while the national figures increased 79 percent among black gay men and 61 percent among Hispanic gays.

California Assembly Narrowly OKs Medicinal Marijuana Measure

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—The California Assembly has narrowly OKed legislation by a 41-30 vote that would permit physicians to prescribe marijuana cigarettes for patients who are terminally or chronically ill, although a number of conservative legislators objected that the bill would promote drug use in the state. If the measure in fact does become law, physicians would be able to prescribe marijuana for their patients with AIDS, cancer, glaucoma, or multiple sclerosis. The bill still requires approval by the Senate and the signature of Gov. Pete Wilson to become law. Last year Wilson vetoed a similar measure because he said it would not work unless the federal government also ended its ban on prescribing marijuana cigarettes.

AIDS Project-L.A. Looking for Conservative PR Firm

LOS ANGELES—One of the first acts of Allen Carrier after taking over as director of communications for the AIDS Project-Los Angeles is to try to find a public relations firm in Washington D.C. with solid links to the Republican Party. Carrier says APLA wants a GOP-connected PR firm to conduct an HIV education campaign aimed at members of Congress. APLA is the second largest AIDS agency in the U.S. with a \$20 million yearly budget.

Hillary Clinton Launches Pediatric HIV Campaign

WASHINGTON—Citing a study showing that treatment can reduce the risk of mothers transmitting HIV to their newborns, Hillary Rodham Clinton has launched a campaign urging preg-

continued on page 74



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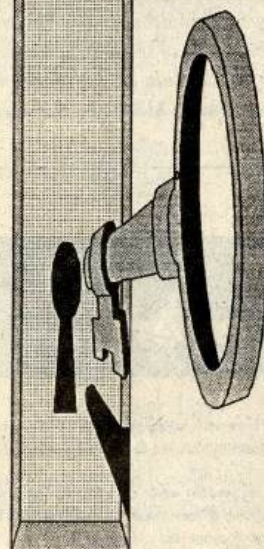
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Tom Spanbauer
*The Man Who Fell in Love
With the Moon*



by Michael D. Wilson

Allow me to say from the outset that this information is presented from the perspective of the gay male, and that while I recognize gay men and lesbians share distinct commonalities in their early childhood developmental issues, I am painfully aware that there are also very clearly defined differences. Being a gay man, I am well-versed on the former; being a fair man, I shall leave the expertise of the latter to those who can better recount their own experiences.

PERSONAL DYSFUNCTION

About a month ago, my mom called to tell me that my 11-year-old niece, Brannon, was performing in her first band concert; she had a solo. It was also her first real "public appearance." I was suddenly reminded of those 15 years of grueling piano lessons and the requisite, inevitable year-end recitals; my first vocal performances in church; and the paralyzing night in college, while performing for 2,000 people in *Man of La Mancha*, I dropped my lyrics during *The Impossible Dream*.

Considering that my mom had recently undergone some fairly serious back surgery, I decided I would make the trip home,

combining moral support for my niece with physical support for my mom.

Now, to say that the small, East Texas ranching community from which I come is conservative is to blatantly undersell the rigidity, closed-mindedness, and conformity required to feel acceptable. And, of course, being one who has spent a great deal of my adult life learning how to present a confident, well-rounded gay male persona (and to chap the asses of conservatives and the religious right), I felt compelled to be a perfect model of gay maleness. This meant wearing skintight Wranglers, red ropers and

a matching red belt, and yes, God forbid, both my earrings.

Well, when my mom saw my "get up" as she called it, her eyes grew significantly larger as she ducked and shook her head. "Now, Michael, do you think those earrings are appropriate? Remember this is not Houston." And while I knew she was choking about the accessories as well, I also knew she wouldn't mention them specifically, because one of my straight, married cousins had just worn out his second pair. (Perhaps he's not as straight as they all think!)

In response, I simply rolled my eyes, stuck out my chin, and exhaled—very slowly and with obviously significant emphasis. I could tell she knew what was coming and that she was already planning her counter-strategy.

"Don't even start with that bullshit," I warned in the calmest and most acidly dulcet of tones. "In the first place, I don't give a big rat's ass what these people think of me. They've never done anything for me except make me more determined not to be like them."

"Well, you don't have to live up here," she countered. "You don't have to listen to the whispers, and you don't have to see the guarded glances."

"You don't either," I pointed out. "Besides, it sounds like *your* issue, not mine. If what other people say about me is more important to you than your feelings of support and acceptance of me, then I would suggest that we don't have much of a relationship here. I recommend therapy." That shut her up, at least temporarily, just as I knew it would.

My father, meanwhile, sat in his recliner, cowering, praying as hard as he could that this argument would soon be over and that we could, once again, pretend that everything was okey-dokey down on the farm. I'll forego a complete description of the man, for that's a whole other narrative. Suffice it to say that, with the exception of his quick and short-lived temper, he is the most emotionally unavailable man I've ever known. Lots of integrity, great respect from his community, a fine and upstanding person. Just one who could never say, "I love you, I'm proud of you, you've done well." At least not until I was lying in a hospital bed—which he could not approach because of all the equipment—possibly dying from a diagnosis that was explicitly more terrifying than my homosexuality. Oh well, better late than never, I always say.

My sister, who is also a psychotherapist,

calls all this family denial and the resulting dysfunction "the pig in the parlor syndrome." We all know it's there: We can see it, hear it, taste it, smell it, we even feed it at times, but we invariably continue to step over it, dust around it, or decorate it.

Sound bitter or cynical? I suppose that I was somewhat distressed, and as a result a bit too harsh. I was more than exasperated that after 20 years of being out to them and having what I had begun to hope and perceive was acceptance, they were still sending me those subtle messages that my sexual orientation was, indeed, *not* okay. The most logical, mature, and appropriate response would have been something like, "It sounds to me like you have some significant issues about what I'm wearing. Would you like to discuss it?" Of course, I didn't say this, because I allowed her to push my buttons and immediately plugged in the tape, "Parent/Child in a Dysfunctional Family's Greatest Hits," with which I was raised.

Not to paint too bleak a picture here, I must also say that in most instances, I *do* respond to my family in more appropriate ways, and they have, in their own limited ability, been very supportive and accepting than I ever hoped. They have treated my lovers with the same respect and acknowledgment as they would any other member of the family. They have been financially, emotionally, and spiritually supportive. And when called upon to do so, they have always come down on the side of gay and lesbian rights. Why, then, do I still have unresolved feelings of frustration, anger, fear?

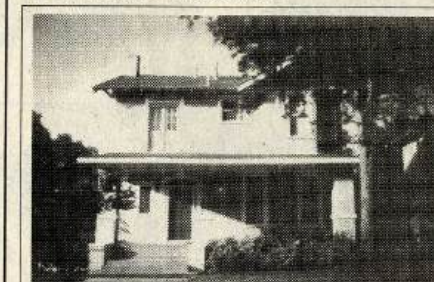
Primarily, I believe it's because I have not resolved my issues of shame about being homosexual and the resulting internalized homophobia I must battle every day of my life. There's also the issue of my positive HIV status which creates a sometimes seemingly overwhelming fear and anger. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, there's the loneliness in knowing that I must be responsible for my own decisions, regardless of my family's reservations or support.

THE EFFECTS OF DYSFUNCTION

Why do the feelings of inadequacy and bitterness persist? In his book *Growing Up Gay in a Dysfunctional Family*, Rik Isensee, a licensed clinical social worker, postulates that the problem is exacerbated by both overt and subtle responses on the part of the larger public community, which tries to prevent us from internalizing good feelings about our orientation. We are con-

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The Pig in the Parlor

Continued from previous page

tinuously bombarded by messages that everything in us that feels normal, that what we do, how we feel, is an abomination against nature, society, and God. Obvious examples include the fact that sexual contact between men is still illegal in many states, and legalized relationships are non-existent. Other contributing factors include ideas about gays being disruptive to military service; the perception that AIDS is a gay disease; denial to spiritual and religious consolation; gay bashing; and the lack of peer support and positive adult role models during adolescent sexual development.

Isensee goes on to say that because gay men grow up in the same dysfunctional families as heterosexuals, we are just as susceptible to homophobic beliefs as everyone else. Confirming and expounding upon the insights drawn by Dr. Susan Forward in her groundbreaking work *Toxic Parents*, he states that what all dysfunctional families seem to have in common is a "pervasive pattern of ignoring or discounting a child's feelings, often combined with abusive interactions. Whether chaotic, violent, rigid, or intrusive, *dysfunctional families consistently fail the child's need for dependable nurturing, unconditional love, empathy, and acceptance.*" They both see dysfunctional families as being:

- Intrusive, with significant violation of trust and proper boundaries
- Stereotypical, regarding gender roles
- Physically, emotionally, and sexually abusive
- Chaotic, in denial, rigid, isolated, secretive, and non-communicative
- Uncontrollably rageful and scapegoating
- Inappropriately assigning adult roles to children

Perhaps the most inexorable evidence of dysfunction is the oppressive and overpowering use of guilt (which has to do with judgments about our *behavior*: not living up to our expectations of ourselves or for perceived transgressions against others) and shame (which has to do with judgments about our core sense of *self*: punitive

guilt, humiliation, and feelings of being flawed). While both feelings can have positive, constructive aspects, we will invariably find them damaging if we allow ourselves to needlessly remain in them. Some of the most obvious consequences are:

- A false sense of self
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Compulsive behavior, including sexual, food, debt, and other compulsions
- Relapses into unsafe sex practices
- Overwork and overachieving
- Self-deprivation
- Continued victimization
- Domestic violence
- Co-dependence (As a feminist, I almost hesitate to include co-dependency, as it has become one of those useless psycho-

babble terminologies used by the lay public to marginalize and oppress women, labeling them as the dysfunctional element in most relationships. However, when we indeed deny our own needs in the hope of controlling another person's desire for us, is it a very applicable term.)

