

Volume 3 ▼ Issue 4

May 15 - June 14, 1996

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Out▼Smart

HOUSTON'S GAY & LESBIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

In Praise of Tradition & Unity

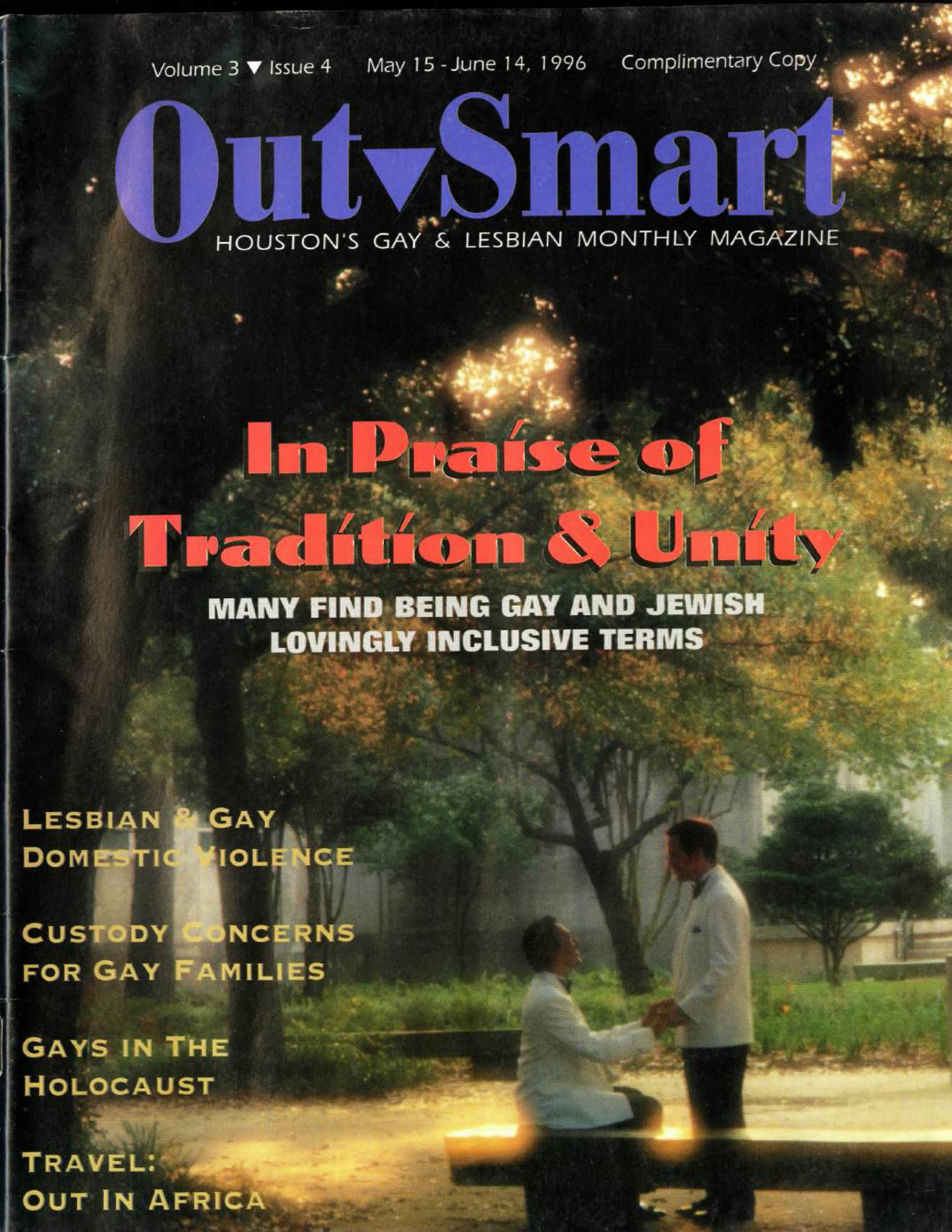
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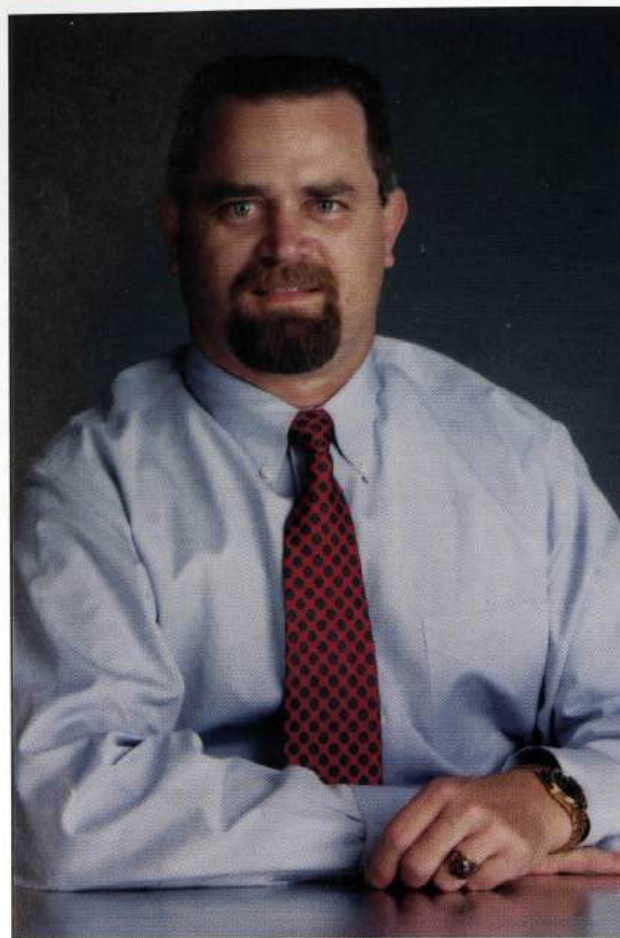
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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 3, Issue 4 MAY 15-JUNE 14, 1996

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Cover photo: Mitchell Katine and Samuel Gutierrez
by Nhan Nguyen of Nhan Photography, 713/523-3887.

A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER



This month, the U.S. Supreme Court is expected to rule on the constitutionality of Colorado's Amendment 2. The impact of this ruling will affect the lives of all gay men, lesbians, bisexual, and transgender Americans.

Amendment 2, a statewide ballot initiative passed in Colorado in 1992, would ban the State of Colorado and any political jurisdiction within the state from passing or enforcing laws protecting the civil rights of individuals based upon sexual orientation.

Longtime Houston lesbian and gay civil rights activist Gary Grant, recently named the Human Rights Campaign's Action Coordinator for the Houston area, is forming a coalition to rally in response to the upcoming ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court on Colorado's Amendment 2.

To demonstrate Houston's solidarity with their gay and lesbian counterparts in Colorado, and because the ruling can directly impact the lives of gay and lesbian Houstonians, the HRC is sponsoring a press conference either to condemn or commend the Supreme Court's decision. The conference will be held at Tranquility Park, in the shadow of the federal building, at 7 pm on the day of the ruling. Individuals or organizations interested in participating may call Gary Grant 713/664-0551.

Similar concurrent press conferences are planned throughout the United States. Other cities include: Atlanta, Boise, Boston, Dallas, Denver, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Boulder, Fort Collins, Los Angeles, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Long Island, Orlando, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland (Maine and Oregon), San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.

See ya at the park, and let's hope it's for a celebration...

Don't Miss the

Special

OutSmart
Gay Pride Issue
June 15, 1996

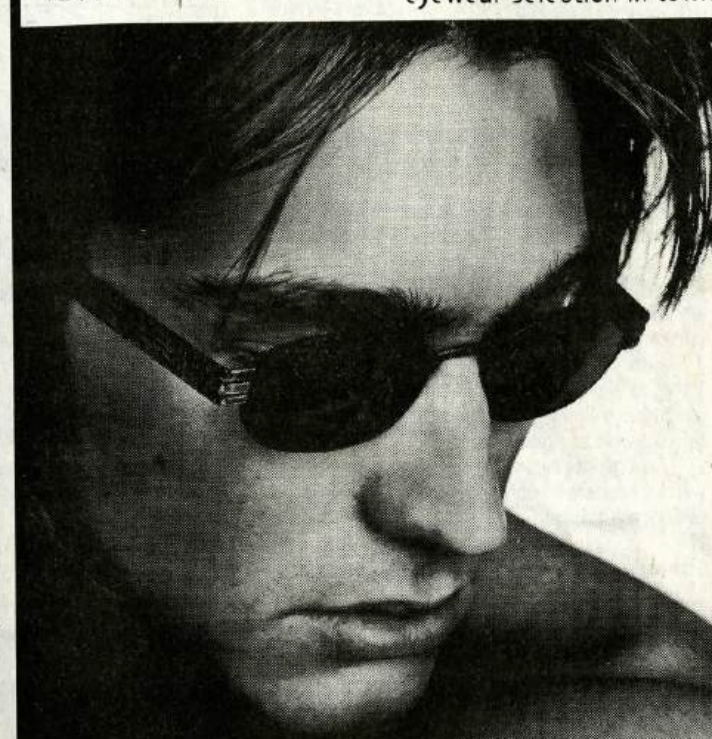
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I'm OK, Kay's Not

I'm sure you may be aware, but just in case, here's something I got off the Internet. Everyone should let her know that she is not the unanimous voice for Texas.

The following letter was sent out by Kay Hutchison's office when she was asked about her stand on the Hawaii gay marriage issue.

Kevin White
Houston, Texas

March 26, 1996

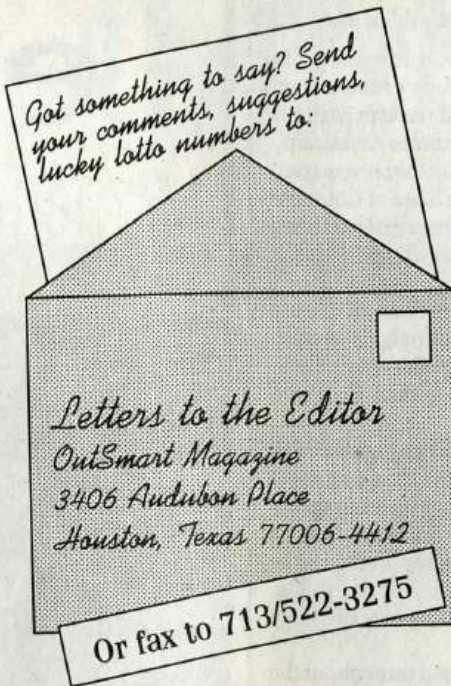
Dear Ed:

Thank you for your letter expressing concern about the State of Hawaii's new law that permits same-sex marriages.

Although the U.S. Constitution delegates authority to the individual states to write their own laws governing marriage, the State of Hawaii's action has serious and far-reaching implications. I am generally opposed to the federal government intruding into matters of state authority. However, if Hawaii's new law requires Texas and other states, as well as federal government, to recognize same-sex marriages, I would support Congressional action to prevent this.

I appreciate hearing from you and hope you will not hesitate to contact me about other issues of concern to you.

Kay Bailey Hutchison
KBH/sbw



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Martha L. Bowman
Houston, Texas

Christmas in July in May?

Here it is [May] and I'm already thinking about PWA Christmas in July and then PWA Christmas. This annual project of the LVL PWA Holiday Fund sends financially troubled people living with AIDS a cash gift and a Christmas in July greeting. This allows them the dignity of having a little spending money for a change—money that is not designated for necessities. We all need a little "mad money" now and then.

One of our fund-raising tools for these projects is the sale of "Holiday Thoughts" tags. A 4"x8" tag is sold for \$1, the person enters the name of whom they are thinking, and then it is attached to a string of Christmas lights. As each tag is added, a bulb is lit. Last Christmas this simple, easy event added \$763 to the Holiday Fund—and that was with only six bars participating! Mary's led the way with \$391, followed by 611 Pub, the Outpost, the BRB, Venture-N, and the Ripcord. Just think what could be done with more bars and businesses participating. It's a wonderful way to remember friends and loved ones, either here or gone, and in their honor raise money to brighten the lives of our brothers and sisters living with and fighting AIDS. So little can help so much.

Mr. Don Gill, co-director of the LVL PWA Holiday Fund, will coordinate this fund drive. When he approaches your bar or business to participate, please give it every consideration. You really can make a difference. Or you may reach Don at 713/521-0911 for more information.

When these bright tags start appearing around Montrose, take the time and give a dollar to spread Christmas cheer all year long. "We need a little Christmas now."

Marvin H. Davis, AKA Lady Victoria Lust
The Lady Victoria Lust PWA Holiday Fund
Houston, Texas

RuPaul Rapture

Open letter to the community:

When creating an event such as the Spectrum '96 "Concert of the Stars," you never know what the final outcome is until it's over. You hope for a success with as little trouble as possible.

With that in mind, I would like to apologize to all of the VIP ticket holders who did not get a chance to meet with RuPaul. His schedule was changed on us at the last minute and was beyond our control.

RuPaul's people advised me the following morning that due to his radio show in New York and the long day, what energy he had was used in the show and he did not physically feel up to meeting everyone. RuPaul also sends his apologies.

I want to thank the many hard workers at Rich's and LaStrada Restaurant who worked to help create a wonderful event. Without them, the concert would not have been the success that it was.

Karel, Pinque, and the Spectrum Dancers enjoyed every minute of their performances to the wonderfully excited crowd that attended.

To all the entertainers, workers, and attendees, I and the board of directors thank you for

making Spectrum '96 "Concert of the Stars" a wonderful success.

B. Alan Bourgeois
President, Spectrum '96
Houston, Texas

RuPaul Rapture

Kudos for that outstanding interview with RuPaul [OutSmart, April 15, 1996]. It was truly awe-inspiring.

S.T. Carter
Houston, Texas

RuPaul Rapture II

Just a quick note to say that we loved your article on RuPaul in OutSmart. What a great piece!

Your friends at World of Wonder
[RuPaul's publicity agency]
Los Angeles, California

PFLAG Cover Girl

I have wanted to write ever since I read Eric Roland's excellent article on our D.C. project ["PFLAG Takes a Trip to Washington," OutSmart, March 15, 1996]; he did an outstanding job. He got it all in—the "why" behind the project, the fire, the zest. I love the cartoon! And, of course, we were very appreciative of being on the cover. I, for one, have never been a Cover Girl before. Thanks to OutSmart for printing this piece that will go down in PFLAG-Houston history as a great tribute to our chapter.

Gail Rickey
Chair, PFLAG Houston's Advocacy Committee
Houston, Texas ▼

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OUTSMART CALENDAR

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

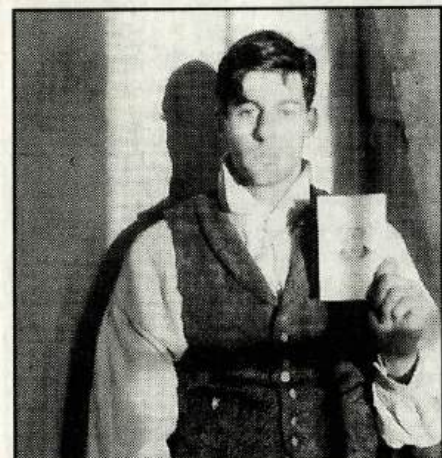
May

15 JEAN-CLAUDE VAN ITALLIE, meet award-winning screenplay writer and librettist of the Houston Grand Opera's world premiere of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, 8 pm, Border's Book Shop, 9633A Westheimer, 713/782-6066.

MEN'S NETWORK for gay and bisexual men, topic: *Expressive Art* by Jeffery Tavel, 7-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 713/529-0037.

16 CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM, discussion of cultural racism and viewing the film *Healing the Hurts*, 7:30-9:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin, 713/738-RACE.

17 LESBIANS IN BUSINESS, 6 pm, Innova Bldg., 20 Greenway Plaza, 713/529-0077.



18 THE POETICS OF VISION, HIV-positive artist John Dugdale will give a gallery talk about his photographs exhibited through June 30, 1 pm, Houston Center for Photography, 1441 West Alabama, 713/529-4755.

18-19 MID-CENTURY MARKET, offering furniture, glassware, ceramics, metalwork, and more from the 1930s-1960s, Lawndale Art & Performance Center, 4912 Main Street, 713/528-5858.

19 FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, 10k

walk and roll-athon benefiting 17 greater Houston HIV/AIDS service organizations, Sam Houston Park, 8:30 am, 713/629-WALK.

AIDS CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL, the 13th annual event will be held at dusk at the Rothko Chapel, 1409 Sul Ross at Yupon, 713/964-8881.

20 GAY & LESBIAN READERS GROUP, will discuss *First Comes Love* by Marion Wink, 7 pm, Barnes & Noble Vanderbilt Square, 3003 West Holcombe, 713/349-0050.

LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS of Houston general meeting, 7 pm, Renata's, 2006 Lexington, 713/529-9100.

21 PRIDE COMMITTEE OF HOUSTON, general meeting and social hour, 6:30 pm, 2700 Albany, 529-6979.

22 WOMEN'S NETWORK for lesbian and bisexual women, 7-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 713/529-0037.

23 CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM, discussion of racial and cultural stereotypes and viewing the film *Ethnic Notions*, 7:30-9:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin, 713/738-RACE.

24 LESBIAN AND GAY POTLUCK, sponsored by the Lesbian & Gay Unitarian Universalists, 7 pm, Crane Fireside Room, First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin, 713/526-5200.

25 BROTHERS FOR SISTERS, the men's wing of Astraea, the national lesbian action foundation, is seeking Houston area men to join their group, 6-9 pm, Cafe Artiste, 1601 West Main, 713/869-9238.

BICYCLING IN RIVER OAKS, sponsored by the Chain Gang, Houston's Gay & Lesbian Cycling Club, 15 miles, 10 am, meet in front of Heaven, 800 Pacific at Grant, 713/863-1860.

28 HIV/AIDS TREATMENT MIXER, open forum for sharing information, 7-9 pm, 2700 Albany, Suite 205, 713/527-8219.

AIDS EQUITY LEAGUE, 12 noon, Charlie's Restaurant, 1100 Westheimer, 713/871-0092.

LOVE, SEX, & INTIMACY, explores the options of safer sex and sensuality through discussion and games, 7-9 pm, AFH Office, 3202 Wesleyan, 713/623-6796.

30 CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM, discussion of institutionalized racism, 7:30-9:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin, 713/738-RACE.

THAT DAM DEBATE: SAFER SEX FOR LESBIANS, seminar sponsored by AIDS Foundation Houston and presented by Nancy Ford, 9:30 pm, Plaza 9200, 9200 Buffalo Speedway, 713/666-3464.

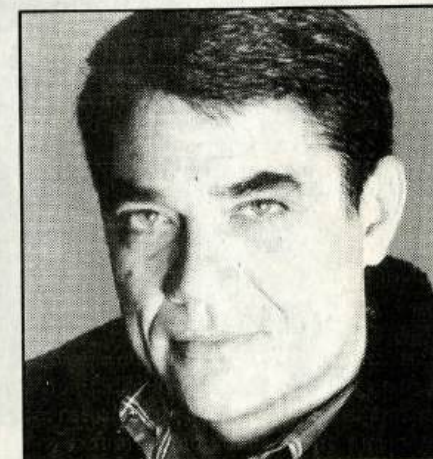


31 MARK PAYNE IN CONCERT, former Houstonian, will perform songs from his upcoming CD accompanied by a full rhythm section, 8 and 9:30 pm, Ovations, 2536 Times Blvd., 713/522-9801.

June

2 PFLAG, general meeting with small group discussions, 2 pm, St. Francis Episcopal Church, 345 Piney Point Road, PFLAG Houston Helpline: 713/867-9020.

4 PRIDE COMMITTEE OF HOUSTON, executive meeting, 6:30 pm, 2700 Albany, 529-6979.

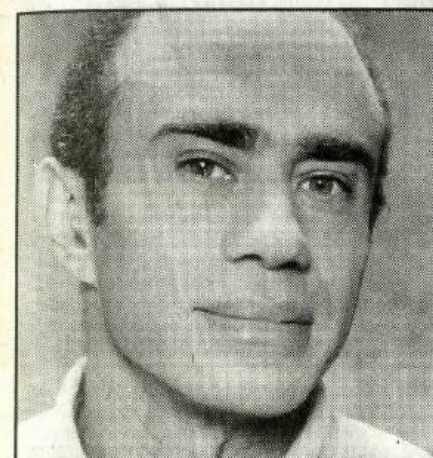


5 REX REED, film critic, scintillating wit, will discuss his career and present *The Member of the Wedding*, at a film department benefit, 7 pm, Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet, for tickets call 713/639-7530.

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN POLITICAL CAUCUS, 7:30 pm, 2700 Albany, 3rd floor, 713/521-1000.

MEN'S NETWORK for gay and bisexual men, 7-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 713/529-0037.

6 CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM, discussion of oneness of humanity, 7:30-9:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin, 713/738-RACE.



7 PRETTY, WITTY AND WILD!, readings by writer/director/performance artist Brian Freeman and Austin-based poet Ana Sisnett, part of the *Beyond Desire* Lesbian and Gay Performance series, 8 pm, Diverseworks, 1117 East Freeway (N. Main at Naylor), 713/223-8346.

8 H.A.T.C.H. PROM, relive memories of prom and bring the gender of your choice, \$15 per person benefits the Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals, Majestic Metro, 911 Preston Avenue, 713/942-7002.



9 ANI DIFRANCO IN CONCERT, guitarist and singer, 8:30 pm, Fitzgeralds, 2706 White Oak, tickets are \$13 in advance available at Inklings.

BICYCLING IN THE WOODLANDS, sponsored by the Chain Gang, Houston's Gay & Lesbian Cycling Club, 15 miles, 9 am, meet at the Woodlands Info. Center, 713/863-1860.

11 HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN PARENTS Support Group, MCCR library, 1919 Decatur, 7-8:30 pm, 713/980-7995.

AIDS EQUITY LEAGUE, 12 noon, Charlie's Restaurant, 1100 Westheimer, 713/871-0092.

12 WOMEN'S NETWORK for lesbian and bisexual women, 7-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 713/529-0037.

13 CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM, discussion of ally building, 7:30-9:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin, 713/738-RACE.

MONTROSE ICE PICKS for lesbian/gay ice skaters, 8-10 pm, Galleria Ice Rink, admission is \$4.75 plus \$2 for skates, 713/629-1432.

14 ASTRO RAINBOW ALLIANCE FOR THE DEAF, general meeting, 7:30 pm, Montrose Clinic, 215 Westheimer, 713/869-2287 via Texas Relay 1-800-735-2988.

15 ANGELSOVERMONTROSE, benefit for Montrose Clinic Psychotherapy Fund, 9:30 pm, Venture-N, 2923 Main Street, 713/521-0911.

ance

HOUSTON BALLET, Jones Hall, 713/227-ARTS. May 23-June 2: *Image*, *Bartok Concerto*, and *Four Last Songs*. June 6-16: *The Sleeping Beauty*.

heater

ACTORS THEATRE, 2506 South Blvd., 713/529-6606. May 17-June 23: *The Rainmaker*.

A.D. PLAYERS, Grace Theater, 2710 W. Alabama, 713/526-2721. Through June 2: *Saving Private Ryan*.

ALLEY THEATRE, 615 Texas Ave., 713/228-8421. May 3-June 1: *The Heiress*. May 17-June 9: *The Food Chain*.

COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE, 12802 Queensbury, 713/467-4497. May 10-June 8: *Sleuth*.

DIVERSEWORKS, 1117 E. Freeway, 713/223-8346. June 8: *12 Minutes Max*, with gay and lesbian youth.

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ENSEMBLE THEATRE, 4212 Main, 713/520-0063. Through May 19: *Before It Hits Home*. June 6-July 21: *Over Forty*.

THE GROUP THEATRE WORKSHOP, at Ovations, 2536-B Times Blvd., 713/522-2204. Through June 16: *10 Percent Revue*.

INSIDE/OUT PRODUCTIONS, Jewish Community Center, 5601 S. Braeswood, 713/864-5986. Through May 18: *Raft of the Medusa*.

MAIN STREET THEATRE, 2540 Times Blvd., 713/524-6706. Through May 19: *Misalliance*. June 6-July 7: *The Mask of Moriarty*.

STAGES REPERTORY THEATRE, 3201 Allen Parkway, 713/527-0220. Through May 19: *A Cheever Evening*. June 7-July 7: *12 Steps to a More Dysfunctional Family, Part III*.

THEATRE SOUTHWEST, 3750 South Gessner, 713/661-9505. May 31-June 22: *Pack of Lies*.

THEATRE UNDER THE STARS, Music Hall, 713/622-TUTS. May 16-June 2: *Me and My Girl*.

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AFTER HOURS: (Radio) Saturdays, midnight to 3 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Caper. KPFT 90.1 FM.

LESBIAN & GAY VOICES: (Radio) Thursdays, 9-11 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 713/949-3119.



The cast of *Ten Percent Revue* from The Group Theatre Workshop at Ovations.

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

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

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

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 HOUSING COALITION HOUSTON runs the nonprofit TLC House program, a 90-day, gay positive, emergency house for PWAs in transition. For

more information about joining, call 713/521-1613.

AIDS MASSAGE PROJECT, sponsored by AIDS Foundation Houston's Wellness Program, call Jeffery at 713/768-4267 for an appointment.

ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA ALLIANCE, an organization dedicated to ending the irrational fear and general dislike of gay and lesbian people, harnesses support from a cross-section of the gay and non-gay population through the use of dialogue, educational workshops, and advertising, and by using effective activism based on non-violence, intelligence, and common sense. For more information, call 713/526-8822.

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 at the Art League, 1953 Montrose. Among other media, the course offers lessons in painting, printmaking, and ceramics on a rotating basis. For information, call 713/523-9530.

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

CAFE MAISON COFFEE ROASTERY, 2089 Westheimer, 713/528-6750, is the only gay-owned and -operated coffee roastery in Houston. Live music every Friday and Saturday nights. Thursday night is singles night/movie night. Sunday is open mic night hosted by Somewhere South.

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. Call 713/681-9082 for meeting date, time, and place.

DELTA LAMBDA PHI is a Social Fraternity at the University of Houston that does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. Interested members of the University of Houston should contact 713/597-2673 for more information.

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

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.

EXXON ASSOCIATION OF GAY AND LESBIAN EMPLOYEES (EAGLE) meets monthly at the Montrose Library to discuss workplace issues, empowerment, social events, etc. For more information, please call 713/916-8110 or 713/522-6212.

FIST (FEMALES IN SEARCH OF TROUBLE) is a social group of women who explore the S/M, B/D, and fetish lifestyle. Monthly meetings and social events. Write: 7534 Carew, Houston, TX 77074 or call 713/772-5826.

GAY AND LESBIAN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS meets monthly, providing socials, speakers, networking, and practitioner referral line. For information or a referral, call 713/523-4700.

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, ex-spouse problems, step relationships, etc. Meets at MCCR, 1919 Decatur, the second Tuesday of every month from 7-8:30 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.

GAY, LESBIAN & BISEXUAL VETERANS OF AMERICA, Houston Chapter. Location and times of meetings as announced. Write to GLBVA, P.O. Box 66706, Houston, TX 77266-6706. Phone/Fax: 713/951-9925.

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 Richard Parent at 713/743-7690.

HEARTSONG WOMEN'S CHORUS rehearses at 7 pm on Mondays on the third floor of the First Unitarian Church, 5200 Fannin at Southmore. New and former members welcome! Call 713/947-1488 for information.

HELPING CROSS DRESSERS ANONYMOUS (HCDA) meets at 8 pm, Tuesdays, 239 Westheimer.

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.

HOPE PROJECT (HIV, Outreach, Prevention, and Education) provides HIV/AIDS information to the African-American community. Board meetings are held every second Wednesday of the month. Contact the HOPE line at 713/587-6914 for more information.

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 provides 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.

HOUSTON TENNIS CLUB, an affiliate member of the Gay and Lesbian Tennis Association, welcomes men and women of all ages and skill levels. They meet Wednesdays and Fridays from 7:30-9 pm and Sundays from 9 am-12 noon at Memorial Park Tennis Center. To join, call Bobby Riggins at 713/868-5039.

HOUSTON WOMEN'S SOFTBALL LEAGUE is a not-for-profit organization for Houston area women who enjoy the sport of softball. For more information, write to P.O. Box 70666, Houston, TX 77270 or call 713/721-6854.

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

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LIVING IN PROCESS GROUPS: Ongoing mixed group for men and women three Wednesday evenings per month. Ongoing gay men's group three Thursday evenings per month. Call Eric Mayo at Living in Process Southwest for more information—713/622-7250.

LIVING WITH HIV SUPPORT GROUP for anyone whose life is touched by HIV. Meetings include a relaxing meditation, information about community resources, and occasional speakers. The group meets Thursdays from 7 to 9 pm in room 117 at Unity Church of Christianity, 2929 Unity Drive at Hilcroft. For further information, please call 713/782-4050.

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

MILAM HOUSE is a housing facility for HIV-positive persons who, because of health, social, and/or economic conditions, are unable to provide for their own basic human needs. We are seeking volunteers to help with everything from shift work to administrative and fund-raising. If you can help, please contact Dallas at 713/520-9248 or email us at ahvlntr@neosoft.com.

MONTROSE COUNSELING CENTER offers numerous counseling groups, including groups for men and women living with HIV, people in recovery, lesbian survivors of cancer, survivors of sexual abuse, people living with chronic pain, lesbian survivors of domestic violence, and many more. For more information, contact (24 hrs.) 713/529-0037.

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.

OUTVOTE, nonprofit organization dedicated to registering, educating, and motivating our community to

vote, meets at 7 pm the third Wednesday of the month at the Multiservice Center, 1475 W. Gray. For more information, call 713/520-VOTE or 713/522-9837.

PRIME TIMERS HOUSTON, promotes social activities for the older gay and bisexual male. Some of the activities they participate in are theater, dining out, movies, pot luck dinners, card games, and weekend daytrips. For more information, call 713/867-3903.

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

Q-PATROL is dedicated to the prevention of hate crimes against gays and lesbians, patrols the bar areas in Montrose, and are always looking for volunteers. If you have at least one Friday or Saturday night per month, please call 713/528-SAFE (7233).

RAINBOW RANGLERS, a gay country and western dance club, teaches beginning level 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.

RICE GALA (Gay and Lesbian Alumni Association) seeks gay and lesbian alumni of Rice University. Contact Neal Tannahill at 713/526-6718 for more information.

SOUTHERN COUNTRY HOUSTON provides country and western dance lessons, exhibitions, and charity events to benefit service organizations. Free dance lessons are offered every Tuesday at The Ranch, Plaza 9200, 9200 Buffalo Speedway. For more info., 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 713/789-0713 to register.

TEAM HOUSTON FOR THE GAMES, INC. is a nonprofit organization to educate and inform all people about gay/lesbian sports competitions and to encourage participation in the Gay Games and Cultural Festival. The next Gay Games will take place in Amsterdam, August 1-8, 1998. For more information, write to Team Houston, P.O. Box 66405, Houston, TX 77266-6405 or call 713/935-1060.

TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR TRANSEXUAL SUPPORT (TATS) is a peer support group devoted to serving the emotional, social, and educational needs of transgendered persons, their partners, families, and friends. For more information, call 713/827-5913 or write to TATS, P.O. Box 142, Bellaire, TX 77401.

TEXAS GAY RODEO ASSOCIATION is a nonprofit organization, with chapters in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston, that promotes and stages an annual rodeo event as well as engaging in fundraising activities throughout the year. For more information on the Houston chapter, write to P.O. Box 130585, Houston, TX 77219 or call 713/777-1444.

TEXAS HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION, a statewide, not-for-profit legal agency, 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 alliance of women committed to direct action on issues affecting the rights of all women. Wednesdays, 7 pm at Toohees. P.O. Box 131148, Houston, TX 77219-1148, voice mail 713/867-9581.

Leading AIDS activists from across the nation will advocate new standards for every viatical settlement company in America. Why?

Lenny Bloom, Chairman and CEO of American Life Resources®, the oldest viatical settlement company in the U.S., is a life-long gay rights and AIDS activist. He feels strongly that every viatical settlement company doing business with PWAs must adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct.

Lenny notes, "As more people living with AIDS are learning they can sell their life insurance policies to pay their bills, obtain higher quality health care and live a more relaxed and less stressful lifestyle, it is essential that a clear set of standards be established — by the community, not the industry — to protect the interests of PWAs when selling their life insurance (commonly called 'viatical settlements'). To achieve this end, American Life Resources has agreed to underwrite the work of an independent group of AIDS activists to establish standards for viatical settlements. I am gratified that several of the most

distinguished leaders in the HIV/AIDS community have agreed participate in this effort."

The mission of the AIDS activists will be to create a code of standards and practices — a "Viatical Bill of Rights" which will be provided to PWAs, AIDS service organizations and state insurance commissioners. Every viatical settlement company doing business with PWAs will be urged to adhere to the code.

American Life Resources will help to widely disseminate this "Viatical Bill of Rights."

Lenny Bloom affirms, "I am proud that American Life Resources is serving as the catalyst for this independent effort. It is consistent with American Life's tradition of leadership in our industry. And while I am confident that American Life Resources

already adheres to the highest standards of professional practice and financial integrity, we pledge to adopt whatever additional standards are established."

*The following top AIDS activists and leaders of major AIDS organizations have agreed to serve on the panel:**

- A. Cornelius Baker**
Acting Executive Director, National Association of People with AIDS.
- Jacques Chambers**
Manager of Insurance & Benefits Counseling, AIDS Project Los Angeles.
- Pat Christen**
Executive Director, San Francisco AIDS Foundation.
- Marc Cohen**
Vice President, United Foundation for AIDS, Miami.
- Paul DiDonato**
Director of Federal Affairs, San Francisco AIDS Foundation.
- Jim Graham**
Executive Director, Whitman-Walker Clinic, Washington, D.C.
- Robert Greenwald**
Director of Public Policy & Legal Affairs,
AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts.
- R. Scott Hitt, M.D.**
Chair, Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund; Board Member,
AIDS Project Los Angeles.
- Mike Isbell**
Associated Executive Director and Chief of Government and
Policy Affairs, Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), New York City.
- Larry Kessler**
Executive Director, AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts.
- Jean McGuire**
Former Executive Director, AIDS Action Council, Washington, D.C.
- Phill Wilson**
Former Director of Public Policy, AIDS Project of Los Angeles
Chair, Black & Latino Gay Union.

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* Organizational affiliations listed for identification purposes only.

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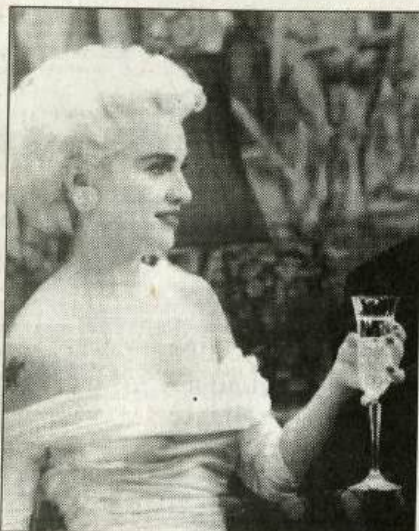
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Republican Rep. Ken Chlouber

(Out, 5/96)

On the proposal to ban gay marriage, before the Colorado assembly, February 28, 1996: "My previous profession was taking steel and dynamite and walking them through a rock. The old miners that used to be there would say that 'truth is at the face.' When you got to the face of that mine, it was integrity to the extreme. And I think that's where we are today in the question that is before us. We are at the face. I'm going to vote no on this bill, and I'm going to ask each of you to reach inside yourself and come up with your truth. The bottom line is, If somebody is gay, what is it to us? It is a private matter."