(One personal and striking example of the inappropriate application of both guilt and shame occurred a couple of years ago, when, at a particularly fragile moment in the relationship with my lover, I began couples therapy with his psychiatrist. During our initial meeting, after making several particularly of-

fensive and disparaging observations about what I was wearing, this doctor proceeded to tell me that anyone seeing me would automatically know that I am gay. Of course, I was angry, and informed him that it sounded to me that this was his issue, not mine. Indeed, what I later came to understand, through competent therapy coupled with my own expanding experience as a therapist, was that this man had projected his own guilt and shame about being gay onto me, hoping in the process to alleviate himself of both.)

HEALING, RESOLUTION, AND RECLAIMING YOURSELF

Now that we understand, to a small degree, how our dysfunctional families and

communities have contributed to our painful and sometimes impoverished physical, emotional, and spiritual reality, what can we do to allay our fears that we may never heal, never be whole, or never be happy?

Isensee says that for healing to occur, we must first be aware that it is a process, not an event, and that this process occurs in stages:

1. Acknowledging any abuse.
2. Identifying any post-traumatic effects.
3. Recognizing self-destructive behavior.
4. Seeking support/therapy for recovery.
5. Allowing and working through feelings.
6. Countering shame and negative messages.
7. Combating homophobia and heterosexism.
8. Learning how to nurture yourself.
9. Asserting your own needs.
10. Creating your own life.

While we as gay men have typically had no emotionally available adults to model the expression of specific feelings such as sadness, anger, depression, fear, and, of course, guilt and shame, we must recognize that honest expression of feeling is a critical aspect of healing. Isensee states, "Real emotional strength does not derive from denying your feelings, but from being able to feel without harming others or acting self-destructively."

Learn how to take care of yourself, to nurture yourself, and to ask for emotional "nourishment" from your support groups. Appreciate, take care of, and have fun with yourself. When you begin with all the negative self-talk, like, "That man could not possibly be interested in me," or "I'll bet they think these clothes, these glasses, this cologne is entirely inappropriate," or, "If I just had bigger pecs, arms, ass, I'd be more acceptable," simply recognize it for the non-reality that it is and begin to give yourself nurturing, positive messages. Seek support from yourself first, then from your intimates. Individual and group therapy go a long way in providing a safe place to ventilate and express your feelings.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, learn forgiveness. Even if you have tremendous difficulty exonerating yourself and the dysfunctional people and events in your life that have left you reeling, forgiveness is a critical aspect of reclaiming your life, your self-esteem, your self-image, and your self-worth.

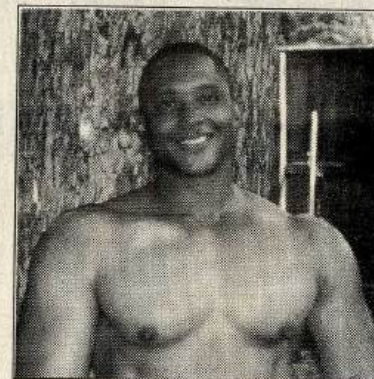
Michael D. Wilson, LMSW, is a clinical psychotherapist and political social worker currently practicing at New Counseling, where he specializes in HIV and death and dying issues. For further information, please call 529-1913.

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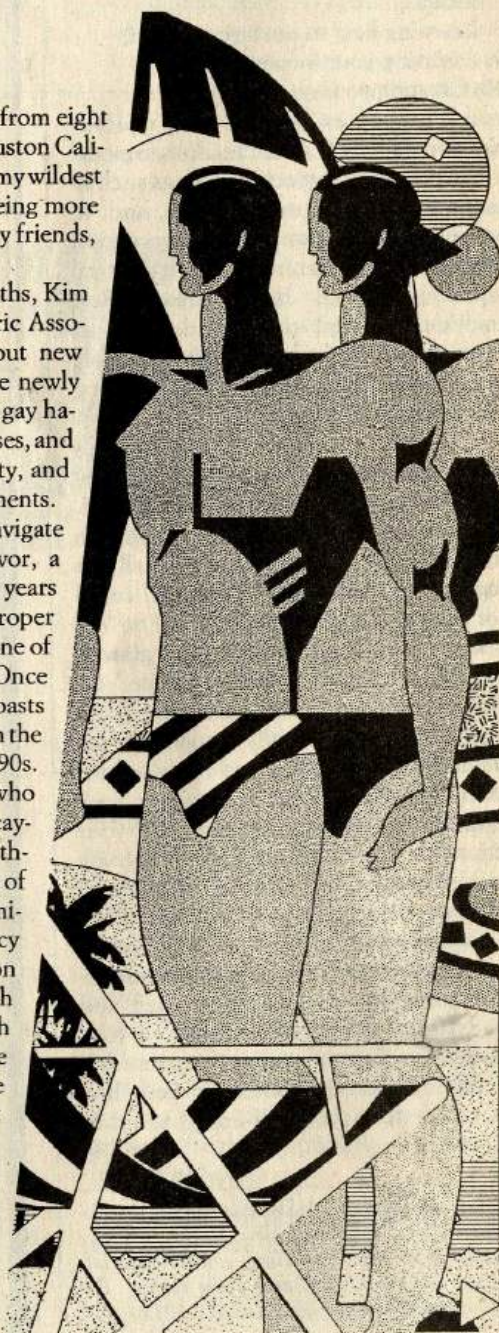
I love Houston. In fact, just returning from eight days in Florida, I've been calling Houston California the past week. Never, never in my wildest dreams could I imagine any place being more hot and humid than Houston, but my friends, Florida wins this battle hands down.

The trip had been planned for months, Kim to attend the annual American Psychiatric Association convention, and me to check out new cruise ships and experience firsthand the newly renovated Art Deco, South Miami Beach gay haven. We accomplished our business purposes, and I was very impressed by the variety, quality, and aesthetic appeal of South Beach establishments.

Miami is an interesting city, easy to navigate and throbbing with delightful Latino flavor, a result of the Cuban migrations these past 30 years or so. Miami Beach is separated from Miami proper by Biscayne Bay, which must be crossed by one of four causeways to arrive at Miami Beach. Once across the bay, head for South Beach, which boasts the largest collection of art deco architecture in the world and is the sun and fun gay haven of the 90s.

In the 1980s, it was the gay community who spearheaded the movement to renovate the decaying Miami Beach area. In the early 80s, the southern section, called South Beach, was in a state of serious decay, as the money and tourists had migrated further up to North Beach to build fancy hotels and high-rise condos. But men and women of vision realized that the sheer volume of local buildings in South Beach, typifying art deco architecture, were definitely worth saving. For the past 15 years, gay men and lesbians have sought to create a unique destination, bringing their creative talents and spirits to the project. The result is one of the most attractive places I've ever visited.

Here you can see the complete cross section of gay culture. Everywhere you look are beautiful gay men and women, hotel proprietors, shop owners, and savvy restaurateurs. The local gay community is warm and friendly, boasts wonderful clubs, discos, and restaurants, and enjoys one of the most fun gay beaches anywhere in the world. South Beach is definitely worth a visit, and it would be a delightful idea to



by Sandra B. Wilkins

combine three or four days there with a Key West getaway. Two important bits of advice though: Don't drive between Miami and Key West, and don't visit in the summer, because *haute* as it may be, it's too damned hot!

Switching gears, let's talk about travel and HIV infection. Dr. Frederick Altice, Assistant Professor of Medicine at Yale Medical School, and director of their AIDS program, has recently written about current health protocols for international travelers with HIV for *Out and About* travel magazine.

Dr. Altice reports: "Even for the seasoned traveler, good preparation is required for a healthy and uncomplicated trip. Although personal physicians are an important resource, *travel clinics offer the most current information*, and you may locate one through your local health department or university medical center. In addition, you or your physician may obtain advice from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Travel Hotline, (404) 332-4555. The majority of preventable medical complications occur among international travelers who visit developing countries. Pre-travel medical advice should be sought at least 4-6 weeks prior to travel. Major considerations when obtaining pre-travel medical advice for the HIV-positive traveler should include an assessment of underlying health, degree of immunosuppression caused by HIV, necessary medications, travel itinerary, duration of the trip, and the expected access to medical care.

"A variety of vaccinations can prove invaluable for HIV-positive travelers and should be administered preferably 2-6 weeks before travel. Efficacy of these vaccines depends on the status of the immune system of the HIV-positive patient; however, the majority of these vaccines have few side effects, and the benefits clearly outweigh the risks. Those highly recommended for HIV-positive people include: (1) pneumococcal vaccine (Pneumovax) to be given every five years; (2) tetanus boosters, given every five years; and (3) for those without previous exposure, hepatitis B vaccine, administered in the deltoid.

"The most frequent medical complications for all travelers are infections involving the gastrointestinal tract; traveler's diarrhea is the best known of these. Careful planning and avoidance of certain foods and beverages can diminish the risks of complications. Since traveler's diarrhea is caused by infectious agents acquired through food and water ingestion, it is prudent to watch your diet as carefully as possible. Tap water and ice from any place other than 4- and 5-star hotels should be strictly avoided, even for brushing teeth. Bottled beverages are preferred, but remember they are only as safe as the source from which they are taken. Not all countries have similar standards of disinfection. Additionally, carbonated beverages may provide some added benefit to non-carbonated beverages secondary to more acidity, which kills some infectious agents. Milk and milk products must be pasteurized. In general, foods should be served fresh and hot, and, in general, it is advisable to avoid street vendors and uncooked or undercooked foods.

"Any trip made by an HIV-positive patient who receives intravenous (IV) therapies such as antibiotics, pain medication, parenteral nutrition, or hydration, requires careful and detailed consideration prior to departure. For domestic travelers, there are many home IV therapy companies nationwide which can provide medication, supplies, and nursing support at remote destinations. Physicians providing these services at home can coordinate continuation of services elsewhere. In some cases it will be important

to carry medications and supplies, and a doctor's note detailing the medical need for the supplies is usually necessary. Two-thirds of states have either prescription or paraphernalia laws governing the possession of needles or syringes. Disposable ice packs (especially those activated by compression) are useful for medications which require refrigeration, but are not practical for extended travel."