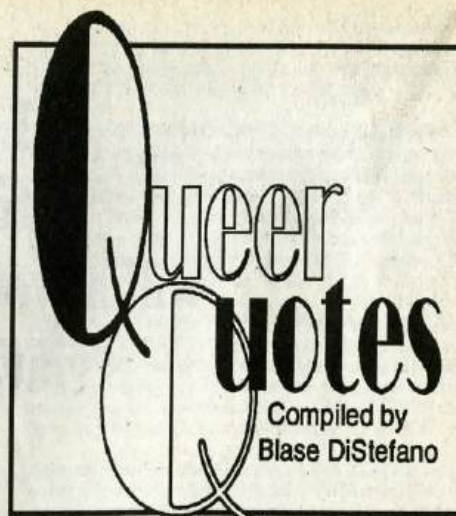


Madonna

(Newsweek, 4/29/96, Jonathan Alter)

On Madonna's pregnancy: "...You told the press last week that you and the father of your baby, the now noted personal trainer Carlos Leon, won't be getting married.... If not Carlos, maybe you could marry a woman. Strike a blow against the right-wingers. They keep pushing family values but condemn gay marriage, which is inconsistent. If they believe that commitment is better than promiscuity, they need to back gay unions. Gay, straight—the important thing is to just get married."

A toast to Madonna (shown here in 1987's *Who's That Girl*): Pregnant and not getting married to the father; maybe she could marry a woman?



Michelangelo Signorile

(Out, 5/96, Michelangelo Signorile)

"...Sure, marriage would ensure our inheritance rights, child-rearing rights, visitation rights, and a slew of financial benefits that mere 'domestic partnership' arrangements have so far failed to deliver. But it is also a chance to wholly transform the definition of family in American culture. It's the final tool with which to dismantle all sodomy statutes, get education about homosexuality and AIDS into public schools, and, in short, to usher in a sea change in how society views and treats us...."



Sting

(The Advocate, 4/30/96, Judy Wieder)

Judy Wieder: A couple of years ago, you and Trudie decided to get married after being together for many years. Gays can't make that choice.

Sting: It's not legal for gays to marry?

No.

But there are ceremonies.

No, we make them up.

Right, well, but that's the best kind of ceremony.

Maybe from your perspective because you have a choice.

That's true. Gays have a right to some kind of recognized legal state. I would support that.

What about another traditional activity for couples: raising children?

Obviously there are gay couples that are far better to raise children than heterosexual couples. You can't generalize either way. Who's going to judge? See, the fear is that being exposed to gay behavior will make you gay. But as Ian McKellan said: "I spent all my school life in English schools being given heterosexual literature, and it didn't turn me straight." So it's fear.

Sting (shown here in 1982's *Brimstone and Treacle*): "The fear is that being exposed to gay behavior will make you gay."

Politically Incorrect

(Comedy Central, 5/2/96)

TV talk show hosted by Bill Maher, with guests Joe Keenan (writer, *Frasier*), Linda Bowles (national syndicated columnist), and Steve Lawrence (entertainer).

Bill Maher: When they were having the Iowa caucuses, they made several of the Republican candidates sign a pledge that said they were against same-sex marriages. When we [*Politically Incorrect*] did shows on it, our point of view was that it's ridiculous because the American people don't care if gays...

Linda Bowles: Oh, I disagree with you. I have to disagree.

Maher: Well, that's what you're here for. [*Audience laughter*] Don't feel bad about it, go ahead.

Bowles: Listen, they do disagree.... [A recent CNN/Time poll said] a large majority of people disapproved of same-sex marriage. [A smattering of applause]

Joe Keenan: I find it remarkable that when the right wing isn't yelling at gay people for being too promiscuous, they're yelling at us for wanting to get married. [*Applause*]

Bowles: ...The homosexuals say that they

don't have the same rights as heterosexuals, but they do. You have exactly the same rights as I do, however...

Maher: Not if they can't get married.

Bowles: They can get married...

Keenan: To the opposite sex.

Bowles: To the opposite sex. You have that right, I have that right.

Maher: I hope you're kidding.

Bowles: No!

Maher: That's not the same right. You have the right to marry who you want. You're saying he [Keenan] has the right to a sham marriage....

Bowles: Just a minute. Thankfully, I want to marry a person of the opposite sex.

Maher: [Pointing to Keenan:] But he doesn't.

Bowles: But he has the same right that I do to do that. How much clearer can I be? Is that too difficult to understand?

Maher: No, it's not difficult to understand, but it's terribly wrong.

Bowles: You think it's wrong?!

Maher: To force someone to marry someone they don't want to marry?!

Bowles: Look, nobody's forcing anybody to do anything.

Keenan: [To Bowles] You just met Jerry in

the green room, right? He's a very nice guy. We've been together for 13 years. You're saying that I don't have the right to any kind of legal relationship with him, but if I wanted to dump him tomorrow and marry the first woman I met, that would be fine and that would be better for me?

Bowles: No, now look, personally I don't care what you do. And I'm not telling you what your rights are.

Keenan: I'm not talking about marriage; I'm talking about a legal recognition of that relationship.

Maher: [To Bowles] You do care what he does, because you don't want him to get married.

Bowles: I'm not stopping him from doing anything.

Maher: So then you're saying it's okay for gays to get married.

Bowles: No...

Maher: [Said quickly and firmly] Well, you just said you didn't care. Either you care or you don't. If you don't care, then let him get married! [*Wild applause*]

Keenan: [To Bowles] You can even be matron of honor at my wedding.

Maher: As a 30-year veteran of Las Vegas, Steve [Lawrence] could perform

the ceremony.

Steve Lawrence: I'll be happy to sing at it, and [Keenan] said you could be matron of honor.

Bowles: Well...

Keenan: ...We're saying that gay people wanna get married. Well, gay people already are married. They're in relationships that last a lifetime, but those relationships don't have the legal recognition that straight marriages have.

Bowles: Well, let me say...

Keenan: There's not inheritance rights, there aren't the tax advantages, there aren't any of the rights that anybody has who marries somebody of the opposite sex immediately gets.

Bowles: The only thing standing in your way is the traditional family, the church, our moral values.

Maher: But that's your family, your church, and your moral values.

[Applause] And what amazes me—as someone who often wants to vote Republican and sometimes does—is that for the party that supposedly wants to get the government out of people's lives and morals and let us do what we wanna do, they take this position.

Bowles: And we certainly want to do that. However, let's reverse this. The homosexuals say, "You keep wanting to come into our bedrooms," you know, "Stay out of our bedrooms." We don't want to go in the bedroom, we really don't. We are being drug in the bedrooms, our eyes are being propped open with toothpicks, and then we are being asked to applaud and approve of what we see.

Lawrence: ...[From your remarks] I just didn't know who was dragging you by the hair into a homosexual's [bedroom, saying] "Oh, here, I want you to watch this." You might learn something. ... [*Applause*]

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THRF Calls for Sanctions Against Tyler Judge

The Texas Human Rights Foundation (THRF) has filed a formal complaint against a Texas judge who last month ordered court supervision of an HIV-positive man's sex life. "We cannot allow this judge's actions to serve as precedent without a challenge. Such government scrutiny of our most private relations cannot be justified," stated Michael Garbarino, an attorney and executive director of THRF.

The complaint arose from a sentencing hearing at Tyler's 7th Judicial District Court last month. At the hearing, District Judge Louis Gohmert was to decide the punishment for a man who pleaded guilty to using a car without the owner's consent. Gohmert learned the man's HIV status through a confidential pre-sentencing report. "The information was provided in confidence out of concern that he get appropriate medical care in the event of a jail sentence," stated Garbarino.

Judge Gohmert drafted a document which he ordered the man to have signed by any future sexual partners, otherwise probation would be revoked and jail time imposed. Gohmert stated one reason for the order was to protect the public safety. "It was particularly irresponsible of Judge Gohmert to characterize the man as a threat to the public safety solely because he has HIV. That's one reason why THRF submitted a formal complaint," stated Garbarino.

THRF filed the complaint with the State Commission on Judicial Conduct. It states that Judge Gohmert violated his professional oath by discriminating against a disabled person and improperly using the prestige of judicial office. "Gohmert attached the condition to the man's probation solely because he has HIV. The case has nothing to do with HIV or sexual conduct, and that's wrong," said Garbarino. "The judge made matters worse by promoting such sentencing conditions for all defendants with HIV, regardless of the crime charged. Judge Gohmert sacrificed a man's privacy to grab attention for a very bad idea."

The State Commission on Judicial Conduct reviews and investigates complaints against Texas judges, and is empowered to issue sanctions ranging from a private admonition to removal from judicial office.

Pride Concert Benefits AIDS Foundation Houston's Stone Soup Food Pantry

The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston (GMCH) has announced that its 1996 Gay Pride concert benefits the AIDS Foundation Houston Stone Soup Food Pantry. The gala concert, titled *gmch//taking centerstage*, is a celebration of American Broadway and popular tunes, and will be presented Saturday, June 15, 8 pm at Cullen Theater at Houston's Wortham Center. Tickets are available at Wortham Center Box Office or by calling 713/227-ARTS.

Appearing in concert with the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston are The Bayou City Chorale, and from Dallas' world-renowned Turtle Creek Chorale, the

male ensemble Acafellas.

"This has been a fun and exciting concert for us all to create," explained Mike Nelson, GMCH marketing chairman. "We are thrilled to have these two terrific choruses appearing and singing with us. Male choral music doesn't get any better than this in the state of Texas."

Latino Pride Gala Scheduled for Pride Week

On Saturday, June 22, 1996, AVES will present "Latino Pride Gala," an official Pride Week '96 event. The celebration, a semi-formal dance, continues the tradition begun by the gay and lesbian Latino community of celebrating pride in being gay/lesbian and Latino/a. The dance, to be held at the Edwin Homberger Conference Center in the Texas Medical Center (2151 W. Holcombe), is open to everyone.

Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$40 at the door, which includes admission and open bar all night. Latino music as well as country/western and other dance music will be provided.

AVES is a community-based organization whose mission is to promote a healthy community through education, disease prevention, advocacy, and direct care to Latinos and other historically under-served populations. All proceeds from Latino Pride Gala will enable the organization to continue its mission. For more information, call 713/626-2837.

Pride Committee Announces

Parade Grand Marshals

In a heavily attended meeting that brought updates on plans for this year's Pride Week celebration, the Houston Pride Committee chose grand marshals for its annual Pride Parade.

This year's female grand marshal is Jeanette Vaughn, board member and officer of the Royal Sovereign Imperial Court of the Single Star, a charitable organization dedicated to raising funds to fight HIV and AIDS. Chosen as male grand marshal is Bill Havard, owner of the Brazos River Bottom, who was praised for regularly making his nightclub available for benefit shows and meetings. Organizational honors go to the Royal Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star. This year's honorary grand marshal is Constable Jack Abercia, who has been praised for his willingness to consult with the gay community and to pay attention to its concerns.

The Houston Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade, known as one of the largest gay/lesbian parades in the nation, rolls down Westheimer on Sunday, June 23, 1996 at 5 pm.

Texas Renaissance Festival Announces Auditions

The Texas Renaissance Festival has announced open auditions for performers at the annual seven-

week autumn festival on Saturday and Sunday, May 18 and 19, 1996.

Performance company character actors will audition in a workshop format, using improvisational exercises. Neither prepared material nor costumes are necessary, but comfortable clothing should be worn. Specialty acts of groups or individuals (musicians, magicians, jugglers, storytellers, dancers, etc.) are given a maximum of ten minutes to showcase. Content is up to performer, and props are encouraged. For appointment or more information, contact Bonnie Hiram at 713/356-2178 or 409/894-2516.

Log Cabin Republicans- Houston Take a Stand on Right to Die Legislation

In April, Log Cabin-Houston went on record at its general membership meeting in support of Right to Die legislation. In doing so, it became the first gay organization in Texas, and possibly the nation, to take a stand on this issue. The membership determined that "right to die" was neither a Republican nor a gay issue, but a matter of choice.

The resolution received overwhelming support from the group. With it, Log Cabin-Houston hopes to set a course toward building alliances and coalitions with other groups to gain support for the proposed legislation.

Volunteers Needed for Studies at Baylor

Healthy, non-diabetic Mexican-American and non-Hispanic white males are needed for research on glucose metabolism. Twice during the study, participants will be required to drink a nutritional supplement for two days, stay overnight at the children's research center, and for six hours the following day receive glucose intravenously and have small amounts of blood withdrawn hourly. Volunteers will receive \$150 for completion of the study. To apply, call 713/798-8654 by June 7, 1996.

Post-menopausal women ages 50-79 are needed

to participate in the Women's Health Initiative (WHI). The WHI, the first comprehensive study of women's health undertaken in the United States funded by the National Institutes of Health, will look at the effects of heart disease, breast cancer, colorectal cancer, and osteoporosis in older women. The health of more than 5,400 women will be followed for an average of nine years in one of two groups: an observational study group and a clinical trial group. Volunteers must plan to remain in the study for at least three years. Qualified participants will receive study medication, Pap smears, mammograms, and physical exams at no charge. For more information or to volunteer, call 713/798-8686 or 1-800-54-WOMEN by June 28, 1996.

People 18 to 80 years of age who have a duodenal (stomach) ulcer are needed for a drug study at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Individuals experiencing burning, gnawing, cramping, or aching in the stomach before meals and at bedtime may be eligible for free diagnostic tests and medication. The college also seeks people at least 18 years old who have ulcerative colitis. Participants will receive free diagnostic tests, medication, lab work, and physical examination. To volunteer for either study, call the study coordinator at the Baylor Institute for Inflammatory Diseases at 713/790-2171 by October 24, 1996.

Alley Theatre Receives Tony Award

Gregory Boyd, artistic director, and Paul Tetrault, managing director, have announced that the Alley Theatre is to receive this year's Special Tony Award for regional theatre. The Alley, currently celebrating its 50th season of production, will be recognized at the 1996 Tony Awards, hosted by Nathan Lane on Sunday, June 2, at the Majestic Theatre in New York.

The Special Tony Award is given to the Alley based on a recommendation by the American Theatre Critics Association for displaying a continuous level of artistic achievement contributing to the growth of theatre nationally. This is the only Special Tony Award to be given this year.

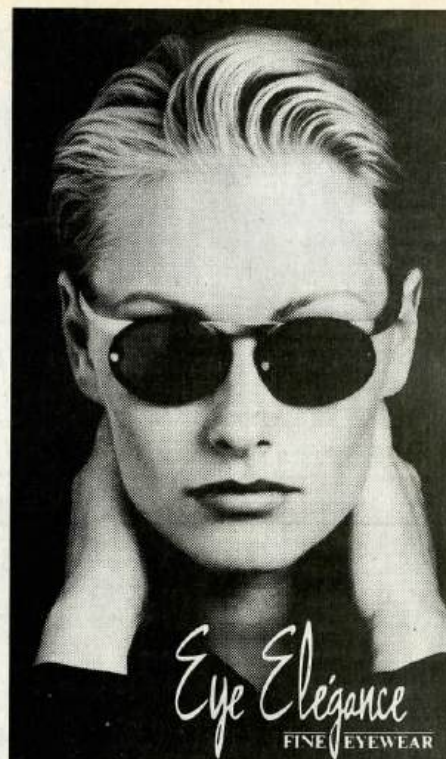
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RuPaul Accepts Town Meeting's National Merit Award



Drag superstar RuPaul accepts an award from OutSmart's Eric L. Roland.

During the middle of his concert at Rich's on May 4, RuPaul paused briefly to accept a national merit award bestowed upon him by Town Meeting, Inc., organizers of the concert and this fall's Spectrum '96 Business Expo. Presented to him by Eric L. Roland, writer and editor for OutSmart, the star-shaped, glass award honors an individual, who, through hard work and perseverance, overcame adversity to pursue a vision that most people said wouldn't work, ultimately making an impact on the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and straight communities. In presenting the award, Roland quoted RuPaul's inspirational message: "Love yourself and you'll find out that life is a song worth singing!"



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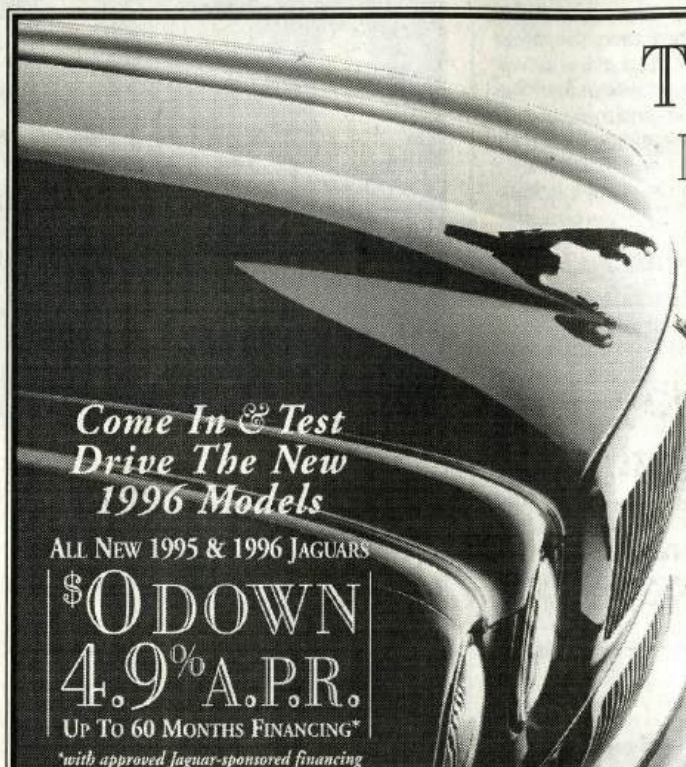


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Out Here

Continued from previous page

Planned Parenthood Offers Free Mammograms for Women Over 50

Funded by a grant from the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, Planned Parenthood is offering free mammograms to women over the age of 50 who have an income of less than \$24,000 per year. The goal of the program is to help women get necessary screening for early detection of breast cancer. Mammograms will be offered at Planned Parenthood's 3601 Fannin location on June 6, 26, and 28 and in Stafford at 3727 Greenbriar, #118 on May 22 and June 14. Women can call 713/494-5757 to schedule an appointment. Mammography is provided by M.D. Anderson LifeCheq Cancer Prevention Program. Low cost mammograms are also available to women in other age and income groups.

Local Rally Planned on Supreme Court's Decision

Longtime lesbian and gay civil rights activist Gary Grant, who was recently named the Human Rights Campaign's action coordinator for the Houston area, is currently planning a rally in response to the upcoming ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court on Colorado's Amendment 2. Amendment 2, a statewide ballot initiative passed in Colorado in 1992, would ban the State of Colorado and any political jurisdiction within the state from passing or enforcing laws protecting civil rights based on sexual orientation. The rally, either celebrating or demonstrating against the Court's decision, will be held at Tranquillity Park in the shadow of the federal building at 7 pm on the day of the ruling. The Supreme Court is expected to rule as early as May 13, but the ruling could come down on any Monday before June 24. The impact of this ruling will be far-reaching and will affect the lives of all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans. Any individual or organization interested in participating may call Grant at 713/664-0551 for more information.

Austin '70s Dyke Reunion on Memorial Day

Women who were lesbians in Austin during the 1970s are invited to an Austin '70s Dyke Reunion to be held Memorial Day, May 27, from 4 to 9 pm at the Living Well, 4503 St. Elmo Road in Austin. The stated purpose is for these pioneers to "Honor ourselves as inventors of lesbian feminism and the front lines of the women's revolution." It is open to all women, their lovers, and children. Admission is free. For more information, call the ALA 70s Herstory Project at 512/326-5634 or e-mail at vickyk@io.com.

Crossroads Market Opens at New Location

Crossroads Market Bookstore and Cafe recently celebrated the grand opening of their new Montrose location at 1111 Westheimer next to Hollywood Video in the old Tower Theater building. The popular bookstore still offers the widest selection of gay- and lesbian-themed fiction and non-fiction books in town, as well as magazines, greeting cards, and gift items. With the new location, however, Crossroads added a coffee shop cafe, featuring cappuccino, espresso, latte, and iced coffees, as well as specialty desserts. ▼

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• Every THURSDAY

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Friday, **MAY 17**

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 9 pm in Ms. B's

Thursday, **MAY 30**

"That Dam Debate:"
 Safer Sex Seminar for Lesbians
 New Program & Supply Kits
 9:30 pm

Sunday, **MAY 26**
Memorial Day Weekend
 Family Bar-B-Que on the Patio
 Steak, Chicken, Sausage and
 All the Trimmings

Friday, **MAY 31**

Shiela Lennon
 Smooth Country Sounds

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FRIDAYS:

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SATURDAYS:

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 in the Ranch and XTC

SUNDAYS:

Family Bar-B-Que on the Patio
 Steak, Chicken, Sausage and
 All the Trimmings

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OUT IN OUR WORLD

From Gaynet Wire Service

Same-Sex Marriages? Well, Maybe in Holland.

Anti-Marriage Movement Continues in Atlanta

ATLANTA—Georgia Governor Zell Miller has signed a bill that bars same-sex marriages in the state, joining South Dakota, Utah, and Idaho as the fourth state to prohibit gay and lesbian marriages in anticipation that such weddings will soon become legal in Hawaii.

A South Carolina House of Representatives committee has also voted for a similar measure that would prohibit such marriages, wherever they might have been performed.

In Arizona, the state's House of Representatives resurrected an anti-marriage measure that quickly won ten-to-three approval in the judiciary committee and was approved on a voice vote by the full House after an hour's debate. It still needs the approval of the state Senate.

The Alaska legislature took a double swing at same-sex relationships, passing one measure that would limit domestic partnership benefits in the state educational system and sending it to Governor Tony Knowles. At the same time, the lawmakers began debate on a ban on same-sex marriages in the state, a proposal that is expected to easily pass.

Kansas lawmakers, meanwhile, approved an anti-marriage bill and sent it to the governor for his signature.

In Hawaii, lawmakers in the state Senate agreed, after some last-minute political maneuvering, to keep a ban on same-sex marriages alive. Senator Milton Holt introduced and passed through his consumer protection committee a bill that limits issuing marriage licenses only to opposite-sex couples to beat a deadline for new measures. Senator Rey Gaulty, chairman of the important judiciary committee where the measure now moves, says he is opposed to reintroducing the measure even though he has agreed to go along with the Holt maneuver.

It's a Thin Line Between Love & Hate in Arizona

PHOENIX—The Arizona legislature got a bit schizophrenic over gay rights, with the Senate passing a bill by 21-9 barring same-sex marriages

in the state, even if legally performed elsewhere.

The anti-marriage bill has already been approved by the legislature's lower chamber and now goes to Governor Fife Symington, who is expected to sign it.

At the same time, however, by a 34-23 vote, the state House of Representatives passed legislation authorizing tougher sentences for criminals who victimize people based on race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. A similar proposal last year died when Republican legislative leaders objected to including sexual orientation.

Missouri GOP's Anti-Marriage Campaign Ignites Sparks

ST. LOUIS—In a highly controversial election campaign tactic that Republican leaders around the country are watching closely, the head of the Missouri Republican Party, John Cozad, has launched attacks against Democrats running for state office, accusing them of having financial backing from supporters of same-sex marriages.

Republicans running for office in the state, including many who are seeking election to the state legislature, are grumbling because the attack campaigns are being operated in their races whether they want them or not. In two special election races, the Republicans have lost both campaigns.

Not all Republicans running for office in Missouri, however, agree with Cozad on the campaign. Republican Bill Patrick, who lost in the just-finished special election in the state's 6th legislative district, publicly apologized to his Democratic opponent for the same-sex marriage campaign launched by the Republicans on his behalf. He called the attack "pretty negative, pretty bad."

State GOP strategists in Ohio, Wisconsin, Oregon, and elsewhere say they're interested in seeing how the same-sex marriage link works as a campaign strategy in Missouri.

Illinois Lawmakers OK Marriage Ban

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—A proposal that would bar Illinois from recognizing same-sex marriages is headed to Governor Jim Edgar after the House approved a

plan that critics denounced as gay-bashing. Republicans in the state legislature backed the measure, saying they were concerned that a legal battle in Hawaii could make the state recognize same-sex marriages performed there.

The measure passed 87-13. The governor has not taken any formal position on the legislation.

Michigan College Students Impeached

ALBION, Mich.—Jeff Schroder and Cori Johnson, members of the Albion College student senate, have both been impeached for sending out a press release that implied their full student senate supported a bill in the Michigan legislature that would bar same-sex marriages in the state.

Schroder and Johnson said they were the victims of a "politically correct witch hunt" because they support the anti-gay marriage bill, but two-thirds of the student senate voted to impeach the pair. Christopher O'Connor, the senate president, said, "It was made very clear...that this was not about the content of their opinions, but the way in which they expressed those opinions."

The student governing body determined that Schroder and Johnson had issued a press release to newspapers and TV stations in southern Michigan after gay rights activists had asked the student governing body to oppose the anti-gay measure.

The senators said that their two colleagues had issued their press release on "Albion College Student Affairs" letterhead, quoting Johnson, so that it appeared the news release was the official view of the college senate. Johnson is quoted in the press release as saying, "It is not the function of the Albion College student senate to legitimize an immoral act. We refuse to soil our name by putting a stamp of approval on such perversion."

Pro, Con Rallies in Hawaii as Legislature Winds Down

HONOLULU—Several hundred people, many with their children, rallied in front of the state capitol building April 1 in support of a proposed bill in the legislature that would put a constitutional amendment before the voters this fall barring same-sex marriages by restricting marriage only to members of

Is Drag Constitutional?

FERNDAL, Mich.—Citizens of Ferndale, just outside Detroit, have become embroiled in a debate over whether men putting on dresses to perform in a variety show is constitutionally protected freedom of speech and expression, or if it violates community standards and can, therefore, be prohibited.

The flap has erupted almost a year after the fact, but that hasn't lowered the heat of the debate over the Lavender Moon Cafe's drag show after Gay Pride celebrations there last year. City Councilman Robert Paczkowski has been leading the opposition, and he

said recently that "a lot of people don't want that kind of a display right in the middle of our central business district." Paczkowski says Lavender Moon's entertainment license includes restrictions barring topless dancing, lingerie shows, and any entertainment that "violates community standards," which he says includes men dressing as women.

Gay Float Doesn't Cause End of the World in Florida

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Authoritative sources in Florida have confirmed that the world, in fact, did not

come to an end because for the first time the annual Tallahassee Springtime Parade included a gay float.

The Community News float, festooned with balloons and sporting three men in drag, caused the North Florida Christian School to withdraw its marching band from the parade, and a lone protester dogged the float with a sign that said, "Nations fall when deviant sex persists."

But parade organizers said that about 150,000 people lined the streets as usual to watch the annual event.

Ohio Gay Groups Join in Denouncing Anti-Abortion Gathering

CINCINNATI—The Log Cabin Republicans and Stonewall Cincinnati joined with NOW, Planned Parenthood, the League of Women Voters and other organizations in taking out full-page ads in the Cincinnati Enquirer denouncing Human Life International for "dangerous extremism" as it started a five-day conference in the city.

HLI is primarily an anti-abortion group made up mostly of Catholics, and has been criticized for its refusal to renounce violence in abortion protests and as virulently homophobic, anti-Semitic, and anti-Islamic in its doctrines.

At its annual conference in Montreal last year, an estimated 5,000 protesters pelted the Maryland-based group's members with condoms as they conducted mass at the city's Notre Dame basilica.

Since then, the Canadian government has gone to court to strip HLI of its tax exemption, charging the HLI is not an education group, but is overtly political.

Continued on next page

marriages by restricting marriage only to members of the opposite sex.

Not to be outdone, several hundred supporters of gay and lesbian marriages also rallied two days later in the same spot against putting the proposed amendment on the ballot. The measure has already passed the state House of Representatives, but appears to be stalled in the state Senate.

Hawaii news sources also report that according to the latest lobbying reports filed with the state, the Hawaii Futures Today Coalition, which is battling against allowing same-sex marriages, had outspent supporters of gay and lesbian marriages by nearly a two-to-one margin during the first two months of this year's legislative session.

Hawaii Futures Today reported spending nearly \$8,000 during the period, while the ACLU and the Hawaii Equal Marriage Project had spent just over \$4,000 in their efforts. The anti-gay marriage coalition, however, said it had intensified its media campaign to fight same-sex marriages since that report and had so far spent about \$25,000—mainly on media advertising—to bring pressure on the legislature to restrict marriage to male-female couples only, even though the legislative efforts in the area appear dead as the lawmakers prepare to wrap up this year's sessions.

Hawaii Lawmakers Struggle With Anti-Marriage Bill

HONOLULU—Unable to decide what to do, but unwilling to let go of the issue, the Hawaii state legislature spent a good part of a week flipping and flopping about same-sex marriages only to find itself pretty much back where it was 10 days earlier.

A bill that would put the question of amending the state constitution to bar same-sex marriages before the voters this November I went to two state Senate committees, in at least one of which it was expected to die. Two senators protested by storming out of the chamber as political tensions continued to escalate.

In an effort to appease the angry pols, the Senate leadership then removed the bill from the committee that was expected to do nothing about the measure, leaving the way open for the measure to be called to the floor for a full vote.

The whole complicated week of maneuvering leaves the anti-marriage bill exactly where it was

earlier in April—uncertain of Senate approval, but still alive in the legislature.

UK Encouraging Local Councils to Extend Housing Rights to Gays

LONDON—The London Telegraph reports that Britain's Housing Minister David Curry is about to issue formal guidelines encouraging local authorities to give same-sex couples "joint tenancies" in local housing.

The paper reports, however, that the move isn't so much a new enlightened policy on the government's part so much as an effort by Prime Minister John Major's government to overturn an amendment already approved by a committee in Parliament that would give gay and lesbian couples the same legal rights as married couples in government-subsidized housing.

Dutch Get Serious About Marriage

THE HAGUE, Holland—The Dutch Parliament has approved a measure by 81-60 that calls on the government to appoint a commission to evaluate the legal implications, both nationally and internationally, of extending full marriage rights to gay and lesbian couples in the country.

The move is several steps from a radical change, of course, but Dutch gays and lesbians, along with progressive politicians in the country, are increasingly insisting on full, equal rights in what is probably Europe's most liberal nation.

What is perhaps most significant about the measure is that the commission is to consider issues such as adoption, parenting, inheritance, taxes, and spousal citizenship of foreigners and an array of questions that other European nations with same-sex couples registrations have so far ducked or specifically added restrictions to.

But as a measure at least of how serious Dutch politicians are about same-sex marriages now, public discussions have even reached the level of members of parliament debating whether Queen Beatrix will give her assent to full marital rights for gays and lesbians in Holland.



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Out in Our World

Continued from previous page

Nature vs. Nurture vs. Bingo!

MILWAUKEE—A judge has tossed out a civil lawsuit, filed by 73-year-old Mary Verdev against a local church, claiming she began having spontaneous orgasms and became sexually attracted to other women after an electronic bingo board fell on her. Verdev said in her suit that she suffered nearly \$90,000 in injuries when the 300-pound bingo board fell from a stage at the church during a bingo night she was attending in 1990.

Her suit claimed the accident led to her unusual sexual responses. Verdev's suit was dismissed "with prejudice" (meaning she can't refile the claim) because she refused to be examined by psychologists.

Olympic Games: Fig Leaves and Cobb County

ATLANTA—The 1996 Summer Olympic Games preliminaries got under way with the Saturday, April 27, televised start of the torch that started in Los Angeles and will be relayed across the country to Atlanta. There it will light the official Olympic flame for the games on July 19, although not quite the way U.S. Olympic officials expected.

Officials at the Los Angeles Coliseum, where the torch relay began, complained that they had trouble finding fig leaves big enough to cover the genitals on two statues of nude athletes outside the stadium.

The cover-up order came from the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG), concerned that some viewers of the nationally televised ceremony might be offended by the nudity. ACOG also announced that the torch relay would not go through Cobb County outside Atlanta because county commissioners have refused to repeal a 1993 measure that condemns "the homosexual lifestyle." That resolution was also responsible for ACOG's decision, under pressure from activists and rights advocates, to pull scheduled Olympic preliminaries from facilities in Cobb County.



Preparing for Amendment 2 Ruling

WASHINGTON—In anticipation of what will be the most significant legal decision concerning gay rights ever in the United States, the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force is coordinating plans with local activists around the country for a "Supreme Response National Day of Action." The program is designed to respond to the Supreme Court's ruling this year on the constitutionality of Colorado's Amendment 2.

The following is a press release issued by NGLTF about its current plans:

Activists Gear Up for Supreme Court's Amendment 2 Decision; Communities Ready to "Celebrate or Demonstrate"

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender activists

across the country are gearing up in anticipation of the upcoming Supreme Court ruling on the controversial Colorado Amendment 2 case.

Activists in cities and towns across the country will be "coming out" the day after the decision to educate and celebrate or demonstrate as part of the Supreme Response National Day of Action.

"The gay community is on the edge of its collective seat and ready to act," said Karen Bullock-Jordan, NGLTF field organizer and Supreme Response coordinator. "People understand that this decision could have monumental ramifications for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people everywhere...as well as all people working for social justice. The court's decision could determine whether the civil rights of a minority can be held hostage to the prejudice of a majority," added Bullock-Jordan.

It remains unknown when the court will release its decision, though the days are dwindling. Court watchers say few potential announcement days remain during the current session for the Supreme Court. The days include...May 20 and 28; and June 3, 10, 17, and 24.

In the meantime, NGLTF continues to work with local activists preparing Supreme Response events and urges g/l/b/t people throughout the country to organize a Supreme Response in their community if there is not one already planned.

If your community is not listed below but is planning an action, please contact NGLTF to become part of the Supreme Response Network. NGLTF will be contacting the Supreme Response Action Network and informing them of the decision and providing them analysis of it as soon as the decision is released. NGLTF will also be distributing information on local Supreme Response events and local contact names and numbers to media across the country.

People interested in mobilizing their community for a "Supreme Response" should contact NGLTF for a free "Supreme Response Action Kit" by calling or e-mailing Field Organizer Karen-Bullock-Jordan at 202/332-6483, ext. 3206, or karenbj@nglft.org.

SUPREME RESPONSE:
A NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION
• TEXAS LOCATIONS •

Austin: Austin Latino/a Lesbian & Gay Organization and Lesbian and Gay Rights Lobby of Texas
Dallas: Dallas Gay/Lesbian Alliance

Houston: A conference will be held at Tranquility Park at 7 pm on the day of the ruling. For more information on the local response, call Gary Grant at 713/664-0551.

San Antonio: San Antonio Lesbian and Gay Media Project and Esperanza Peace & Justice Center.

California Trustees Wiggle Around Outright Gay Club Ban

GLENDAL, Calif.—Trustees for the Glendale, California, school district have decided under pressure from civil rights groups not to adopt a policy that would require students to get parental permission in order to join gay and lesbian school clubs specifically, and instead modified the policy to make it apply to any "controversial" non-curricular clubs at the city's public schools.

The school board had initially intended to make the policy apply only to the gay and lesbian club that students at Hoover High School had asked to form, but decided to make the policy apply generally to any "controversial" clubs so it wouldn't appear to be discriminatory.

Civil rights advocates were not satisfied with the

broader parental permission requirement and argue that the adopted policy simply covers up the original intention of the board to make it nearly impossible for gay and lesbian students to join the proposed club.

Marc Elovitz, staff attorney for the ACLU's Lesbian and Gay Rights Project, said the policy "was a thinly-veiled attempt to silence gay youths."

"Rather than making it more difficult for lesbian and gay teenagers to come out, the school board should be meeting to discuss ways to create a friendlier environment for gay youths," Elovitz said.

Anti-Violence March at Kentucky School

MOREHEAD, Ky.—Nearly 200 students, faculty, and staff members marched through the Morehead State University campus in a "Take Back the Night" campaign aimed at raising awareness of anti-gay and -lesbian violence at the school.

The march, the first of its kind at the school, was sparked by the February 5 attack of Carrie O'Connor, a lesbian enrolled at the university. According to MSU campus police, three masked men grabbed O'Connor as she was walking back to her dormitory and repeatedly punched and kicked her. Officials say they still have no suspects in that attack, but it was reported to state police as an anti-gay hate crime—the first such official report filed by the school.