It's very encouraging to note that almost all of the fine gay and lesbian tour operators are familiar with—and experienced in—assisting HIV-positive travelers. As always, plan your dream vacations as far in advance as possible, discuss your medical situation with your doctor and travel agent, and allow all of your professionals to help you plan for and enjoy to the maximum, your vacation time.

From the sunny shores of California-like Houston, I say bon voyage until next time. ▼

Sandra Wilkins, a travel professional for 17 years, specializes in arranging travel for the gay and lesbian community. Contact her by phone at 713/526-4471.



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Documenting Our Relationships



by Connie Moore

During the Pride season, we like to return to the legal basics and spread the word about all we can do to clarify and protect ourselves and our relationships. Many types of legal problems can be solved just by using a little advance planning. There never was a more appropriate use of the old adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," than in the legal arena. By executing certain documents or even obtaining court decrees, we can document our agreements and safeguard our families. Let's take a brief look at some of our methods of protection.



Who needs a will?

Everyone needs a will. If you die without a will, your property is distributed according to the laws of the state in which you live. If you are single, this usually means that it all goes to your children, your parents, and/or your next of kin. A will gives you the opportunity to say exactly

who is to get your property when you are gone. In a Texas will you can designate an executor who may act independently from the court's control. This factor alone can save surviving friends and family thousands of dollars in legal expenses in taking care of your affairs.



What is a power of attorney?

A power of attorney is an authorization for another person to act on your behalf. Powers of attorney come in two flavors: general and special. The general power of attorney gives a person the ability to act for you in

virtually all situations. A special power of attorney gives someone the ability to act on your behalf in a specific situation or for a limited purpose.



What is a health care power of attorney?

Health care powers of attorney are special powers of attorney giving another person the power to make decisions for you in a medical emergency and when you are incompetent. They also enable that person to visit you in

the hospital as if they were your next of kin. This becomes particularly important if you are in intensive care or under restricted visitation orders.

Do powers of attorney really work?

Nothing is ever guaranteed when you are dealing with banks, the federal government, or with other entities who may have their own required forms. A power of attorney is a very inexpensive emergency document that will work in most situations. One thing is sure, without a power of attorney, you have very little chance of having someone act for you in an emergency. Also, a court-appointed guardian can override either a general or a health care power of attorney. If you are concerned that a family member will seek appointment as your guardian from a court in order to wrestle away control from your designated agent, then sign a designation of guardian to make your wishes known about your choice for your legal guardian.

Do I need a directive to physicians or a living will?

Texas is one of a growing number of states which gives terminally ill persons the right to refuse the use of mechanical life support systems to prolong their lives. This is not a euthanasia law. You must make your desires known to your physician before it becomes necessary to employ life support systems. The best way to do this is to execute a directive to physicians and give a copy of it to your doctor.

Who has the right to make my funeral arrangements?

You do. If you don't do it before you die, then that right passes to the person you designate in a document called an appointment of agent to control disposition of remains. If you do not sign one of those, then your next of kin has the absolute right to decide what happens to your body.

Are cohabitation agreements necessary?

Even if you think you are going to live together till death do you part, it is still a good idea to make an agreement as to your rights and responsibilities to each other and put it in writing. The law provides little protection otherwise. If you live together happily ever after, you have the satisfaction of knowing where you stand with that special loved one. If you go the way of the unfortunate, however, you have a basis from which to start dividing all that accumulated wealth. This document is especially important if real estate is part of your portfolio. Oral agreements about real estate are not valid in Texas.

What if we are raising children together?

There are many things that you need to consider, such as emergency health care for the kids, planning for the death of one parent, co-parenting rights and responsibilities, and safeguards from outside interference. You may even choose to obtain court decrees to strengthen your special family ties.

This is just a brief overview of some of the protection which we recommend for our community. We will take an in-depth look into each one of these topics and their importance for us at several upcoming free seminars. Two talks will be included in the speakers portion of Spectrum '95, which will be held at the Astroarena on Sunday, June 18, 1995. We will also join Julie LaRue and Mitchell Katine for "Legal and Financial Planning for People with Life-Threatening Illness" on Thursday, June 22, 1995, at 6:30 pm. For additional information about either of these opportunities to learn more about document planning, just call 522-4282, extension 10. Have a fun and safe Pride!

Connie Moore is a partner at Moore & Hunt, a lesbian/feminist law firm based in Houston. Since graduating from the University of Houston Law Center, Connie has pursued the area of human rights law with an emphasis on lesbian and gay rights. Under Connie's guidance, Moore & Hunt is a part of the cooperating attorney network of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. In addition to feminist, lesbian, and gay issues, the firm concentrates in family law, contract negotiations and disputes, corporation and small business formations, wills, estate planning and probate matters. For more information regarding this article, call 522-4282.

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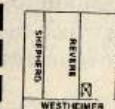
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COMMUNICATIONS 101:

UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS, IMAGO STYLE



by Patrick J. Vachon

When couples enter my office for the first time, they almost always identify "communication" as one of the major issues that they wish to address. The others who state that their communication is not an issue, generally leave the first session questioning their communication abilities. In fact, most of us, if left to our unconscious style, communicate very poorly. Although there are many factors which contribute to relationship conflicts and breakdown (see "Understanding and Transforming Conflict," *OutSmart*, May/June 1995), resolution cannot truly occur without well-developed communication skills. This article will focus on some of the underlying factors of communication breakdown as well as offering a tool of correction which the IMAGO model calls the "intentional dialog."

It would probably be helpful to briefly review some ideas presented in previous articles which address the functioning of the brain. First and foremost, it is important to remember that the

unconscious agenda of what the IMAGO model calls the "Old Brain" is survival. Its primary objective is to keep us safe and alive. If our physical, emotional, or intellectual safety is perceived as being threatened, the Old Brain responds with some form of defense. This usually results in reactivity escalation and communication breakdown as the Old Brain survival instinct overrides the New Brain responses which include verbal communication. The brain will do what is necessary to secure the body's safety. If the body is threatened, it will respond with an appropriate response of fight, flight, freezing, or submission. If the unconscious perceives a threat of any kind, it will defend itself, often by attempting to change our partners mind or re-enforcing our position on an issue. If we are successful in changing someone else's mind, the threat is removed from us and de-escalation occurs; however, this has often resulted in a submission of the other person's reality, which causes

a converse-perceived threat. The key here is to provide a space where both realities can be held simultaneously with complete safety.

Another underlying factor that complicates communication is an unconscious need for connection. If another person has a different perception than our own, we are confronted with our separateness. In a desperate attempt to re-connect (have a shared perception), we will often try to change someone else's reality. This again is often perceived as an attack and is met with defense, which causes further division rather than connection. Our inherent need for connection is thus met head-on with the Old Brain directive to keep us safe and secure even if separation is the result. Individuals will often state that to give up their belief about something feels as if a part of them is dying. To the unconscious mind that is exactly what is occurring.

The main goal of the Intentional Dialog is to allow couples to realize and be able to hold two or more different realities simultaneously. The desired outcome is then to retrain the brain to realize that an opposing reality is not life threatening and thus does not require life-sustaining measures.

In summary then, most of what we call communication breakdown is an unconscious attempt to keep the body safe and alive. The Intentional Dialog is a process which allows for what I call "Reactivity Override." What this means is that we short-circuit the Old Brain response to be defensive and replace it with a conscious attempt to understand and hold another reality while not forfeiting our own.

As stated earlier, most of us do not communicate well at all. When in a dialog with another, we often become defensive, finish sentences, interrupt others, give opinions, judge, give advice, criticize, or try to fix the problems. In doing any of these things, we have essentially quit listening and thus ended true communication. I like to define true communication as "speaking until you feel heard and listening until you understand."

The Intentional Dialog process requires two participants, a Sender and a Receiver, and is divided into three parts—Mirroring, Validation, and Empathy.

Because this process appears to be time consuming, I am often asked when it should be used. Although this process would be beneficial to use all the time, it is most important that Intentional Dialog should be used whenever a breakdown occurs when discussing sensitive issues or any time you feel the need to be listened to and understood.

The role of the Sender is to deliver information which will be mirrored back by the Receiver. The role of the Receiver is to mirror back the delivered information without interruption, without interpretation, and without alteration of content. In short this means "don't add, don't subtract, and don't interpret." Also do not ask or answer questions.

The first step in the Intentional Dialog is to ask for an appointment and can be simply stated as such: "There is something I need to dialog. Is now a good time?" The appointment request serves as notice to the Receiver that something important is to follow which requires their full attention. Many couples fail to incorporate this step which often "blind-sides" the other, causing immediate reactivity. I also encourage clients to use good judgment and sensitivity when requesting a dialog. To ask for a dialog while driving down the freeway or while one person is working is not generally a good idea and can sabotage the process as the attention required is often distracted. In addition I suggest that dialog be done face to face rather than via telephone, although this is not always possible. Turning off televisions and other distract-

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

I SOUGHT MYSELF BUT MYSELF I COULD NOT SEE,
I SOUGHT MY GOD AND MY GOD ELUDED ME,
I SOUGHT MY BROTHER AND FOUND ALL THREE.

—author unknown



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Communication

Continued from previous page

tions is also a good idea.

Once the time and place has been secured, the Sender begins the process by making a statement of concern. It is generally best for the Sender to keep the statements short and as precise as possible, at least initially. When the Sender completes the statement, the Receiver mirrors back the statement as accurately as possible. The Receiver responds with the sentence stem, "So, if I'm hearing you correctly" or "So, what you are saying is" and then mirrors back the statement. It is not necessary to get the words exactly; however, an attempt should be made to paraphrase accurately. Also, it is not necessary that you agree with what is being said, only that you mirror accurately.

In addition to the mirroring of content, the Receiver will be attempting to mirror back effect as well. This would include any variations in tempo, volume, or hand movements which would add to an accurate mirror. What is being attempted is to do what a visual and auditory mirror would do, that being a direct reflection of what has been stated. It is important to remember that the Receiver not respond in any way, not even if the Sender requests. For example, if the Sender asks, "Don't you remember when you did that?" the Receiver would simply mirror by saying, "So, you want to know if I remember when I did that," without answering the question. When the Receiver finishes the mirror, he or she will check for accuracy by asking, "Did I get that right?" The Sender responds by saying yes (if they did) or by making a statement like, "You got most of it, but what I want you to hear is," and then restates the missing part. The Receiver then mirrors back the restated message until the Sender feels heard. Once the message is received and verified, the Receiver asks, "Is there more?" The Sender then sends more of the message and continues the process until she or he feels completely heard. When the Sender is completely finished, the Receiver then initiates the second part of the Intentional Dialog, which is Validation.

What the Receiver is attempting to do in the Validation phase is to put aside their own reality for a short time and attempt to view the situation or perspective of the other person. Again, this does not mean that anyone has to surrender their own reality.

Imagine that you and your partner both have camcorders and are both filming the same event. However, one of you is filming from a vantage point much different (i.e., higher or lower) than the other. When the event is over, you begin to discuss your perspective and realize that each of you has seen different aspects of the same event. To help you understand the other person's perspective, you decide to watch each other's video. Upon doing so, you are able to see the reality of the other person and subsequently validate their reality and perception while maintaining your own.

Actually, each one of us begins life with our own unique video camera in tow. We experience life, filing each encounter, interaction, and person on film. As adults, we then perceive current events and interactions with a historical bias. Our perceptions are skewed by our wounds as well as our joys of the past. Conflicts often occur as a result of our partners not understanding "where we are coming from." The intent of the Intentional Dialog and Validation process is to understand the other reality and communicate our understanding to our partner.

Once the Mirroring is complete, the Receiver validates the Sender by stating, "What you are saying makes sense to me because," and then tells the Sender what aspects of what they have heard make sense. Once again, it is important to remember that

agreement is not necessary. The intention is to acknowledge that there are two different realities which are both true and correct based on the individual perceptions.

The final part of the Intentional Dialog is Empathy. Similar to validation, this component attempts to facilitate the Receiver in extending themselves into the emotional reality of the other, based on the previous Mirroring and Validation. In this stage, the Receiver tries to imagine what it might be like to be experiencing the reality of the other. What is being attempted is to re-connect the two individuals, this time from an emotional point. After validating the other person's reality from a content perspective, they would continue the Empathy by stating, "And if you saw it that way, I would imagine that it might make you feel," and then attempts to imagine the possible emotional responses of the other, such as scared, angry, hurt, sad, or abandoned.

Once complete, the Receiver will then check out with the Sender if he or she feels heard by asking something like, "Did I get all that?" "Do you feel like I got it all?" or "Is there anything that you would add?" The Sender would then respond with a final "Yes" or add anything else to complete the interaction. The Intentional Dialog provides the necessary safety mechanisms for the Sender to speak until they feel heard, and the Receiver to keep asking for more which allows for a clearer picture to be painted.

One couple I was seeing had a seemingly unending conflict around public displays of affection. Jerry could not understand why Richard wouldn't allow him to put his arm around him in a relatively dark movie theater. Richard would always get angry, pull away, and lean the other way. Their normal conversation would end in conflict and impasse, where each thought the other was overreacting. Both people were willing to try a different approach and use the Intentional Dialog. The interaction went something like this.

Richard: Jerry, every time we go to the movies, as soon as the lights go out you put your arm around me, and that makes me uncomfortable.

Jerry (mirroring): So, what you are saying is, when we go to the movies and I put my arm around you, you get uncomfortable. Did I get that right?

You got most of it, but what I want you to hear is that you do it every time! And immediately when the lights go out.

(Mirroring) So, what you are saying is that I do it every time! And I do it immediately when the lights go out. Did I get that right?

Exactly right!

Is there more?

Yes, well, I'm scared that someone from work will see me. And if they do, I'll have to deal with all that crap.

(Mirroring) So, what you are saying is that you are afraid someone from work might see you, and that if they do, you will have to deal with a bunch of crap at work. Did I get that right?

Yes.

Is there more about that?

Yes. If anyone from work finds out that I'm gay, the word will spread to my boss, my sister-in-law (who works there also), and possibly to my parents. I could lose my job, my seniority, my income, and maybe even my family. I'm not ready to risk all of that.

(Mirroring) So, what you are saying is that if you are identified as being gay, people at work will find out, maybe even your family, and that could result in you losing your job security, your income, and maybe even your family. Oh yeah, and you are not ready to risk all of that. Did I get that right?

Continued on page 79

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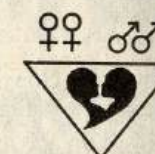
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Top photo: Mistress Formika (right) poses with another drag queen.

Bottom photo: L-R: Director Barry Shils poses with David Schweizer, Jackie Beat and Alexis Arquette during the filming.



Freedom comes in a variety of guises—and the look of the 1990s in America will mean sporting serious hair, a sensational frock and working a pair of size 14 heels. It took a popular New York Festival called Wigstock to bring drag out of the dark and into the light of day. Now, *Wigstock: The Movie* throws it onto the big screen in a vibrant film that is a musical celebration of life, love, and lipstick.

The art of drag has reached a zenith in terms of being part of American culture. Despite its current vogue status, drag has never really gone out of style. Practically relegated to being just a campy sub-culture hidden in out-of-the-way bars or exploited on afternoon talk shows, drag has emerged as the media darling of the post-modern generation. Embraced with a renewed fervor by Hollywood, *Wigstock: The Movie* presents the “real thing,” relatively speaking. It’s the Super Bowl of drag.

Launched in 1984, Wigstock has turned from a gathering of friends and hipsters of the underground club scene into one of New York’s most popular and outrageous events. The “Lady” Bunny, creator and reigning diva, has emceed every festival over the last decade—an all-day affair that has been described as Woodstock without the bad hair.

Traditionally held Labor Day weekend in downtown Manhattan, the festival now attracts an audience from beyond its loyal Village neighborhood and the gay community. Artists, their fans and the



curious from around the world make the pilgrimage every summer in a quest to be fabulous. Its first incarnations took place in Tompkins Square Park, growing in size and production values with the 1994 edition boasting an all-star roster of talent and a record-breaking 30,000 people in attendance.

First captured on film by late video artist Tom Rubnitz in 1986 as a 20-minute short—portions of which comprise the title sequence of the feature film—director Barry Shils says he wanted to fully capture the true spirit of the event and present it to the rest of an unsuspecting world. Two separate Wigstocks were documented on film: the 1993 edition at its original Tompkins Square Park home and the 1994 festival at the Christopher Street Piers, where Wigstock was moved in order to accommodate a larger audience and show.

“I recommend that every-one within the sound of my voice should go out and get a wig, a pair of high heels, pantyhose if you will, and strut your stuff, girlfriend.”
—RuPaul

Shils places the camera into the very roots of this tangled, teased-up, high-gloss festival for a unique perspective through a variety of camera positions around and above the stage. Going behind-the-scenes on an expedition of sorts, the film captures rarely seen preparations of the drag stars and their arduous rehearsals which culminate in a variety of dazzling performances. In essence, the film is a journey underneath the make-up and glamour to reveal and display some unique talents.

Wigstock: The Movie features such prominent pop culture figures and drag icons as “Supermodel of the World” RuPaul, the musical group Deee-lite, dance music recording star Crystal Waters, Los Angeles-based actors/drag performers Alexis Arquette (a.k.a. Eva Destruction) and Jackie Beat, and such legendary divas as Lypsinka, Mistress Formika, Joey Arias, and, of course, “Lady” Bunny herself. There is also “a cast of thousands and all in wigs” to complete this outrageous ensemble. Even the audience is dressed up and ready to show.

The movie is also full of festive music such as *Age of Aquarius* from the Broadway show *Hair*, *Too Darn Hot* by Cole Porter from the musical *Kiss Me Kate*,

We’re Off to See the Wizard of Dorothy and Toto fame, and the recent dance hit by Crystal Waters, *100% Pure Love*. RuPaul, consummate drag diva, performs three of her songs—*A Shade Shady* (Now *Prance*), *House of Love*, and *Free to Be*.

Like the event, *Wigstock: The Movie*

is about fun and style. Most importantly, the film captures a celebration of uninhibited imagination. Even more, it is a rare cinematic effort to capture a true grass roots movement. It is a call to personal freedom and a chance to embrace a basic fundamental right—to have fun and respect oneself.

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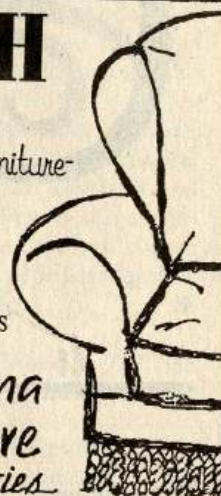
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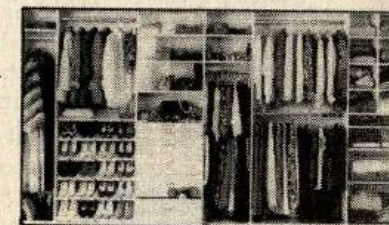
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Dating, Relating



Commitment

Part III The Challenge of Commitment

The Dilemma:

Jane and Margaret met each other last year at a workshop on dating (of course!). They have been dating each other for a while now—almost a year—and they just recently had their first major conversation about commitment. Both have been in “committed relationships” before, but they decided they have much to learn about what commitment means before they “tie the knot again.”

Jane tells Margaret about her first commitment to her college roommate back in 1973. Jane was 20 years old and struggling with her sexuality. The commitment lasted for seven months until the roommate started dating Jane's last boyfriend. Since then, Jane has had three other committed relationships, the longest lasting seven years.

Jane chuckles as she relates that her former roommate and still best friend recently celebrated her 18th anniversary with Bridget. Margaret pensively recalls that her “first committed relationship” was also her first romantic involvement with a woman. Margaret's nine-year marriage to Bill ended in an amicable divorce five years ago. Three years ago, while doing volunteer work at the Center for Women, she met Lois and fell in love for the first time. Margaret and Lois moved in together in August after knowing each other for three glorious months. Their commitment ceremony (a lovely gathering with just a few close friends) was in October, and by March Margaret was in the midst of her second divorce. Since then, Margaret has been busy exploring dating.