Minnesota Students Not Amused by Spoof Newspaper

DULUTH, Minn.—The April Fool's edition of *The Statesman*, the University of Minnesota-Duluth's school newspaper, has sparked a raging controversy on the usually placid campus.

The eight-page special sendup, titled *The Stateschic*, included spoof articles about a nonexistent bar called "Gerbils" under a headline reading, "Pump and lick it up at the new gay bar in anal park" and another that announced "Get a free HIV test sponsored by ULGBA, the Ugly Lesbos Gay Bastards Association."

Some 5,000 copies of the paper disappeared just hours after it was distributed on campus. Several hundred copies were passed out at a protest rally where some 700 students demanded the resignation of *Statesman* editor Bob Hustvedt and a front-page apology for the offending issue. The disappearance of the free newspaper led UMN-Duluth officials to warn that theft of copies of the free paper may violate federal law.

Hustvedt has adamantly refused to resign, saying he has a First Amendment right to publish whatever material is "appropriate for the newspaper."

Two copy editors and the paper's news editor, who all said they had nothing to do with the content of the April Fool's issue, have resigned to protest what they consider "an offensive violation of journalism ethics."

Fired New Hampshire Teacher Wins Reinstatement

NEW IPSWICH, N.H.—An independent arbiter has ruled that Penny Culliton, the Mascenic High School English teacher who was fired last year because she defied administrators and assigned books with gay themes, should be reinstated in her job.

The arbitration, however, also determined that

Culliton will not receive back pay or accrue retirement benefits for the period during which she was officially "fired."

Culliton had assigned students to read works by E.M. Forster and May Sarton after the Mascenic School Board had adopted a policy that barred teaching materials that portrayed homosexuality.

Rhode Island School Anti-Bias Measure Passes; May Be Resubmitted

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—A Rhode Island state Senate committee narrowly approved by a five-to-four vote a measure that would outlaw bias based on sexual orientation in the state's public schools. But because a number of the judiciary committee's members missed the vote, committee Chairman Domenic DiSandro said he will probably resubmit the bill to another committee vote on whether to report the measure to the full Senate.

Wisconsin University Students Sue Over Gay Funding

MADISON, Wisc.—Three University of Wisconsin law school students have filed a lawsuit against the school, charging that they are being forced to contribute to organizations, including a campus gay group, that violate their political, religious, and ideological beliefs.

Scott Harold Southworth, Amy Schoepke, and Keith Bannach, who described themselves as "devout Christians," said they particularly object to money given to the environmental group, UW Greens; to the

Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Campus Center; the Campus Women's Center; and the Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG), a citizens' advocacy organization.

Jordan Lorence, the attorney who is representing the three students in their federal suit, said these organizations and others received about \$18 of the \$165 in fees that students at the University of Wisconsin pay each semester. About two-thirds of the fees go to the University Health Service and the student Memorial Union.

Utah Lawmakers Ban Gay Clubs at Schools

SALT LAKE CITY—Called into special session, the Utah Legislature spent a nasty day enacting a measure that would bar gay and lesbian student groups from public schools in the state, a measure that Governor Mike Leavitt has already indicated he would sign into law and for which he called the special session.

The state's ACLU has already vowed that if the measure is signed into law, as it's sure to be, it will sue to overturn it.

"Not only does it violate the rights of lesbian, gay, and straight students," said Carol Gnade of the American Civil Liberties Union in Utah, "but also everyone associated with a Utah high school, including teachers, administrators, and volunteers."

Under the law just approved by the Legislature, school boards will have the authority to restrict or bar any campus club, but in addition, the measure also forces public school officials to ban any that are centered around bigotry, criminal activity, or human sexuality.

Continued on next page

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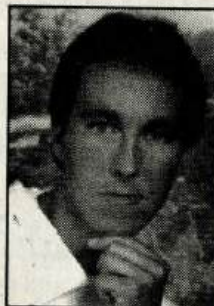
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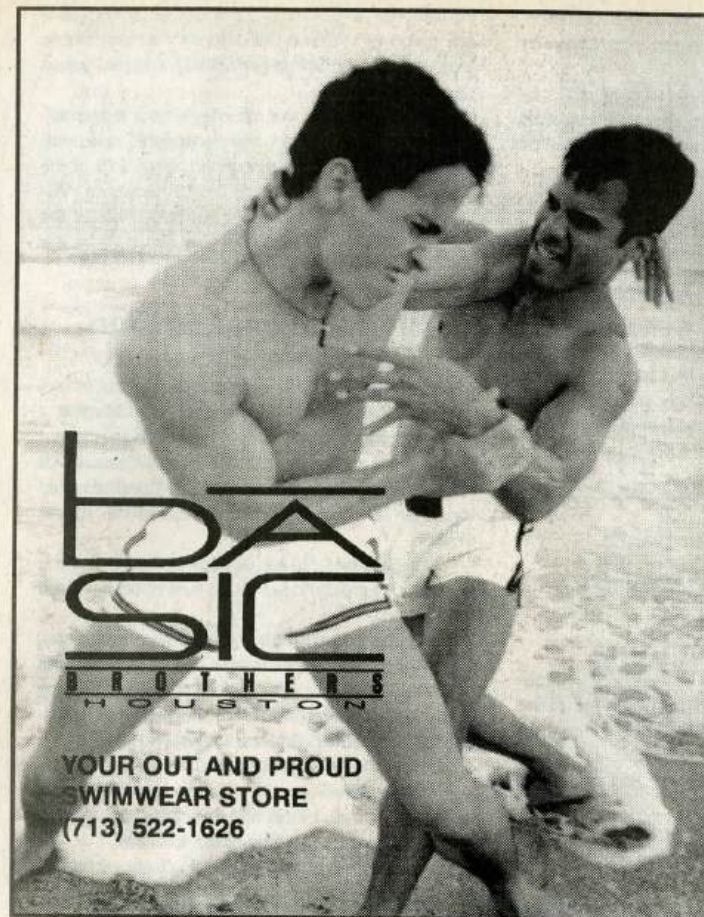
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Out in Our World

Continued from previous page

Governor Mike Leavitt and the measure's sponsor, Senator Craig Taylor, insisted that the new law takes back control of campus clubs by allowing school boards to prohibit specific clubs. The Utah attorney general has already indicated that barring campus clubs that are "controversial" is illegal under the 1984 federal Equal Access Act.

Des Moines School Board Center of Fight Over Rights

DES MOINES, Iowa—The Des Moines school board is getting it from both sides, with the anti-gay Concerned Parents of Des Moines asking the school trustees to eliminate the district's anti-discrimination protections that cover sexual orientation.

In response to the petitions calling for the repeal of the anti-bias protections, students at Des Moines schools started their own petition drive calling on the district to keep the nondiscrimination protections.

Both sides have collected more than a thousand signatures on each of their respective petitions.

Notre Dame OKs One Lesbigan Group, Rejects Another

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—Responding to recommendations by an ad hoc Committee on Gay & Lesbian Student Needs, Patricia O'Hara, Notre Dame's vice president for student affairs, has announced that the Catholic university will allow Notre Dame Gay & Lesbian Students official recognition at the school, although it will be set up differently from other student groups on campus. The school will not, however, recognize an existing gay and lesbian group that it rejected last year.

According to O'Hara's office, NDGLS will "stand in special relationship to the Office of Student Affairs [to] assist gay and lesbian students in coming together to find mutual support and in exploring common issues within the context of this community and the teachings of the Catholic Church."

NDGLS's advisors will also be appointed by O'Hara, unlike other student groups on campus which select their own advisors. The university will continue, however, to refuse to recognize an unofficial student group. Gays & Lesbians of Notre Dame and St. Mary's College, which was kicked off campus last year even though it continues to function as a non-campus organization.

Catholic Publication Rejects Dignity Ad

BOSTON—According to a report in the *Boston Globe*, the city's official archdiocesan publication, *The Pilot*, refused to run a paid ad for Dignity-Boston, the Catholic gay and lesbian group. *Pilot* officials so far haven't explained why they rejected the ad, which was to announce Dignity's Easter Sunday services.

Heresy Trial Appears Bugged Down Over Church Issues

WILMINGTON, Del.—Despite predictions that the heresy charges against retired Episcopal Bishop Walter Righter would be thrown out quickly after an ecclesiastical court convened on February 27 to hear the case, the bishops who will decide if Righter is guilty or not because he ordained a gay man to the clergy seem to be embroiled in the complex issue of the difference between church "doctrine" and "discipline."

Shortly before the special court assembled in late February, Bishop Righter's lawyer, Edward Rehill, told reporters that the court would throw out the charges "by the end of the week." But in early March the presiding bishop-judges asked attorneys for both sides to submit detailed statements on the distinctions between church doctrine and church discipline, giving the lawyers until April 9 to file their documents.

Archbishop Tutu Calls Anti-Gay Attitudes "Blasphemy"

LONDON—British news media were stunned at an announcement that a soon-to-be-published book, *We Were Baptized Too*, includes an admonition from Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town. The Archbishop has warned in the book that those churches which reject gays and lesbians because of their sexual orientation are committing a sin that is "nearly the ultimate blasphemy."

Tutu's forward says that gays and lesbians would have to be "the craziest coots around" if homosexuality were simply a matter of personal choice because of the "hostility, discrimination, loss and suffering" they face. "We blame them for something that is becoming increasingly clear they can do little about," the Archbishop writes.

We Were Baptized Too is an assortment of church services aimed at gay and lesbian Christians and includes a "thanksgiving" for National Coming Out Day, a "celebration of coming out," and other church liturgies written specifically for gays and lesbians.

Religious Beliefs Not Justification for Bias in California

SAN FRANCISCO—Overturning a lower court ruling, the California Supreme Court has ruled that a landlady's religious beliefs do not exempt her from the state's anti-discrimination statutes.

The court narrowly ruled four-to-three that Chico, California, landlady Evelyn Smith violated state housing laws when she refused to rent a home to an unmarried couple, Gail Randall and Kenneth Phillips, because her religious beliefs held that sex outside matrimony is "a sin."

The case has wide-sweeping implications for the state's gays and lesbians because a state appeals court, which had found in Smith's favor, opened the possibility that landlords who object to homosexuality on religious grounds might also refuse to rent to gays and lesbians.

4th Circuit Appeals Court Upholds "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"

WASHINGTON—In the continuing war over the constitutionality of the U.S. military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, Lt. Paul Thomasson, a former naval officer discharged for revealing that he is gay, has lost an important battle in a federal appeals court decision.

The U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in Virginia upheld the policy banning openly homosexual women and men from serving in the nation's armed forces. The case has national significance because it is the first ruling involving the "don't ask, don't tell" policy to reach the federal appeals level.

Alan Moore, Thomasson's attorney, argued that the military policy of excluding gays and lesbians from the armed services was both unconstitutional and unreasonable, considering the young officer's outstanding record. Moore also took the unusual step of adding First Amendment free-speech claims on top of Fifth and Fourteenth Amendment "due process" and "equal protection" arguments that have been more widely used in battling the Pentagon ban in the past.

The appeals court ruled, nonetheless, that the president and Congress retain the right to set military policies, and that the judicial branch should defer to them. "It was appropriate for Congress to believe that a military force should be as free as possible of sexual attachments and pressures as it is prepared to do battle," wrote Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III in the nine-to-four majority opinion.

University of Pennsylvania Lets ROTC Off the Hook

PHILADELPHIA—The University of Pennsylvania has arrived at its own unique solution to the question of what to do about ROTC on campus and the school's anti-bias policies. After meeting with Pentagon officials earlier in April, Provost Stanley Chodorow has announced the university is doing nothing at all. Chodorow said he will not hold any further meetings with Defense Department officials because there was "nothing to be gained" by more meetings.

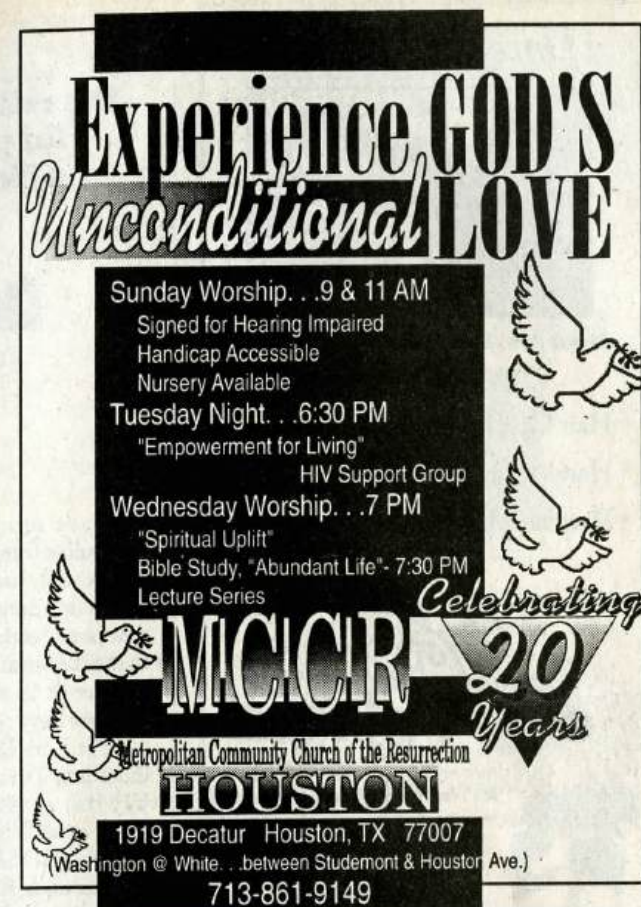
Instead, Chodorow said the university will simply reimburse any students who lose their ROTC scholarship funds because of their sexual orientation, and the campus ROTC program will simply continue at the school even though he called the military ban "unjustified and unjustifiable."

Bob Schoenberg, who heads the school's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Center, said that by not acting against ROTC, the university "is sanctioning discrimination" against gays and lesbians in defiance of the school's own anti-bias policies.

Harvard Will Let ROTC Ceremonies Go Forward

BOSTON—Dean of the college, Harry Lewis of Harvard, has rejected an undergraduate council resolution that would have kept the school's Reserve Officer Training Corps from holding its commissioning ceremony at Harvard Yard because of the military's ban against gays and lesbians.

Lewis said stopping the commissioning ceremony would unfair to "those students who choose to participate in the ROTC program." ▼



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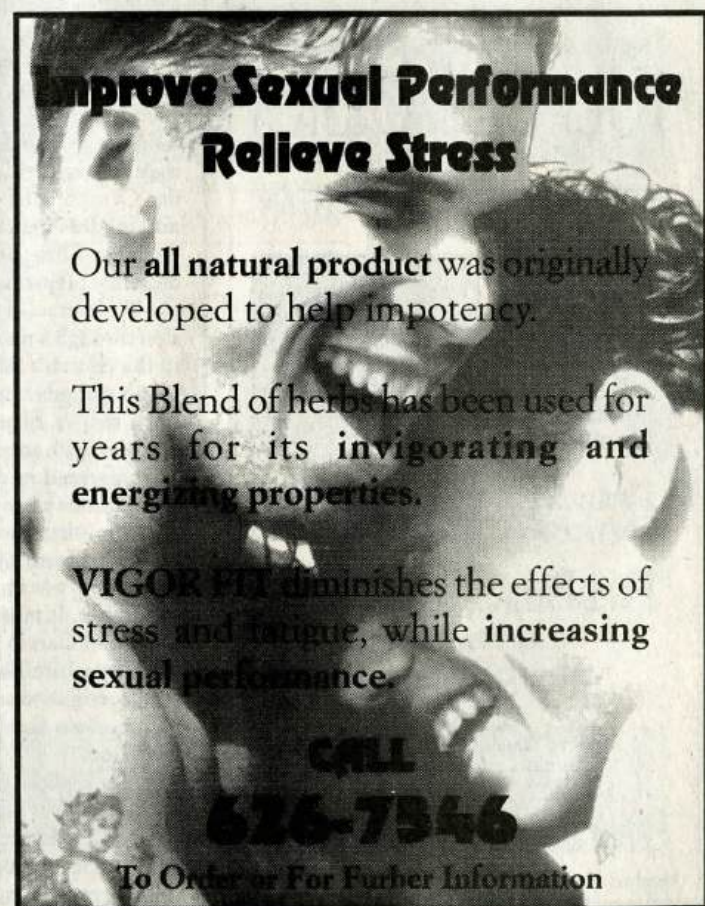
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O U T ▼ R I G H T

The religious right is organized, zealous, and poised for yet another Republican sweep of the polls in November. This calls for a little espionage...

One Christian Nation: A Look Inside

It's no secret that the religious right has built a formidable political machine, especially within the Republican Party, in less than a decade. You can see it in the way that presidential contenders have pandered to the theocratic visions of the far right. You can see it in the way that religious right activists have seized control of the Republican Party machinery in almost half the states, including Texas. And you can see it in the way that religious right-sponsored candidates have swept to victory in primaries and in general elections. But these are only the political end-products of a disciplined and coordinated effort that begins at the grassroots level with a handful of people in thousands of precincts across the country. Recently, some friends and I went to a precinct training session for religious right activists held at First Baptist Church. The session was nothing less than a glimpse of the One Christian Nation future they are diligently preparing for the rest of us.

We learned of this precinct training session through a mailing that apparently went to the church's 20,000 or so members. We began our adventure by entering the labyrinth that is First Baptist. A huge sports complex, with an elaborate refreshment stand and information desk, awaits the visitor at the entrance we took. The building had that partly musky, partly scrubbed smell that I remember from my church-going youth. But this church was much bigger than anything I remember. It must have hundreds of thousands of dollars in reserve to build and operate a structure like this. We went down a long corridor to an elevator where we went to a medium-sized conference room on the sixth floor.

The session was lead by four experienced religious right activists who head up an effort called the Nehemiah Project, sponsored by Second Baptist Church. Among the four were: Susan Feldtman, a Republican

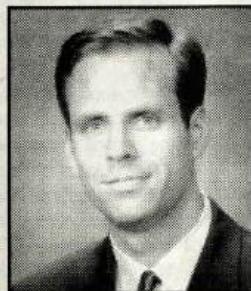
precinct chairperson and candidate for Republican National Committeewoman from Texas; Bill Borden, a Republican precinct chairperson and influential party activist; Tina Binkheiser, an attorney and a Republican precinct chairperson; and a fourth person, a man, whose name escapes me. The four were introduced by a spokesperson for First Baptist, who explained that the training session was First Baptist's effort to catch

up with Second Baptist's success in encouraging political involvement among its members. On a table to one side of the room were "Voter's Guides" prepared by the Texas Christian Coalition and other far right groups, telling churchgoers where candidates for public office stand on issues like abortion and gay civil rights.

The four presenters were very knowledgeable about the rules and procedures for precinct conventions, and went over them in some detail, occasionally fielding questions from the audience. They took turns covering different areas of concern and adhered to strict time limits in doing so, cued by time cards their compatriots flashed at them. Here are some of the highlights of what we heard.

The presenters had some pointed advice about the strategies to use in taking over a precinct convention, which is the lowest, most grassroots level of political involvement in a political party. One presenter told us that we should secretly take tape recorders into the precinct meeting so that we could have a verbatim record of what transpired. He told us that the recording would provide useful evidence in case we were outnumbered at the precinct convention and wanted to challenge the results because of some error in the proceedings. He suggested that we not take video recorders, since these are obvious recording devices.

The presenters suggested that we prepare—in advance—a slate of "pro-family"



by Dale Carpenter

delegates to be offered at the meeting. (In religious right argot, "pro-family" means anti-abortion and anti-gay.) These delegates go on to the next level of political party organization, the senatorial district conventions. The presenters suggested that we ask our slate to stand at the precinct convention in order to impress any dissenters with our political power and organization. Presumably, this show of "force" would intimidate others in the room into silence at the meeting. Feldtman indicated that she had already had a meeting to discuss strategy with her 67 delegates at her home before the primary. She added that when she asks those 67 people to stand in unison at meetings, "the other side gets real quiet." One of the presenters suggested that if you're in the minority at a precinct convention, you should just be quiet about your political views so you can be chosen as a delegate. Another presenter summed it up: "It's a numbers game. If you have the numbers, you win. If they have the numbers, they win."

Further, the presenters urged the trainees not to elect delegates or alternates unless they are "pro-family." Borden told the group not to let emotional appeals from the "other side" sway their judgment about electing delegates and alternates. "Don't get roped into this idea of fairness," he snickered. I wondered what Jesus might have thought of that comment.

Borden related one especially revealing "war" story from his long experience in grassroots politics. He said that he once had a precinct chair call him after a primary to tell him that no one else showed up to his precinct convention on the night of the primary. So the precinct chairperson went home. No, Borden advised, "Here's what you did." Borden then proceeded to instruct him which resolutions his precinct had "adopted" the night before—even though no such "convention" had ever taken place. The resolutions were then sent on to the resolutions committee as if they had been duly adopted. My mother had a word for that sort of thing when I was growing up: lying.

All of these suggested machinations and strategic moves prompted an audience member to ask, only half-jokingly, "You can't lose your salvation by doing this, can you?" Everybody laughed.

The presenters did not skirt substantive issues. Binkheiser warned the audience not to let provocative language get in the way of passing important resolutions for the party platform. For example, she said, suppose you wanted to pass a resolution condemning homosexuality. If you begin your resolution

by calling homosexuality "an abomination to God," she advised, you'll lose half your audience right away. So, in your anti-gay resolutions, just don't call homosexuality an "abomination," she said. "Of course, it is," she added confidently.

The avowed goal of the religious right is to make the United States "One Christian Nation." They intend to purify the land, making it righteous and holy, cleansing it of all evil, and teaching it to be obedient to God's will as they understand that will.

Lies. Deception. Intimidation. Selective disclosure. Secret recordings. Abominations. Might makes right. It is all opposed to everything I was taught about the teachings of Jesus. And yet we heard all of this in a church. Welcome to the brave new world of One Christian Nation. ▼

Dale Carpenter, a lawyer in Houston, is state president of Log Cabin Republicans of Texas and serves on the board of directors of Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus. The opinions expressed in this column are his own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Log Cabin, HGLPC, or OutSmart magazine.

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L E F T ▼ O U T

Politics make strange bedfellows.

The Gay Republican

Every time I hear the term "gay Republican," I experience cognitive dissonance. Usually, my mind equates the term "gay" with "homosexual." However, when the word "gay" immediately precedes the word "Republican," the combination is so intellectually unnatural that my mind deviates and defines "gay" as one who is "light-hearted or mirthful."

I then try to pair that definition with the word "Republican." But, images of Bob Dole, Phil Gramm, Strom Thurmond, Bob Dornan, and Jesse Helms dance in my head and, again, the term "gay Republican" just won't compute.

Only after this intellectual exercise ends do I realize that the term is actually referring to a homosexual Republican and the next challenge begins. And that challenge is to try to understand why anyone would choose to be a gay Republican.

Why would someone gay voluntarily try to integrate into a political party that has traditionally excluded gays and lesbians; that has repeatedly adopted language into its party platform asserting that gays and lesbians are not equal under the law; and that has uniformly opposed any legislation supportive of gay rights?

Today, we even have gay Republicans, "Log Cabin Republicans," who are trying to change the Republican Party from within. They attend Republican precinct conventions. They screen Republican candidates to assess their attitudes toward gays and lesbians. They even run for political office as Republicans.

While I certainly commend their bravery for fraternizing with some individuals who openly hate them, I cannot un-

derstand what possesses them to do so. I question why someone would actively seek participation in a party that openly courts the radical right and offers it a forum for gay bashing.

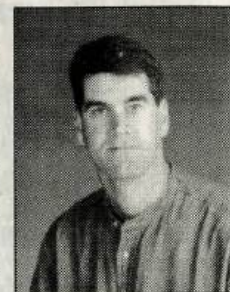
Let's assume that someone, a gay someone, wants to get involved in politics. And, let's assume they choose the Republican Party because they agree with it on fiscal issues, crime, education, and foreign policy. Because they agree with the Republican Party on so many issues (except for gay rights), they join the party with the intent to change from within its stance on gay and lesbian issues.

There is one problem with this approach. Today's Republican Party doesn't care what a gay man thinks about balancing the budget. It doesn't care what a lesbian thinks about education. And it doesn't care what a bisexual thinks about foreign policy. What today's Re-

publican Party cares about with regard to gays and lesbians is what we do in our bedrooms.

I'm not saying that all Republicans are homophobic, are gay baiters, or are obsessed with our sexuality. I'm not saying that there are no Republican candidates worthy of our support. And I'm not saying that we should never seek inclusion in the Republican Party. What I am saying is that the Republican Party, thus far, has consistently endorsed policies and platforms adverse to our interests. And until it quits doing so, we should not reward it with our support, but should beat it at the ballot box.

Given the Republican Party's history, why wouldn't a gay or lesbian, hungry to participate in party politics, naturally gravi-



by Daryl L. Moore

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tate toward the party with a better track record on tolerance, acceptance, and the promotion of civil rights for all individuals. If that gay or lesbian is conservative fiscally, it seems to me it would be easier for them to convince a Democratic spendthrift that the numbers aren't adding up than it would be to convince a puritan Republican that our orientation is worthy of equal treatment.

I sincerely hope that the gay Republicans who have become active in the political process are successful in changing the face of the Republican Party. However, after much introspection, I simply cannot understand why they want to.

Perhaps it's that I'm just a liberal. Perhaps it's that I was raised a Democrat. Or perhaps it's that I have never wanted to be a member of a club that doesn't want me. Because, as Stuart Smalley says, "I'm smart enough, I'm good enough, and gosh darnit, I like me." And as long as I do, I will not voluntarily align myself with a party that doesn't.

Daryl L. Moore is a lawyer in Houston, Texas. He has a general practice and is board certified in civil appellate law. The opinions expressed in this column are his own and do not necessarily reflect the views of OutSmart magazine.

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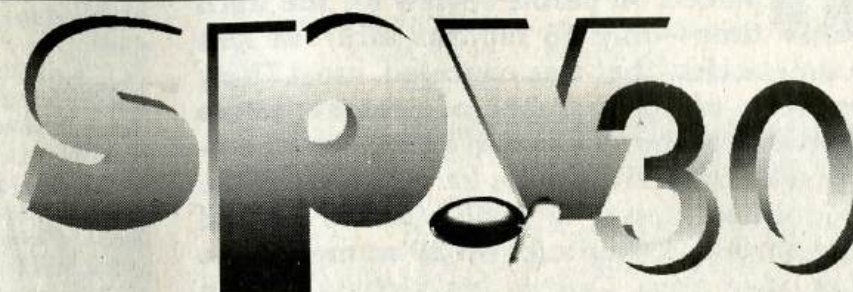
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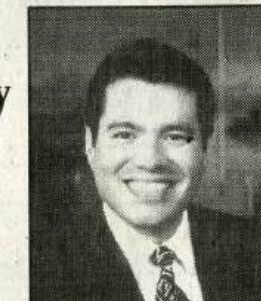
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"Montrose Rapist" Up for Parole Again

On April 16, 1996, Jack Walton was placed on parole review for the third time—only 18 months after his last parole review that was canceled, most likely because of the number of protest letters written. For those who don't know or remember who Jack Walton is, he was named the "Montrose rapist" in 1986 after he stalked and brutally assaulted over 20 women in the Montrose area. One of his victims, Suzan Cotellesse, recalls the attack:

Police believe Walton stalked me, planned his attack, and broke in as I slept in the early morning hours of July 1, 1986. Upon entry, he brutally beat me in the head with a hammer (resulting in five facial fractures including a broken nose and jaw), sexually assaulted me (vaginally, anally, and orally), stole my jewelry, bound and gagged me, and left me for dead. It was 7:30 pm before I was discovered and rushed to Hermann Hospital in critical condition. Then began a long and painful recovery—physically, emotionally, and spiritually."

Walton was arrested six weeks after his attack on Suzan, based on a lone fingerprint lifted from a safe during another assault. Charged with and brought to trial on only one assault, Walton later plead guilty to lesser charges of aggravated robbery and burglary with

intent to commit theft—any mention of sexual assault was dropped. He was sentenced to 30 to 40 years in prison, but 1986 guidelines mandated that he serve only 25 percent of his longest sentence (10 years).

Ten years is now up, and the parole board must review Walton's case. Unfortunately, due to plea bargaining, any sexual assault charges have been dropped from his record; therefore, the parole board does not know the extent of his crimes. Furthermore, Walton has not received therapy or rehabilitation for the violent rapes he committed. Statistics show that 80 percent of rapists are not rehabilitated and have the highest recidivism rate—the majority of early release offenders reoffend within three years.

If you would like to help "drown the parole board in paper," write a letter of protest letting them know you don't want this man released. Strongly protest the parole of this violent offender and request that Walton serve all of his sentence of 30 to 40 years concurrently.

Send letters to: Raven L. Kaven, State Director of Victim Services
Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice/Victim Services
P.O. Box 13401
Austin, TX 78711
Fax: 512/406-5417 (please follow with hard copy in mail)
Phone: 800/848-4284

Deadline: As soon as possible.
The time to respond can be closed at anytime.

Offender info.: The following must be included in your letter:
Jack Walton
State ID: 03726514
TDC ID: 434042

Who can write: Anyone! More is better. Get a friend involved.

Contents: No form letters, please. Use your own words.
Strongly protest the parole of this violent offender and request that he "serve all" of his sentence.

Copy to Suzan: So that a file can be kept of the responses to the parole board, please send a copy of your letter to:
Spectrum Center
4100 Westheimer
Suite 235,
Houston, TX 77027

Thank You!



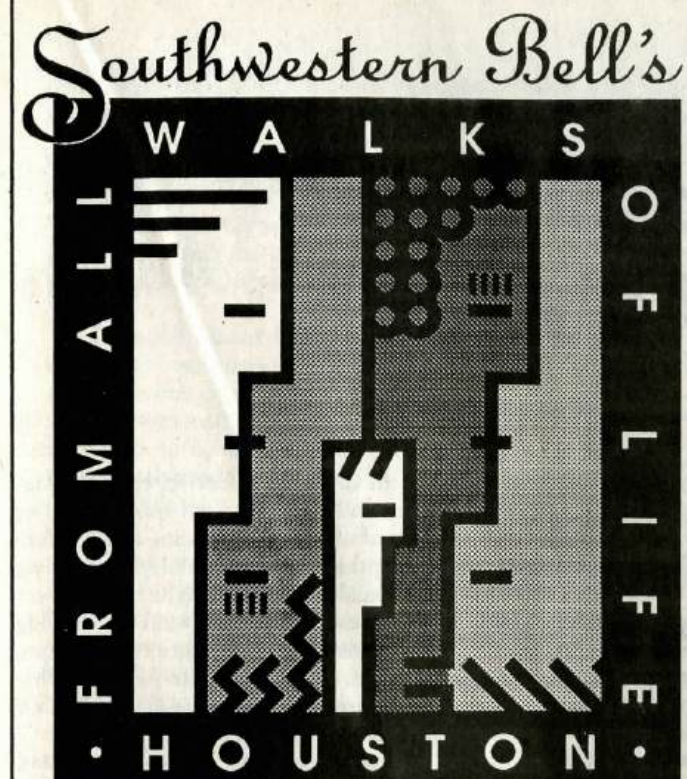
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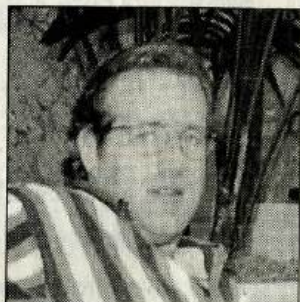
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by Rick Schroder

Coming Out of My Shell

I had just finished college and accepted a position with a company in the state of Washington. After several months, it became apparent that one of my colleagues was doing everything in her ability to hurt my job performance, and ultimately, to get me fired. I was being discriminated against at a time in my life when I was perceived as a heterosexual male. Her motive was the inconsistent hiring practices of the company, something which I had absolutely no control over. Fortunately, common sense intervened and management put us on separate projects.

It is ironic that everything seems to boil down to how we are perceived by others. I left that company nine years ago, but throughout my career, I've periodically reflected on the situation. Originally, I viewed the experience as a reason for staying in the closet. After all, if I could be discriminated against for being a straight white male, what would happen if they knew I was gay?

A little over a year ago, I decided to no longer hide my sexuality as an employee at Shell Oil Company. I'd like to say there are many of us, but there aren't. I think a large part of that is due to perception: how gay employees view their employer, and how the employer views gay society. That is one reason for coming out of the closet or, in this case, maybe it is more appropriate to consider it a shell.

Another is a desire to live one life. For most of my career, I've worked diligently to keep personal and professional lives separate. In some situations, that means lying to others and yourself. Everyone is different, deserving to be recognized and respected as an individual, regardless of what their sexuality may be, or how they choose or chose not to embrace it.

In any society, survival equates to income and becoming self-supported. For some of us, that means being dragged into the depths of huge corporations and hiding our sexual orientation. It is like being swept out to sea, drifting and tumbling, feeling very vulnerable, and unsure of the future. But eventually we come to recognize that our futures can be secure if we hide our sexual orientation in a shell.

For so many of us, life as a grain of sand in a mollusk becomes synonymous to survival. From that first day at work, we sequester our personal lives, working diligently to prove our value to our employers. In essence, we become the pearls, hidden social irritants, proving our worth, but remaining in our shell with regard to sexual orientation.

After accepting the job with Shell Oil Company several years ago, I drifted into my proverbial shell, working long and hard to prove my value. After several years of corporate belt tightening resulting in about a 30 percent reduction in staff, I'm still here—an openly gay man, employed by one of the largest oil companies in the world. There is

one modest change. But it wasn't always that way.

While a graduate student in Kentucky I had come to the realization I was gay. It was a time when I was academically maturing, ready to enter a whole new world, a world of business and career.

It was also a time when relations with my family had been strained irreparably to the point of breaking by a protracted and rather vicious divorce. Ironically, I was ostracized by both of my parents because of my reluctance to side with one against the other.

On top of trying to finish a master's degree, alienation by my family, and a potentially rewarding job offer, I was trying to understand my sexual orientation. Timing has never been

one of my virtues. There was a considerable amount of stress and confusion as to who and what I was at a very important juncture in my life. One thing seemed apparent, and that was getting my priorities in life organized.

Of all the thoughts swirling around in my head, two seemed unreconcilable: work and sexual orientation. Intuitively, the world wouldn't afford many opportunities to an openly gay hydrogeologist. I am reasonably certain that I wouldn't have experienced a career leading to the position I now have with Shell Oil.

At the age of 25, knowing very little about gay life, I naively decided to enter the safety of a shell for what seemed at the time a reasonable period, but which quickly be-

came a full 10 years. It was apparent that my social and professional lives couldn't intertwine. The justification was perception: work hard to become a good role model for the gay community. The underlying premise: when the day came and society wanted to pass judgment, they'd have to think long and hard before condemning me on the basis of prejudice.

In the fall of 1990, Shell extended a lucrative job offer, requiring much travel,

streets. There was no professional role model for them to relate to, but based on their behavior, I wasn't about to volunteer for the job.

In 1991 a judge ruled in favor of an employee of a Shell subsidiary who had been fired for being gay. Being in the closet provided the luxury of hearing fellow employees' opinions on the issue. Most were surprised at the magnitude of the dollars being awarded.

The ruling was punctuated even more by those awkward moments (now humorous), such as the time a boyfriend sent me white silk boxer shorts with little red hearts on Valentine's Day. The envelope was hand-delivered to me in the middle of a meeting, catching the attention of many of my peers. After seeing who it was from, I decided to wait until

the break to open it in my room.

There were also difficult situations that went beyond being awkward. A close friend was very ill, then hospitalized, but I couldn't show my emotions in the office. Nor could I tell my peers at work about a date, or a weekend outing, or a party. How could I be their friend?