Solution: the Slow Dance of Commitment

Commitment is a cornerstone of a stable romantic relationship. It is a loving, living bond that exists between people who care deeply about each other. Commitment requires acceptance, without denial or resistance, that the other person is important in your life. It means that you experience your

partner as significant to your well-being and are comfortable with that fact. In healthy commitment, there is no denial or loss of either person's individuality. At the same time, commitment almost always means you'll let go of a focus on some aspects of yourself in favor of a focus on the relationship. Commitment as a decision to bond is also a decision to make the protection and preservation of that bond a highest priority.

Commitment is an active process that requires partners to challenge each other to grow at times, understanding that there will be rough times and difficult forces to deal with along with the joys and achievements of a loving relationship. Part of commitment is also acceptance of things that don't change, such as each other's habits and shortcomings that may be bothersome, but are not intolerable or destructive.

The ability to make healthy commitment presupposes the wisdom to choose a partner with whom sustaining such a commitment is realistically possible. That is why it is so important to take time to really get to know your romantic partner before you make commitment. Remember, passion and “in love” feelings are not enough to sustain relationship. By going slowly, true intimacy is developed. Also, since life has its ups and downs, moving slowly allows you to experience some difficult times together. Going through adversity with the other person will show you the quality of support your partner can provide and how well you work together.



by
Joyce M. Gayles, Ph.D.

In the process of making a commitment, it is important that both of you are working toward making the same type of commitment. The decision to have a “committed relationship” should not be rushed, and it is obviously better if both of you share similar ideas about it. When you find yourself at the point of readiness for commitment,

brief couple's work with an experienced therapist might be helpful preparation. There you can share feelings about what you want and need from your relationship and what you want out of life. Your discussion should bring into the open each of your needs, wishes, and goals for yourself and for the relationship. By talking in this way, you will become aware of the ideals and goals you share. You will also become aware of your differences and the areas of relating that will be challenging to you.

Solution: Working on Your Commitment

Commitment can be divided into two types: formal and process. Formal commitments are those you make when you take vows, sign contracts, or make promises. Process commitments are the day-to-day instances of re-dedicating yourself to the relationship. Process commitment is demonstrated in several ways:

Time commitment for example: There are 168 hours in a week. People spend an average 45 hours working, 50+ hours sleeping, 10+ commuting, 20+ eating/“doing things around the house.” How much of your 168-hour week are you willing to devote to a partner and nurturing your relationship?

The issue of **sexual exclusivity** is another obvious facet of commitment. While most people equate sexual exclusivity with commitment, some people, no matter how much they love, are not sexually exclusive in their long-term relationships. Therefore, it is important that you and your partner share similar ideas about sexuality and sexual expression. Whatever choices and decisions you make will have consequences. Whether you are one of those who is inclined to exclusivity or one of those who is not, it is important to be honest about your feelings, preferences, and actions. Don't lie to yourself, and don't lie to each other.

Commitment to your agreements is an important day-to-day demonstration of your devotion to your relationship. Do you honor your end of agreements in such matters as household chores, financial responsibility, co-parenting, etc?

Long-term commitment is demonstrated by your willingness to share joys and work out difficulties together over time, by your willingness to establish and pursue goals together, and by your acknowledgment to the world that this is your main woman or man.

Solution: Knowing When to End

Commitment should never be an ab-

solute. Blind commitment or the “press on, regardless” school of relationships is a source of much misery in the world. At the opposite extreme is the “any reason” justification for exiting a relationship. Dissatisfied with your sex life? Find another partner. Feeling like your lover is holding you back? It's time to hit the road, Jack. Not feeling understood? Surely, there's someone else out there who will be glued to your every word. For most of you, however, good judgment suggests a middle ground. Certainly, there are circumstances where the decision to end a commitment is a valid and mature response. Anna and Robin are a good example.

Anna is 24 years old, and Robin is 39. Anna saw in Robin a maturity she had never experienced before combined with a joy about life that matched her own. Looking at Anna, Robin saw a similar zest for life and was thrilled with Anna's appreciation of her maturity. They began dating and were ecstatically happy for a while. Time passed, and friction slowly and subtly developed between them. Play and the freedom to explore became more and more important to Anna, while Robin became aware that she wanted the stability of a firm commitment. Anna and Robin loved each other deeply, but came to see how different were their stages of development and consequently their deeper wants and needs. They felt compelled to part, but understood that their relationship was not a failure. Each of them gave the other something nourishing, and each had grown.

No one can draw the line for you about ending your commitment. However, Jack Barranger, in his book, *Knowing When to Quit*, suggests a few questions to explore when you are considering quitting:

How do you really feel? It is important to discover how you really feel about your commitment to the relationship. At times you may find it difficult to separate your own feelings from the feelings of your partner or the opinions of your friends, family, and the community.

Are your expectations realistic? Expectations can run rampant in relationships. The media portray relationships so unrealistically that no one is unaffected. A good question to ask yourself in a relationship is, “Is what bothers me about my partner something I would have only with this partner?”

What will you gain from ending this commitment? When most people think about quitting, they focus only on the loss aspect. It's a good idea to think about as many specific gains as possible to provide

the necessary balance for making your decision.

Is there any light at the end of the tunnel? This is the question. As long as you have hope, there are other alternatives to consider. However, once you realize that “the tunnel simply goes on and on,” ending your commitment is a healthy response.

The Dance of Commitment Is All About Change

The decision to commit is the decision to share life's journey with someone. Just as each person evolves through stages of development, so do relationships. The ability to achieve healthy commitment paradoxically lies in your ability to handle change. Couples who are able to ally with and support each other's dreams and aspirations, joys and pains have the best chance that their relationship will be a lasting one. ▼

References:

J. Barranger, *Knowing When to Quit*. San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publishers, 1988.

Joyce M. Gayles, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist specializing in life transition and growth issues. She also facilitates a popular seminar on dating. For information, contact her at 713/667-6047.

There's Strength in Comedy.

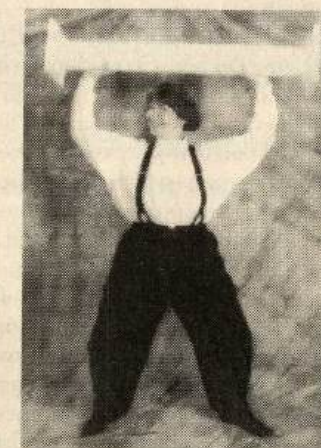


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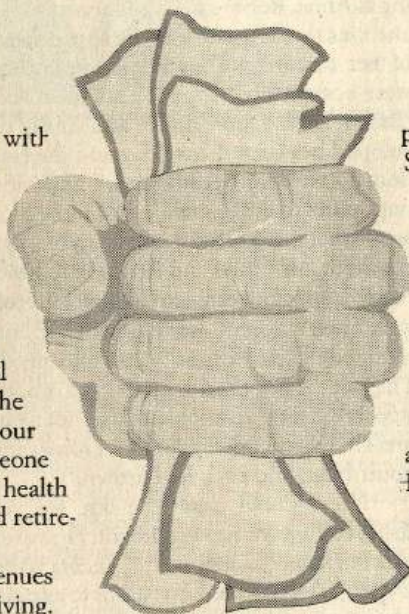
HOW TO TAKE FINANCIAL CONTROL

Part 3

Taking financial control when living with a life-threatening illness means two things: 1) start planning as soon as possible after being diagnosed and 2) get professional help from attorneys, case managers, the Social Security Administration, financial planners, accountants, and anyone else who is professionally qualified to help in this area. By starting as soon as possible, with professional advisors, dramatic differences can be seen in the asset planning stage, the second stage of ten in our planning process. The two biggest assets for someone living with a life-threatening illness, next to health insurance, are his/her life insurance policies and retirement plans.

Life insurance provides several different avenues for receiving the benefit while an insured is still living. One way to receive this is through accelerating the death benefit. This is known as "living benefits," which differs from viatication in that a pre-death settlement is made between the insurance company which issued the policy and the person who is insured under the policy. Some insurance companies will pay an accelerated benefit on a policy if the insured can show that he/she has less than six months to live due to a terminal illness. Other companies, however, will pay a benefit if the insured is expected to live less than 12 months. These options vary depending on the insurance company, but many times the benefit will be greater than when viaticating a policy.

Viaticating your policy is another way to get money from your life insurance policy. This involves selling your policy to a third party for immediate cash. The company you sell to is called a viatical settlement company. In this scenario, policies are purchased for 50 percent to 80 percent of the face value. The percentage of the face amount of the policy a company will pay is based on the insured's life expectancy. Generally, a viatical settlement company is looking for a life expectancy of two years or less. Some companies will extend



past two years but with substantial discounts. Sometimes people will sell only a portion of their policy. Once your policy is sold, the insured and beneficiaries have no rights to the policy if the entire policy is sold. Term, permanent, and group life insurance policies may all be viaticated, but individual contractual clauses should be reviewed prior to trying to viaticate your policy. Advisors helping clients viaticate their group term life insurance have found these policies to have many different variables and sometimes can take many months to viaticate. Having time on your side with viaticating can be a significant benefit to you.

Both viatical settlements and accelerated benefits are subject to federal income tax as ordinary income. There are regulations pending with the IRS to make accelerated benefits and viatical settlements free from federal income tax.

Another way to get money from your life insurance is to use your policy as collateral for a private loan. The first place to consider this is with the beneficiary of your policy since they will ultimately receive the proceeds from your policy. You may also consider a friend or relative who could make a loan to you, and you could then make them an irrevocable beneficiary of the policy.

Borrowing from a permanent life insurance policy can be a way to get cash out of your policy. This would only be an option if the policy has been in place long enough to build up some cash value. Newer policies (1-5 years old) generally have not had time to build up a large enough cash value to borrow against unless a large lump sum premium payment was made.