In September of 1994, I was going through my e-mail at the Shell refinery near New Orleans. There were a series of notes regarding one of my coworkers having gone on medical disability. Upon returning from Louisiana, I dropped by the office of my boss who filled in the details. It turned out that my colleague was gay and HIV positive. He was working on a book which he wanted to fin-

Continued on page 69

Shell Oil Adopts Employment Non-Discrimination Policy

by Tristan A. MacAvery

Shell Oil Company recently announced that they have modified their Equal Opportunity Policy to reflect nondiscrimination in the hiring of lesbians and gay men. Adoption of this policy, which took effect on April 15, makes Shell the second major oil company, after Chevron, to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Shell employee Rick Schroder, who came out about a year ago, feels strongly that this move is a positive one. "Shell created what is called a Strategic Team on Diversity to study the question of diversity. They hired consultants to interview a cross-section of Shell employees to ask their opinions and how they felt about the support of diversity in the workplace.

"I found out about the study by accident," says Schroder. "A Cuban woman that I know, who works in my office at Westhollow Technology Center, was asked to visit with the consultants and the Diversity Team to get her views as both a Cuban and as a woman. I wondered if the team were also taking a look at gay men and lesbians."

This curiosity led to discussions with another gay worker, and from there up the corporate ladder until the suggestion reached the Diversity Team. "The next thing I know," Schroder says with a grin, "I and a few other gay workers are invited to talk about our views."

The interviews went well, and Schroder feels that he and his fellow workers helped to adopt the new policy. "I've been working with managers to help them become more comfortable working with

gay men and lesbians. There is no question that the gay-friendly environment has helped the productivity and morale at Shell."

When contacted about the new employment policy, Shell Oil Media Relations responded with the following statement: "Shell's Equal Opportunity Policy has explicitly addressed only those areas that are addressed by Federal nondiscrimination laws. However, our intent has been and continues to be that our EO policy covers all employees."

"The inclusion of sexual orientation is in keeping with Shell's core value of belief in people. It reiterates Shell's commitment to providing a workplace where everyone is treated with dignity and respect."

"Consistent with these values, this change was made to the wording in Shell's Equal Opportunity Policy."

The following is a copy of the newly revised policy:

Shell Oil Company Equal Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of Shell Oil Company to provide equal opportunity to all persons consistent with employment requirements and individual qualifications. Further, the policy prohibits discrimination in all employ-

ment practices for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, status as a special disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era or citizenship of individuals legally authorized to work in the United States. Harassment for any of the above reasons, including any form of sexual harassment, is a discriminatory activity and is strictly prohibited.

Positive, continuing affirmative action programs have been established to promote the full realization of equal opportunity at all Company locations.

Supervisors, managers, and officers are responsible for implementing Shell's equal opportunity policy. All employees are expected to support the policy and contribute to an environment of equal opportunity. Employees are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to management's attention or, as appropriate, directly to the Human Resources Organization.

The Vice President Human Resources has overall responsibility for this policy. The Manager Equal Opportunity & Recruitment, Human Resources Firm, is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the policy throughout the Company.



The IMAGE in the MIRROR

Houston Ballet Brings
the Myth of Marilyn
Monroe to Life in
Chorographer Ben
Stevenson's "Image"

In his travels around the world, Houston Ballet's artistic director and choreographer Ben Stevenson has been constantly confronted with images of Marilyn Monroe. From a giant portrait of Monroe outside the Beijing Dance Academy in China to a portrait of her in Venice, her persona, says Stevenson, "seemed more alive today, 25 years after her death, than when she was actually alive."

While researching Monroe's life, Stevenson was struck by the startling transformation in her physical appearance from the beginning of her career as a young unknown actress to the end of her life, when she was an internationally known film star and the epitome of American sexuality.

"I came across a photo of Marilyn as a young girl," Stevenson recalls. "She was a brunette and not particularly attractive. It seemed so very different from her last film appearance where she wasn't just sexy, but beautiful and sophisticated."

Image, a one-act ballet featuring a solo ballerina, is Stevenson's tribute to the quintessential dumb blonde of 1950's Hollywood.

The ballet is a dramatic, expressive work based on Marilyn Monroe's statement: "If you are nobody, to be somebody, you have to be somebody else."

Image is about a woman who does not look like Marilyn Monroe. She has short hair and seems frightened and insecure, almost half crazy. Then, through the use of huge mirrors on stage, she turns into Monroe.

The work's title *Image*, according to Stevenson, is a reflection of the burden that many great female film stars have borne as victims of the Hollywood Machine. "These extraordinarily beautiful women would lock themselves away from the world when they couldn't be seen as the 'image' that they had created. The horrible thing about it was that they couldn't sustain the image. They couldn't be young and fresh and beautiful all the time. It's not just a Marilyn story."

Choreographed by Stevenson for his principal dancer and protégé, Janie Parker, *Image* showcases Parker's talents as a con-

summate dancer and actress. Her association with Stevenson spans 20 years and has included numerous world premieres and artistic triumphs.

"Janie has been very inspirational to me. She conjures up all sorts of ideas for a choreographer," admires Stevenson. "She's a lyrical dancer, which is very rare these days and has extraordinary dramatic capabilities. Janie expresses feelings through the steps and uses them to shape the story."

Parker is equally effusive. "Ben created me, as he has created numerous dancers, and I love working with him. He has been a very important man in my life. *Image* is one of the seminal roles in my career and is the culmination of all of our years of working together."

"Ben and I began working on *Image* when, professionally, we had started to understand each other instinctively, knowing precisely what each required from the other," Parker continues. "In spite of this understanding, when he brought me this project, I thought 'How is he ever going to make this work?' *Image* was so risky—it wasn't pretty,

it wasn't happy, and it certainly wasn't a 'tutu ballet.' Additionally, it was a one-woman show which required me to captivate an audience for thirty minutes!

"Once we started studio rehearsals, the creative process took shape," she adds. "The whole world of *Image* opened up. Ben was able to relate Marilyn's vulnerability to the vulnerability that he saw in me, especially as a young dancer. When you portray an icon like her you inherit a tremendous responsibility. People naturally invest in and relate to that personality."

Parker seems somewhat self-effacing with regard to her role in *Image*. "I feel as though I'm just the vehicle used to bring this work to life, like a little piece of Silly Putty that Ben is molding," she admits.

With scenery and costumes by Nadine Baylis, the production parallels Monroe's transformation, moving from simplicity to

an unusual *coup de theatre* near the conclusion of the work. The "Adagio" from Gustav Mahler's intensely romantic unfinished Symphony Number 10 provides an effective musical accompaniment to the ballet.

At its world premiere in 1988 *Image* received rave reviews from critics depicting Parker's "perfect form and emotional, courageous performance." Stevenson's choreography was also praised as "sinuous, sliding, and sometimes writhing."

Parker's retirement at the end of this season brings an especially poignant sadness to this work. Unlike so many other great talents, she is leaving dance at the pinnacle of her career. A wedding a scant week after her last performance and plans to raise a family fill her future. As the only dancer in the company to have performed *Image*, we hope that her portrayal of Marilyn Monroe does not retire as well.

To Janie Parker—prima ballerina, elegant dancer, compassionate individual, and brilliant talent—our very best wishes. ▼

Houston Ballet will present a mixed repertory program with three works choreographed by Ben Stevenson, including *Image*, along with *Four Last Songs*, with music by Richard Strauss, and *Bartok Concerto*, with music by Bela Bartok, May 23, 25, 31, and June 1 at 7:30 pm and May 26 and June 2 at 2:00 pm at Wortham Theater Center. Tickets are \$10-\$75 and are available by calling 713/227-ARTS or 1-800-828-ARTS or at the Houston Ticket Center and all TicketMaster outlets.



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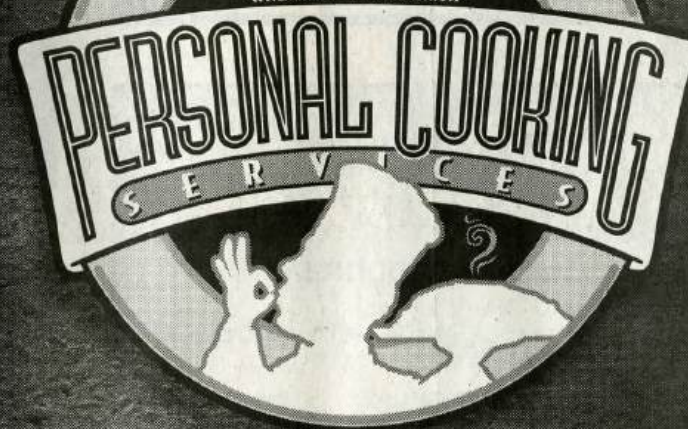
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In Praise of Tradition & Unity

Many Find Being Gay and Jewish Lovingly Inclusive Terms

Whether their ceremonies include "Ave Maria" or are performed under a canopy, gay men and lesbians are more and more frequently pledging their troths in front of God and everybody.

Houston attorneys Samuel Gutierres and Mitchell Katine were joined in their lifetime commitment ceremony on September 3 of last year, but it wasn't considered "newsworthy" until last month. KPRC-TV news spotlighted the couple in light of announcements from the Jewish Reform and the Catholic religious authorities regarding same-sex marriages. Samuel is Catholic; Mitchell is Jewish.

The 1,750 members of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, during their 107th Annual Convention, adopted a stance of support for "the right of gay and lesbian couples to share fully and equally in the rights of civil marriage." In almost the same moment, the Vatican reaffirmed its stance against homosexuality itself, much less acknowledging either a civil or holy union of homosexuals.

Both Gutierres and Katine are philosophical about the views of both statements. In the news program, Gutierres quoted briefly from the text of their beautiful and moving lifetime commitment ceremony: "Religious societies may consecrate it or they may not; states may legalize it or they may not; but neither can create it or annul it."

The partners' families, friends, and law firms attended the ceremony and, in fact, participated in it. Presiding Reverend Troy Plummer, in accordance with the script, asked the assembled for their blessing. "Those who will do everything in their power to uphold, support, and care for these two persons in their union, please respond by saying, 'we will.'" Each and every voice was raised in loving affirmation.

For Katine, the ceremony was, in part, a fulfillment of his life as a Jew. "It is very traditional, in the Jewish religion, to get married. It feels somewhat like being complete, like completing part of the life process. I wanted this ceremony. I wanted to wear a ring; I wanted to be known as married."

The closeness of family is a treasured part of the Jewish faith, and Katine's family was no exception. Although the ceremony itself was not a religious one, Katine's sister, herself an Orthodox Jew, performed a brief ceremony at the

by Tristan A. MacAvery

Photos by Nhan Nguyen of Nhan Photography

In Praise of Tradition/Unity

Continued from previous page

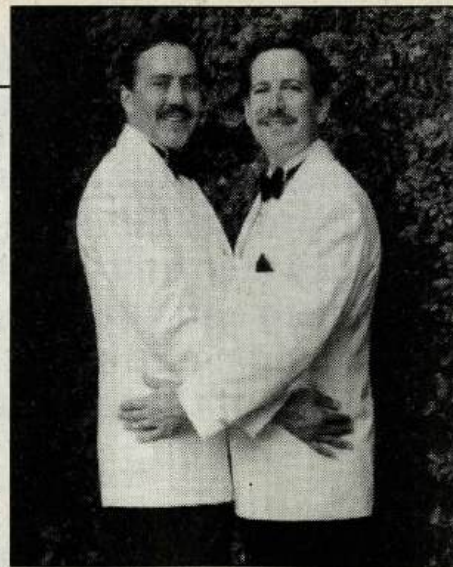
reception. She said a blessing over the wine and the *challah* (HALL-lah), an egg-rich yeast-leavened bread traditionally eaten on the Sabbath and holidays. "On the videotape," says Katine with a grin, "you get to see my sister making the blessing with mariachi music in the background—a contribution of Sam and his family. I guess you could call that celebrating diversity."



The Jewish faith is something of a mystery to most Americans, perhaps because one statistic indicates that only two percent of Americans are Jewish. This unfamiliarity is equally prevalent among the gay community, who may not have considered Judaism as an alternative in their search for a spiritual compass. What are the values and precepts of the Jewish faith? What is their stance on homosexuality?

One Jewish gay man teasingly observed that it might be easier for gays and lesbians to know more about the Jewish faith than straight people because of the higher percentage of musical-lovers who have seen "Fiddler on the Roof." The thought of the character of Tevye belting out strains of "Tradition" comes immediately to mind, and although that's far from an exact definition of Judaism, tradition and ceremony do indeed play a large part in the lives of the Jewish people.

"There wasn't a lot of emotionalism put into Judaism when I was growing up," said Mitchell Katine. "It's much more a feeling of tradition than an internalized belief. For example, getting married—



Samuel Gutierrez and Mitchell Katine

very traditional. The marriage ceremony is something where relatives come, friends come, you have a big party, you spend a lot of money, you have a good time—those are very Jewish traditional things."

Stephen Stein, conductor-in-residence at the Houston Symphony, feels much the same way. "I didn't grow up in a religiously ceremonial environment," he said. "The Jewish faith, unlike other faiths, is not one where you work while you are alive on this earth for the goal of what may become of your soul after you physically die. It is a religion where you are judged and you are observed—if you believe that God observes you—day after day after day. And so it is our task as Jews to reaffirm ourselves, our goodness, our honesty, our love of ourselves, of each other, and all those that we connect with, and this reaffirmation takes place on a daily basis. The more you do that, and the more deeply you do that, the more you evolve and become a whole You—the most complete

You that you can be."

This integration, for Stein, certainly includes his being gay. "What I think has helped me, in terms of learning to understand who I am and learning to accept myself as a gay man, has certainly been some of the central principles at the core of Jewish belief—at least as the Reform branch of Judaism sees it. This belief concerns a very central belief in the goodness of humanity, in the central goodness of people. It includes the concept of doing good deeds for others, the concept of a real, deep faith in oneself, honesty within yourself, as you view yourself and as you put yourself before God."



All four branches, or sects, of Jewish faith would probably agree with this assessment. Just as the Christian faith has several denominations, each differing usually on points of religious practice and/or interpretation of scripture, so the Jewish faith is reflected in the Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist sects. However, the concepts of tradition, of ceremony, and of the importance of family and living in the fullness of God-given life are common to all of them.

The question of homosexuality, in terms of Jewish faith, is most actively addressed in the Reform and Reconstructionist sects. In the Reform sect, whose Central Conference of American Rabbis made its recent statement in support of same-sex marriages, most of the decisions about religious questions seem to be arrived at from the "top down." As a result, the showing of support from the highest levels of the Reform sect represents a consensus of the rabbinical leaders to support the civil recognition of same-sex marriages, but the consensus statement does not address a specific religious posture on the subject. Some individual rabbis within the sect may actually condone or even perform religious rituals for same-sex couples, but the sect itself is not necessarily in favor of these ceremonies.

Conversely, the Reconstructionist sect, which began in the 1920s and grew out of the Conservative sect, seems to make its policies from a "grass roots" viewpoint. The members of the sect are active in their faith and in their practice of it. In 1993, their Commission on Homosexuality produced a 42-page report which, with intelligence, sensitivity, and great insight, actively supports the acknowledgment

"Religious societies may consecrate it or they may not; states may legalize it or they may not; but neither can create it or annul it."

and recognition of homosexuality, and thus of same-sex marriages. Each rabbi within the sect is free to decline to perform the ceremonies if he or she so chooses, but in contrast to the Reform movement, such would seem to be the exception rather than the rule.

Craig Oettinger, Ray Sher, and Jeanne Saletan are all members of the Houston Reconstructionist Havurah (HAHV-your-ah, meaning "community" and coming from the word *haver* [hah-VAIR], meaning "friend"). Craig feels that the progressive thinking of his sect is neatly summed up in the phrase, "Tradition has a vote but not a veto."

"Our Orthodox brothers and sisters see the *Torah* (what Christians refer to as the first five books of their Old Testament) as revealed truth; they are very much like fundamentalist Christians in that they believe that the truth is all there, and it just needs to be studied to be revealed. Reconstructionism, in contrast, sees

such study as an ongoing dialog, and that part of what the *Torah* speaks of is based on the culture of several thousand years ago. Part of it includes eternal values which each generation gains meaning from, but another part may be speaking to the times in which it was written, and we may need a new interpretation for our modern times.

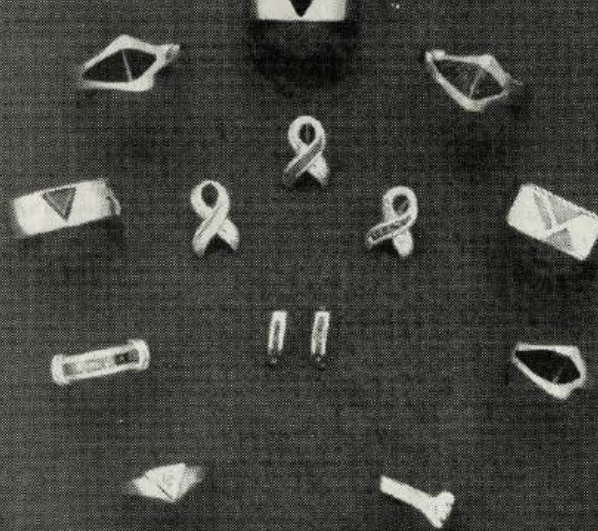
"For example," he continues, "we haven't lately taken a red heifer and sacrificed it at the traditional moment, even though the original teachings require us to do that. This made sense within a civilization of several thousand years ago, but we don't do it in this day and time. However, the concept of personal sacrifice and acknowledging the source of benefits is something that we can perform. We just do it in

Continued on next page

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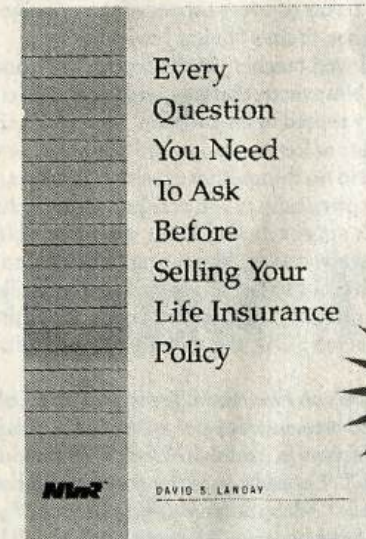
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a different way.