Many people purchase a disability waiver of premium on their permanent policies. This generally says that if a person becomes unable to work, the insurance company will continue to pay their premiums. This can be a source of cash, because as the life insurance company is paying premiums, the cash



By Julie LaRue, LUTCF

value is continuing to build and dividends are being paid if it is a dividend-paying policy. Loans and withdrawals can then be taken against the cash value once it has accumulated.

Retirement plans—the other big asset—are referred to in the financial world as qualified plans. Qualified plans are regulated by the IRS and have certain rules and regulations that must be followed. Many of you have retirement plans through your employers, sometimes called 401(k) plans, 403(b) plans, etc. These plans allow you to make contributions before tax. This helps to reduce taxable income and allows the earnings and growth on that money to be tax-deferred. This means you don't have to pay tax until the money is withdrawn after age 59 1/2. But if any money is taken out before age 59 1/2, you have to pay a 10-percent excise tax and treat the amount withdrawn as ordinary income. However, the 10-percent excise tax may be waived in the case of a financial hardship such as disability. In other words, we could be putting additional dollars into your retirement plan (with the company possibly having a match in contribution) and create a larger sum of money to use for additional income at a later date. Remember though, this plan would reduce your taxable income and, therefore, possibly decrease future Social Security Disability Insurance benefits. This type of planning should be coordinated with the appropriate advisors.

In summary, life insurance can be your biggest asset—next to your health insurance—so be sure to consider all your options before viaticating your policy or accelerating your death benefit. Similarly, retirement or qualified plans allow options for additional income, especially through the use of the financial hardships provisions.

These ideas all require considerable planning, with the help of professional advisors to maximize your options. Next month we'll discuss liability management and some ideas on how to handle credit options. ▼

Julie LaRue, LUTCF, is a financial advisor with The Acacia Group. Her practice includes financial planning for people facing a life-threatening illness. She is a Registered Representative and Investment Advisory Associate with The Advisors Group, Inc., the registered broker-dealer and investment advisor of The Acacia Group. Information is general in nature. Be sure to consult an attorney for specific legal advice. Julie can be reached at 713/888-3500.

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THE WORLD

After much turmoil and great periods of stress, a vibration of ease settles over the country. I see a meeting of minds—not a partnership, but an agreement. Though this agreement may take a long time to actualize, it shall be the beginning of a temporary peace. The prevailing sickness of some countries in our world will cease, even if only for a period, and a reconciling of differences shall occur. This will not be permanent.

Jobs and the economic status of the country will begin a slow turn upward. Once more the U.S. will be saved from disaster, at least until next time.

I feel as though the Gods and Goddesses of mankind are at peace and have smiled upon their children. So should the world reflect this gift. In life we are given chances to change the world. What we do or do not do to aid the better good is totally our own choosing. Learn to tap dance along with the rhythm of life, and all will soar with the flight of the eagle. Peace and blessed be.

ARIES (3/21-4/19)

Doing the right thing can sometimes be hard. It seems now as though all the pleasure you've worked for is strangely bittersweet. In life we must learn to conform to reality and live within the boundaries of our own time and space. Once we start to develop our inner selves, our minds will open and new awareness will form.

As you move away from your past difficulties, life will change. Sacrifice that must occur on your way to Spirit will be more noticeable. You could find yourself sitting in church a lot more, listening to the music and being filled with the essence of Spirit.

Single Aries, independent and free, should dance the rhythm of romance. Offers of love, flowers, and fattening little chocolates could find their way to you. For a time, if you let it, life will seem to better itself. Relief is yours—for a moment.

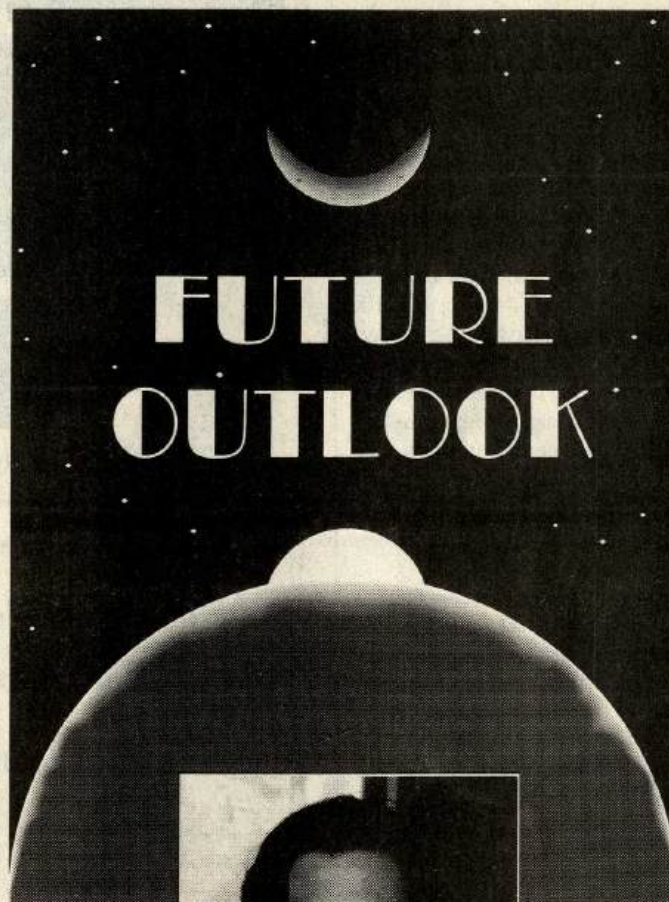
All will come, and all could be taken away. This is totally dependent upon you. They say an old dog can't learn new tricks. Of course he can, but first he must be willing to say goodbye to the old tricks.

TAURUS (4/20-5/20)

Situations in life, whether they be pronounced or mild, inherently call for—no, they demand—equanimity. For Taurus there is a need to stabilize your emotions. Perhaps you feel as though you've worked hard enough and deserve more. Maybe you're not getting the recognition needed by you at this time. Of course, we know that normally this would not be a problem for Taurus. Even though you may insist that recognition or pats on the back truly don't mean anything, your child within is crying out for stroking.

Learning the lesson of Temperance—following the middle path—can be the most difficult of life's lessons. Not taking sides or leaning toward one direction or the other may seem to require superhuman strength at times. Intermingled in this lesson is the trying experience of patience. Success for you is not far away. What is one year in the span of 80? Stressing over it will only make the time seem longer.

You need to be careful of giving in to those weaknesses that are currently



BY JOSEPH MOLINA

surrounding you. The key here is self-control, which is the understanding of Temperance. Respect the alchemical that draws opposites together. If you can't control yourself, then truly, what can you control? The challenge of life, Taurus, is upon you now.

GEMINI (5/21-6/20)

Welcome, Gemini! Your life is unfolding quite pleasantly on your way down the Yellow Brick Road to find the Land of Oz. But before Oz can be found, some decisions need to be made. Pay more attention to structure. Set solid goals. During this time there is a lot of money that could be made, perhaps manifesting itself in an unexpected windfall from a previous investment.

They say all good things come to those who wait. But this time the universe waits for you to at last make the decision which holds the key to your future. You may actually be coming to your senses, Gemini, either in terms of your career, romance, or the city where you choose to live. Once that decision is made, off you'll fly to start the cycle all over again.

CANCER (6/21-7/22)

Starting new situations and becoming fully independent can, at times, be a struggle. The cards show a scattering of energy leading to a dissipation of ideas. You may be asking yourself, "What can I do to feel more alive?" or "How are we going to manifest all these ideas?"

The mist of change can often obscure the light at the end of the tunnel. Relax. Take a breather. What's the point of crying over spilled milk? You need a little attitude adjustment. How you go about this is fully up to you, but that is something that needs attention, and soon.

You could notice a pronounced sense of tension, perhaps manifesting as headaches or neck problems. Once this feeling of powerlessness goes away, so will your headaches. You have the sword of victory at your side, and it's making its way into the Cup. This will create many new opportunities for you which lead to a happier, peaceful life. Choosing six of these opportunities will lead you nowhere, so don't be greedy. One or two opportunities are sufficient to give you the world.

LEO (7/23-8/22)

Hello, Leo, and welcome to the world of interior design. Or how about Nifftee's cleaning service? Your house is in need of a cleaning. Possibly the energy within your space has grown slightly heavy and needs a good wave of the majick fairy wand—a good ol' smudge stick.

For a few days, you will be all things to all people. Or maybe all things to just one special someone. Who knows? You'll be free and charitable, or perhaps someone will be free and charitable to you. There could be a few days when you feel overwhelmed. You'll be overheard saying, "No, not another day at work!" or "Thank God it's Friday!" more than usual. Try to avoid snapping at the people you don't like. Or at the very least, limit yourself to pointing out the obvious, and simply avoid the people you don't want to completely alienate.

Life's just not moving fast enough, and you've been patient long enough.

Don't let it get to ya, Leo. Remember, you're the Lion—it's time to roar and let the world know who's boss.

Also, regardless of circumstance, things in life will move in a green direction or slow to a yellow. Common sense tells us to kick back and relax. One way or another, you'll get where you're going. You may have to make a pit stop at McDonald's, but you will eventually reach your destination. Full empowerment is yours, if you just use it right.

VIRGO (8/23-9/22)

"Whoa!" says the Genie of the Lamp. "I granted you your wish, and now you want to thank me by throwing it back?"

Security, stability, and the manifestation of a goal are key this month. The cards show a very profitable beginning for you, starting off with a bang as real estate, property, a new home, or simply more money appears in any area of your life. At first it comes to you, but then shatters to pieces. "Not the way I envisioned it," you say? Don't worry; you'll get over it. This situation will give you a valuable moment to pause to re-evaluate your plans. Just when you thought it was safe to trust your instincts....

Please be careful of being taken advantage of. Remember—this is only the beginning; the actualization of your being used and abused might not occur immediately. Being aware of the threat around you will help you be better prepared.

Don't worry; it's really not as bad as it seems. Sometimes the puzzle doesn't seem to fit, making it hard for all your wishes to come true.

LIBRA (9/23-10/22)

The cards show that you carry with you the qualities of grace and dexterity as well as the ability to rise above confusion. There is a sense of instability about your life at this time. Perhaps the foundation that you've laid for yourself—your chosen career, your earthly home—needs some attention; it's starting to crack. We can definitely tell that you are quite proficient at achieving nearly anything, providing it holds your interest. Perhaps you need more time to enjoy these pleasures, or take better avenues to reach them.

There is a hesitation about striking out on your own, as well as making any major life decisions. You have finally achieved security; why should you make changes? In a way, your intuition is working overtime. Trust it. Making any major changes now would not be wise; fate would not lend itself to your chosen goals.

I suggest that you enjoy your solitude, as this will be the greatest gift that you have. In the future, peace of mind won't be so easily available. Enjoy it while it's here, if you can.

SCORPIO (10/23-11/21)

Restless, restless, restless. Some Scorpios may notice a slightly empty or down feeling. This accompanies your dealing with memories of incidents past, or as you come to terms with the life you are leading today. As you heal an inner scar caused by a past love or a present friend, know what your limits are; especially, recognize when it's time to move on.

Single Scorpios: Indications don't point to a particularly lucky love life at this time. Married Scorpios: Expect to experience a tad bit of friction in your relationship. Maybe you two just need a change of scenery. How about a night on the town?

Sitting at home seems harder and harder. You crave excitement, like a cat pawing on a screen door, just itching to go prowling. All this inner confusion should subside toward the end of this cycle. Harmony will prevail. You'll find a sense of balance and contentment as you settle into the life of your choosing. We must remember that most good things in life take time to develop; true overnight success is rare and lucky.

SAGITTARIUS (11/22-12/21)

This will be a period focused around relationships and the lesson of learning to stand up for yourself. I see many invitations coming your way. This could be friends, potential dating partners, even strangers. You must never forget to say what you feel and to stand up for your position.

The energy surrounding you is light and easy—a switch from the past vibrations. Maybe you're due for a vacation or a weekend at the beach.

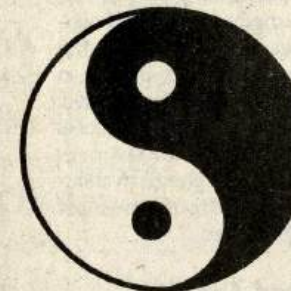
Single Sagittarians: opportunities galore. If you want a date, it shouldn't be hard to get one now. But remember, if you don't want to go out with them, then don't. You'll save yourself a lot of heartache. If married: a few days out in the country, a night at the opera. Stress relievers, Sag, that's what you need. Stress relievers.

Also, please watch your health. Indications point to you avoiding or

Continued on page 75

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HIV Health Watch

Continued from page 53

nant women to get tested for the virus. The campaign, designed by the Pediatric AIDS Foundation, "will reach out and give women the information they need to protect their own health and the health of their children," she said. Clinton also said that, according to the National Institutes of Health study, almost 6,000 American women infected with HIV give birth annually and, without treatment, 20 to 25 percent of those babies are born infected.

HIV-Infected Convicts Caught in Germany

BONN, Germany—A 51-hour hostage-taking in northern Germany ended after a police chase with two escaped prisoners, both of whom are HIV-positive, scattering 100-mark notes from the window of a stolen car. The escaped prisoners said they had nothing to lose and that "we would rather die free with a bullet in the head than slowly and painfully behind bars." A special police unit arrested the men in central Osnabrück and freed their hostage, a prison guard, said a police spokesman. The prisoners, Peter Struedinger and Guenther Finneisen, had seized the guard at a prison in Celle on Sunday morning. Thirteen hours later they fled the prison in a Porsche 928 that police provided along with 200,000 marks (\$141,000) in cash. After driving erratically around Lower

Saxony state with police following at a distance, the two ditched the Porsche, stole another car, and temporarily slipped out of police sight.

AIDS Ride Fundraiser Expects \$5 Million

HOLLYWOOD—The second annual California AIDS Ride, a 550-mile bicycle trek from San Francisco to Hollywood that has just ended, is expected to raise more than \$5 million, making it the largest AIDS fundraiser in the U.S. Among the 1,800 bike riders, about 10 have AIDS and up to 250 are HIV-positive. Celeb Judith Light of the TV comedy *Who's the Boss?* said after the 7-day ride, "It looked impossible, but it was possible because of everyone's commitment."

FBI's Surveillance of AIDS and Gay Rights Groups

WASHINGTON—Documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by the Center for Constitutional Rights indicate that the FBI has kept a number of AIDS and gay rights organizations under surveillance since the early 1980s when the group ACT UP began. The FBI denied spying on the groups and said it merely passed information along to local authorities about possible violence by members of the groups. Among the organizations the FBI kept records on—in addition to ACT UP—were: the Gay Men's Health Crisis, the Coalition for Lesbian & Gay Rights, and Senior Action in a Gay Environment, a social services agency for older gays and lesbians. Despite the FBI's denials, the agency released only 22 of its 199 pages of files on ACT UP, claiming the rest of the file was confidential because of "ongoing law-enforcement activity" involving ACT UP.

Anesthetic: Another Possible HIV Transmission Route

SYDNEY—HIV can exist for as long as four hours in anesthetic, according to a report published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*. The

researchers who did the report say their findings could explain how four women in Australia became infected with HIV in a single day in 1989 while being treated by a doctor there who was not himself infected. The researchers concluded that the ability of the virus to survive raises the possibility of transmission via multidose anesthetic vials, which allow a doctor to administer several anesthetic doses on different patients. The Australian scientists suggested that multidose anesthetic vials should be discontinued and that reusing syringes for anesthetic should be avoided unless they have first been thoroughly decontaminated.

\$200,000 Award in False HIV Diagnosis Suit

DETROIT—A jury has awarded Teri Karapetian \$200,000 for being incorrectly diagnosed as being infected with HIV. Karapetian sued the Pontiac, Michigan, Osteopathic Hospital and Dr. Dennis Lynch, claiming the physician had diagnosed her as being HIV-positive because of her flu-like symptoms when she visited him at the hospital in 1992, even though Lynch didn't test her for the virus. Afterward, Karapetian started an HIV treatment program at another hospital because of Lynch's diagnosis. After 18 months in the program without developing any symptoms of infection, Karapetian was tested for HIV and discovered she was in fact not infected.

D.C. Clinic Caps Patient Load

WASHINGTON—The Whitman-Walker Clinic in the nation's capital has announced that beginning June 1 it will be restricting its social work and health services because of the clinic's inability to meet the growing demand. Clinic officials said the fast-growing number of HIV and AIDS cases coupled with the leveling off of government funding made the move necessary. The clinic will keep its current client load at about 1,500 patients and will refer anyone above that level to other services.

House Military Subcommittee OKs Anti-HIV Measure

WASHINGTON—The national security military personnel subcommittee of the House of Representatives has voted to approve an amendment sponsored by Rep. Robert Doman (R-Calif.), the subcommittee chairman, that would bar abortions at armed forces hospitals and authorize discharging military personnel infected with HIV. The nation's armed forces currently prohibit individuals with HIV from joining, but troops diagnosed after recruitment are permitted to continue serving as long as their health allows, but are not allowed to serve outside the U.S. The Defense Department and the Department of the Army both oppose Doman's measure, which would mandate honorable discharge within 6 months of diagnosis.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Continued from page 73

pretending that your indestructible nature, even now, is all-powerful. Enjoy the lightness and easy flowing air for a calm, peaceful rest.

CAPRICORN (12/22-1/19)

From a deep darkness within, a light doth shine. A change is needed in your life. You sense this from deep within yourself, don't you? Your expectations, your chosen direction, seem inert. This has caused you to re-evaluate the foundation of your present circumstances.

The cards indicate a strong need or desire for money. Either you want more flexibility in paying your bills, or are ready for that new Z-28.

The cards urge you to have faith and trust in the power of the divine. Whether you believe it or not, you were meant to come to the place that you are now. I suggest you take a few days off or time away to refocus yourself and your life. Returning will empower you on the road to success, as you confront these problems and put the issues in balance. Nothing's easy, and this time is no exception.

This is a very empowering time for you, Capricorn—one where the results lie fully in your own actions. Good luck.

AQUARIUS (1/20-2/18)

To start off, self-control is the key. It would not be wise to exceed your limits of alcohol at this time. Of course, if you don't drink, then watch your eating habits. You are prone to excess that could lead to your downfall. A DWI is never good.

Money should begin to become a little more secure. Imagine paying the bills and having money left over at the end of the month! Your life is moving away from a pattern of defeat, and you're finally feeling alive.

You're going to be able to tell the world, "Hey, look what I bought!" or "I'll pay!" Don't be overly impulsive, but you may be encouraged to know that money from many different directions, like an extra job, is coming your way.

You're heading into a very "alive" time, one that is perfect for romance, a new career, or just a very bubbly attitude. How well this all flows is totally up to you. Remember, the key is self-control.

PISCES (2/19-3/20)

For you, a vacation is definitely due. You are in need of peace and are willing to do just about anything to attain it. If taking any trips, it would be a good idea to leave all your work behind. Learn what it means to be on vacation, and to enjoy yourself, your friends and your quiet time.

For single Pisces, please watch yourselves, especially when it comes to falling head over heels into any relationship. I see an intimate experience coming your way which could lead to confusion. Beware—you may be taken for a ride. We're usually the ones most responsible when we let ourselves be hurt, so be prepared.

Generally, a nice ease surrounds the vibration influencing Pisces. It should be much easier to breathe and feel alive now. Of course, this is a choice that's up to you: Should you keep things status quo, or implement change?

The winds of time blow visions of rest to you, humming with the songs of the angels. Enjoy.

Joseph Molina is a practicing psychic and has studied the sacred sciences for over 14 years. Specializing in Tarot, combined with clairvoyant insights for personal growth, Joseph also teaches and guides students in their development. He is available for private consultation. For information, call (713) 524-4411.



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The Classifieds

continued on next page

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Communication 101

Continued from page 65

Yes, you got it.

Is there more?

No, I think that's all for now.

So, that is all you have to say for now?
Yes.

(Validating) Well, what you are saying makes sense to me. First of all, I usually do try to put my arm around you when the lights go. And when I do that, I can see how you might be concerned about someone seeing you because we are in a public place. It also makes sense to me that someone might see you because we have seen people from your work there before. And, of course, your sister-in-law does work with you, so it makes sense to me that the word might spread to her and your family. (Empathy) And if you think that my putting my arm around you might lead to losing your family and job, I would imagine my doing that might make you feel scared, uneasy, and maybe even angry when I persist. Is that how it feels?

Yes, that's how I feel. You got it.

Thanks for listening.

So, I got it all, and you want to thank me for listening. Is there more?

No.

The above example shows that when

safety is created, a person is allowed to go into more detail about what is bothering them. In addition, most of us are not used to our partners asking us for additional information. Usually, we are given advice, direction, or in some way discounted or invalidated. The Intentional Dialog attempts to provide parameters to circumvent this from happening. The Mirroring process forces the Receiver to listen intently to the Sender, because he or she must accurately mirror back the information. When doing this, the Receiver is forced to focus on the Sender and keeps them out of their own reactivity. If the Receiver finds themselves formulating a defense or creating a response in their mind, they have stopped listening. The brain is unable to listen and process a defense at the same time. Therefore, the Mirroring process removes the defense from interactions and allows the Receiver to attend to the Sender without interference of their own agenda.

In addition, the Process allows for the Sender to be listened to attentively. One of the biggest complaints in relationships is, "I just want you to listen to me." Most people are not looking for advice or direction, but rather to be listened to. Most of us as children were not afforded the opportunity to be listened to, validated, and accurately mirrored. Instead, children are generally met with defensiveness or at best ambivalence. They are told things like,

"Go away," "I'm too busy," or "That didn't hurt." As adults, we have the same needs as we did as children—being to be listened to and validated. Most couples in my office interrupt, defend, finish sentences, give directions, or criticize, which is a far cry from validation and empathy.

Common complaints about the Intentional Dialog are that it takes too long and that it feels odd. In fact, in the long haul, it is probably more time-effective. If you have ever found yourself rehashing the same issue over and over again, it is likely that you haven't communicated well the other times. The expenditure of time and energy to accurately communicate seems to produce healthier outcomes and reduces the need to keep returning to the same issue. To validate the Process feeling odd, it will in fact, at first, because it is foreign to most individuals' styles. Most people are used to defensiveness in communication; therefore, communication without the old energy is likely to feel odd and awkward.

In summary, the Intentional Dialog provides a basic tool for any and all interactions. It not only works in love relationships but in family and employment dynamics as well. Most people find a positive reaction from those that they mirror, and when mastered, this does not seem so cumbersome as it may have at first. So, the next time you find yourself in conflict or being defensive in your communication, pull out your Intentional Dialog guide and try communicating in a new way. You will likely be pleased with the results. ▼

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WHAT A WORLD, WHAT A WORLD

Continued from page 82

What's So Funny, Girl? Instead of joining hopeless gambling addict Nickey Arnstein on that European-bound luxury liner, Fanny Brice remains in New York at the curiously-insistent urging of co-chorus gypsy Anne Francis. They spend a hiatus from *The Ziegfeld Follies* writing their own terse, two-woman comedy show, which becomes the vaudevillian precursor to *The Kathy and Mo Show*.

Parent Trap: The Rest of the Story Haley Mills plays grown-up twins who discover they're not really twins at all, but completely unrelated. In an ultimate act of narcissism, they fall in love with each other, and marry. Mayhem ensues as they become famous as the only bickering couple in film history who, after telling each other to go fuck themselves, actually can.

Mommie, You're the Dearest Devoted adopted daughter discovers that her mother, an old former motion picture

queen, is really just an old queen.

Orlando, Part Deux Quentin Crisp stars as the mayor of a steamy Florida tourist mecca which receives its water supply from Ponce de Leon Natural Springs, giving all its citizens eternal life and unlimited potential for sequels.

The Whining Game Audiences are shocked at the surprise ending when the film's heroine, a cabaret singer and model, is revealed to actually be a woman. Kinky.

When Harry Forgot Sally in Paris A man and a woman, supposedly in love, re-evaluate their relationship when she can't stop calling him Frank. ▼

Nancy Ford is a Houston-based comedian and frequent contributor to the gay and lesbian press. She performs each Thursday night, 8:30 pm, at Ms. B's in Plaza 9200, 9200 Buffalo Speedway. Call 666-3464 for info.

Patrick J. Vachon is a Licensed Social Worker and Advanced Clinical Practitioner in private practice at New Counseling Center in Houston. He is a Certified IMAGO Relationship Therapist and Workshop Presenter in training. Mr. Vachon offers 20-hour intensive "Getting the Love You Want" workshops for lesbian and gay couples. His next Houston workshops will be July 28-30 and Sept. 15-17. Mr. Vachon will be offering a free lecture, "Striving to Get the Love You Want," sponsored by MCCR and P-FLAG as part of Houston Pride Week on Monday, June 19, at Houston Public Library—Montrose Branch, 6:30-8:30pm. In addition, he will be speaking at the Montrose Counseling Center Men's Network on June 21, 7:30-9:00pm. Call MCC for information. Patrick J. Vachon is available for lectures, seminars, and individual/couples therapy. For more information, call (713) 529-1913, voice mail #4.

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Remembrance



David LeRoy Joseph Hemmer

May 27, 1958-June 9, 1995

David LeRoy Joseph Hemmer, 37, died June 9. Promotional Director for Rich's for several years, Hemmer brought such performers as Debbie Harry, CeCe Peniston, Jody Watley, Taylor Dayne, and RuPaul (pictured here with Hemmer) to Houston's gay and lesbian community. He is survived by parents Clarence and Betty Hemmer, St. Louis, Missouri; sister Robin Hemmer and her partner Lori Flanery, Denver, Colorado; sister Gale Zraggen and husband Thomas, Atlanta, Georgia; and close friends Gary Archer, Jerial Knight, and Pinque. A Memorial Service was held June 14 at Earthman Downtown Chapel, followed by a celebration of Hemmer's life at Rich's. Memorials may be directed to Bering Care Center. His one-of-a-kind talent will be greatly missed.

WHAT A WORLD, WHAT A WORLD...

Don't look now. Another "lesbian movie" has been released.

The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love is being heralded by critics as a rarity—a "lesbian movie" with crossover appeal. It's the story of two mismatched lovers from the opposite sides of the track. Passion triumphs when two high school sweethearts defy the odds and choose to love each other, regardless of the obstacles thrown in romance's path. It's kind of like a funny Romeo and Juliet without the death, the period costumes, or the penis.

Things have changed so much. Whatever happened to those movies with "adult overtones" that merely hinted at the "different-ness" of the protagonists? In a world full of changing social mores, the one constant we could always count on was that these movies would end with everybody coming to their senses and riding off into the sunset with a companion of the opposite sex. Or we could bet on some accident to tear the ill-fated lovers asunder. Suicide, at least. Good grief, is nothing sacred?

It seems so strange to enter a movie theater and enjoy a film about "us" that isn't tragic, or preachy, or even pretentious. Wonderfully strange. Could it be that as acceptance of gays and lesbians is becoming more mainstreamed in the real world (whatever that is), our characters are also, finally, being mainstreamed onto the silver screen?

Maybe these really are the Gay 90s. Never before in the history of film has the industry been so inundated with films dealing either specifically with gay and lesbian themes, or at least including a strong gay/lesbian presence. Yesterday they had *Going My Way*. Today we have *Priest*. I like it—how about you?

One of the best things about all this gay cinema is that it sheds a welcome light on our culture, our modus operandi, our essence, that might otherwise be overlooked. "Do you still think we'll still know each other when we're 30?" is a question



by Nancy Ford

the *Two Girls in Love* ask each other. Research and conversation has indicated, at least to me and my contemporaries, that not only do most lesbians still know their first lover, they continue to play a major



Going our way: Evie Roy (Nicole Parker) and Randy Dean (Laurel Holloman) in *The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love*.

role in each other's lives. What doesn't kill us makes us stronger? In fact, bringing a new paramour home to meet the family now often means introducing her to your ex-lover, your ex-lover's current wife, her

current wife's ex, and her current wife's ex's gay cousin from out of town who we think is probably gay but no one is completely sure. Welcome to Lesbianville—we hope you enjoy your stay here.

One of the art-imitating-life-est parts of *TITAOTGIL* comes to us in the character of Girl 1's best friend, Frank. Every high school has at least one Frank. You know—Gay Frank. Faggy boy Frank. Constantly-harassed-by-the-jocks Frank. And every dyke—adolescent or not—needs a Frank to cover for her when she's up to no good, to encourage her when everyone else has abandoned her, to help her choose just

the right accessories for those really special occasions. If she doesn't have one, she should get one. I'm lucky; I have about five Franks, and I wouldn't trade a one of them.

It's become a welcome trend for filmmakers to focus specifically on various lesbian rites—and wrongs—of passage. *Bar Girls* gave us an accurate backstage view of the theater where most lesbians give their first—and best—public performances. *Desert Hearts* gave us a tasteful yet provocative lesson that love, especially when you find it in Reno, is always a gamble. *Claire of the Moon* gave us a rash. *Two Girls* gives us a nostalgic tweak recalling the unspeakable excitement and incomparable buzz that accompanies first love—that constant ache in your stomach that has never before or since hurt so very, very good.

It's encouraging that lesbians (and gay men, for that matter), can now go to a neighborhood theater—other than the kind that only accepts quarters—and enjoy a positive film experience. Prior to this new cinematic enlightenment, a gay person's identifying and internalizing a film experience was limited to fantasy.

And fantasize I did. The following is a list of films that I hope to be able to experience before my buttered corn-popping days are done.

Continued on page 79

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