"By that same token, if the modern world doesn't reflect the sacrifice of animals, perhaps the modern world doesn't reflect the old ways of thinking about homosexuality. So rather than interpreting the lessons through a 5,000- or 6,000-year-old civilization, we look at it through our own eyes, our own lives, and find love and acceptance."

Ray Sher, president of the Houston Reconstructionist Havurah, felt that love and acceptance from the first moment that he was welcomed into the havurah. "I can go to other synagogues or temples in Houston, and I might be able to find someone who will say they might accept me as a member, but I don't know that I would find anyone who would welcome me in the same way, where I would feel the same sense of self-esteem that I have found within the Reconstructionist havurah."

Jeanne Saletan agrees. "When I meet people, I don't know if they're gay or straight. The important thing is that this is a person, and this person wants to live a Jewish life, and other knowledge about whether they're straight or gay comes later."

"People are created in the image of God," Craig points out, "and

there isn't a lot to say after that."

The brochure for the Houston Jewish Reconstructionist Havurah expresses the desires of "advancing the spirit of our Jewish heritage; creating a warm and inclusive Jewish community; educating ourselves and each other Jewishly; expressing our spiritual life in worship."

"It's vitally important that we act as a community," said Jeanne, "and every person who is a Jew or who wants to live a Jewish life is very precious. It is this that strengthens the Jewish community."

The concept of "living Jewishly" involves following the *mitzvot* (mitz-VOHT), or "obligations." There are 613 of them in the original books of Jewish teachings, and some of them—like the example of the heifer—are not directly applicable to life in today's world. Many others, however, lie at the center of the daily life of the Jewish people: honoring God; joining with God in the task of completing the creation of the world; recognizing the godliness in other people (what is sometimes called "the divine spark"); making of yourself and your life—the gifts that

God has given you—everything that you can be, and returning that as your gift to God and those around you.

"Each person is so truly and totally unique," Jeanne noted, "that it is a great responsibility and a great task to express that uniqueness. In expressing the divine spark that is within you, and in accepting and honoring the divine spark that is within everyone and everything else, you must express the whole you. This is why we, in the Reconstructionist sect, feel that homosexuality is not an issue. If a person is gay, that is simply a part of that unique, special, valuable individual—an individual who is as much a divine spark as everyone else."



The concept of completeness of self, of being "out" not only in terms of sexuality but in terms of every aspect of the creative self, is very much a part of Stephen Stein's "living Jewishly."

"One of my most beloved teachers in the world, and thousands of people would describe him exactly that way, was Leonard Bernstein, who was also quite deeply rooted in his Judaism. Someone with such a strong musical personality as Lenny, you would think that he would, in teaching, try to get you to do things his way, either in terms of your musical interpretation or physically as you conduct an orchestra. But never did Lenny have this approach, and that's what made him such a great teacher. He would always say, 'I'm trying to get you to be the most YOU that you can be, not to get you to be like me, or like him, or like her. The best conducting, the best art, comes from the most fulfilled and creative sense of YOU, the individual who is like none other.'"

In his moving book *Souls on Fire*, noted Jewish writer Elie Wiesel notes that when we die and meet our Creator, our Creator will not ask us, "Why didn't you become a messiah?" or "Why didn't you discover a cure for AIDS?" The only question that we will be asked in that precious moment is, "Why didn't you become you?"

Those who are living Jewishly are confident that they will be able to answer, "I did. And I gave that gift to the world."

For further information about the Houston Jewish Reconstructionist Havurah, please write to P.O. Box 35634, Houston TX 77235-5634, or call 713/728-5050. ★ ▼

Tristan A. MacAvery's maternal great-grandfather was a full-blood Spanish Jew, but it manifests most in him as a flair for Yiddish words and a craving of bagels. He is, however, hard at work on becoming himself.

"My dormitory, with 180 prisoners or more, contained the most varied collection of people. Unskilled workers and shop assistants, skilled tradesmen and independent craftsmen, musicians and artists, professors and clergy, even aristocratic landowners. All of them, before their imprisonment in concentration camps, had been decent people in private life, many indeed highly respected citizens, who had never come up against the law, but were set apart only by their homosexual feelings. All of these otherwise decent people had been assembled here, in this melting pot of disgrace and torment, the 'queer block' of a concentration camp, for extermination through back-breaking labor, hunger, and torture. None of them were child molesters or had had sex with children or adolescents, as all of these had a green triangle.

Were we with our pink triangle really outrageous criminals and 'degenerates,' a menace to society?"

Heinz
Heger



The Pink-Triangle Prisoners

It has been estimated that 10 to 15 thousand men wore the pink triangle, the symbol for homosexual prisoners, in the concentration camps of Hitler's Nazi regime. This figure will never be confirmed, since most of these imprisoned men died—by starving or freezing to death, while being subjected to medical experimentation, or even through execution. Those who did survive the brutality of the death camps have been reluctant to step forward to tell their stories, fearful of more homophobia, discrimination, and even further persecution.

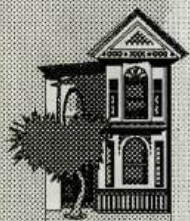
Within the realm of Holocaust research, gay men belonged for a long time to the so-called group of forgotten victims—the mentally and physically handicapped, prostitutes, alcoholics, the victims of forced sterilization, and all those who were labeled as asocial. Following liberation, these men with the pink triangles were set free from the Nazi camps

only to be re-incarcerated, first under the Allied military government and later under the German authorities, in German prisons. Not until recently have these "forgotten victims" been recognized by researchers and remembered by memorials and museums, such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and the recently opened Holocaust Museum Houston.

During the Weimar Republic prior to Adolph Hitler's rise to power, a burgeoning gay and lesbian community thrived in Germany's urban areas. Gay and lesbian organizations, publishing houses, journals, social groups, and events flourished—Berlin alone boasted nearly 100 gay and lesbian bars. For a brief moment in 1929, the gay and lesbian movement attempted to abolish Paragraph 175, the anti-sodomy law that had been on the books since German unification in 1871. A parliamentary commission voted to drop the statute, specifically tar-

by Eric L. Roland

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The Pink-Triangle Prisoners

Continued from previous page

getting anal intercourse, presumably because there were few prosecutions under the law. Yet, because of the growing influence of the Nazi Party, the commission's recommendation was never introduced to parliament.

Soon after taking office in 1933, Hitler banned all gay and lesbian organizations, and storm troopers raided the institutions and gathering places of the gay and lesbian community. With propaganda touting homosexuality as not only a criminal offense but a threat to the Aryan race, many inside the Nazi Party pressed to broaden the old sodomy law so that evidence of anal intercourse was not necessary to arrest and convict a suspected homosexual. On June 28, 1935, a revised and strengthened Paragraph 175 was enacted, making the mere suggestion of homosexual intent grounds for arrest. Kissing or embracing another man, gossip spread by neighbors, or receiving a letter from a gay friend were now adequate evidence.

Mass arrests of homosexual men became common by the end of 1934, when many were sent to the first established concentration camps. Their uniforms sometimes bore identifying marks such as the letter A (from the German word for "ass fucker"), which were later replaced by a pink triangle.

The prisoners' uniforms were marked with a colored cloth triangle to denote their offense or origin. Their prison number was sewn below the triangle. The triangle was about five centimeters across and placed point down, and was stitched onto the left breast of the jacket and coat and the outside right trouser leg. The pink triangle, however, was about two to three centimeters larger than the others, so that we could be clearly recognized from a distance.

A pink triangle meant harsher treatment in the camps. Gay men suffered a higher mortality rate than did other relatively small victim groups, such as Jehovah's Witnesses and political prisoners. They were usually near the bottom of the prisoner hierarchy and were often singled out for special tortures and dangerous work. The men with the pink triangles couldn't count on a support network within the camps and were often treated with contempt by their fellow prisoners. Many were given the hardest work and died within a few months of arrival.

Research has shown that certain camps, such as Sachsenhausen, a camp known for its elaborate flower beds tended by the prisoners, had a relatively higher percentage of gay prisoners. Research also found that gay prisoners were sometimes placed into special slave-labor squads or segregated in special 175 barracks. One of the worst atrocities of the Nazi death camps was the medical experimentation performed on prisoners, homosexuals not excluded. At Buchenwald, for example, an SS doctor performed operations designed to transform gay men into heterosexuals, by surgically inserting a capsule which released testosterone. The procedure was so barbaric that some of the men died during the operation. Such procedures reflected the desire for Nazi leader Heinrich Himmler and others to find a medical "solution" to homosexuality.

Himmler's idea...was that those of us in the pink-triangle category should be "cured" of our homosexual disposition by compulsory regular visits to the brothel. We were obliged to show up there once a week, in order to "learn" the joys of the other sex. Of course, this instruction only showed how little the SS leadership and their scientific advisers understood homosexuality, seeing a human emotional orientation as simply a disability and prescribing brothel visits as "treatment."

Toward the end of 1943, a new instruction on the "eradication of sexual degenerates"—that is, homosexuals—came down from Himmler. He now stipulated that any homosexual who consented to castration,

and whose conduct was good, would shortly be released from concentration camps. Many of the pink-triangle prisoners actually believed Himmler's promises, and consented to castration with a view to escaping their murderous persecutions.

After the Allies won the war in Europe in 1945, the Nazi concentration camps were liberated. It was common knowledge among the Allied forces that gay men had been prisoners in the camps and that they had been marked with a pink triangle. Unlike other survivors, the gay prisoners soon discovered that their persecution had not ended. The postwar German government did not simply forget about homosexuals, but continued to persecute them, justifying the efforts of the Nazis. Using the Nazis' revised version of Paragraph 175, German courts convicted homosexual men at a rate as high as that of the Nazi regime throughout the 1950s and '60s. In fact, Paragraph 175 was not repealed until 1969. Having survived the concentration camps, some men could not find the strength to face this second wave of persecution. Many committed suicide while others escaped into marriage or into complete isolation.

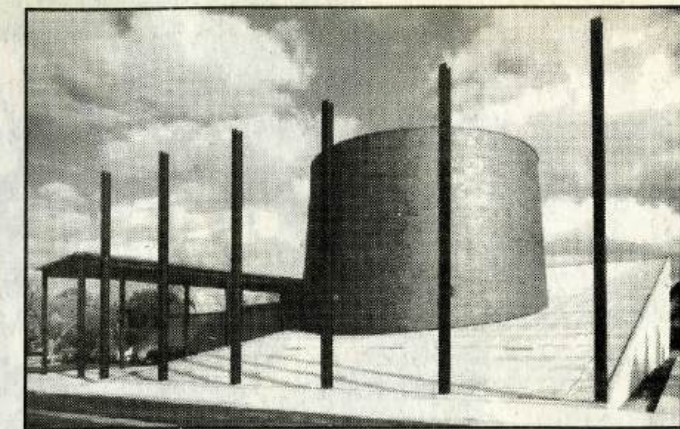
While other Holocaust survivors were recognized as survivors by the outside world and received reparations from the German government, the men who wore the pink triangle never received any recognition, nor any moral or financial support after 1945. A symbol invented by the Nazi regime, the pink triangle has become an international emblem symbolizing gay and lesbian pride, despite the fact that we know little about the individual fate of those who suffered wearing it. Before we can truly share the pride that the pink triangle has come to represent, we must all recognize the survivors and memorialize those who died wearing it.

Lesbians in the Holocaust

Little is known about gay men in the concentration camps, and even less is known about the persecution of lesbians. Only gay men were made criminals under Paragraph 175, and within the strongly gender-biased society of Nazi Germany, the persecution of gay men became the focus of Nazi anti-gay politics. In late 1930s, Nazi officials debated whether to include lesbianism in Paragraph 175, but didn't because 1) lesbianism was seen as essentially alien to the nature of the Aryan woman, 2) because there wasn't a real threat of a "lesbian conspiracy" since women were excluded from positions of power, and 3) Aryan lesbians could be used as breeders, and reproduction was the most urgent goal of the Nazis.

Lesbians, and gay men alike, were forced to go underground, and many escaped persecution by getting married, often to gay friends. While there are a few documented cases of lesbians being incarcerated in the concentration camps, there is some evidence, although no proof, that lesbians were arrested under the category of "asocial" and wore black triangles, rather than the pink ones connoting homosexuality. The lives of lesbians were shaped less by official Nazi homophobia than by the regime's marginalization of women in general, seeing the ideal German woman as the breeder of a future Aryan race.

The information in this article was taken from the book *The Men with the Pink Triangle*, Alyson Publications, 1980. Factual information is from the introduction by Dr. Klaus Müller, a historian and consultant for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. First person accounts (italicized sections) are those of Heinz Heger, author of the autobiographical book.



Holocaust Museum Houston

Located in Houston's museum district, the recently opened Holocaust Museum Houston is a moving testament to an event and an era many would like to forget. However, the primary purpose of the museum is to serve as a resource of understanding, setting the awareness among all of us to face today's challenges and co-existence between all peoples.

The museum houses a permanent gallery, memorial, classrooms, changing exhibit gallery, 100-seat theater, library and archives repository, and administrative offices. In the permanent exhibit, visitors are shown the denaturalization of the Jews in Europe followed by exhibits on the creation and operation of the ghettos, concentration camps, and other atrocities of the Holocaust. The permanent exhibit concludes in the theater where visitors can watch and hear oral histories of Holocaust survivors.

The museum, which is the third largest of its kind in the country, differs from the Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles Holocaust museums in that many of the displays tell the story from the perspective of local survivors making the horror of the Holocaust more accessible to Houstonians. The museum also does not forget about the men who wore the pink triangle, as several displays and one particular plaque as you enter the exhibit mention homosexuals among the millions who were persecuted.

The museum, located at 5401 Caroline, is open Monday through Friday, 9 am-5 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, noon-5 pm. Admission is free.

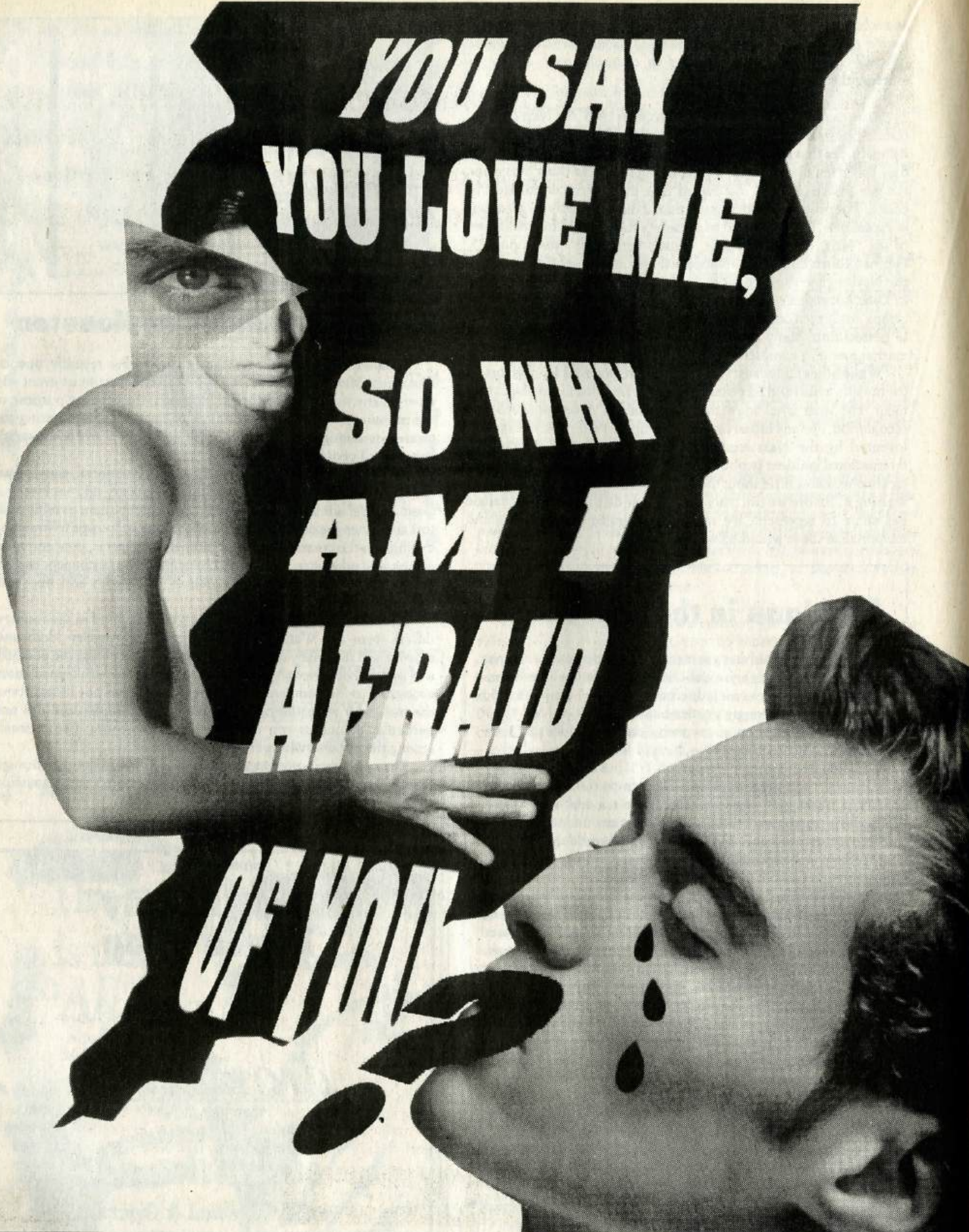
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COLLAGE BY ERIC L. ROLAND & BLASE DISTEFANO

This is not about sado-masochism. This is not about a "fair fight" between equals, nor a drunk or drug-crazed person battering his or her lover. This is not about extreme cases of violence that are often covered by the news media where a person is beaten to death by their mate. This article is about domestic violence that occurs in ordinary household settings between ordinary lesbians and gay men.

This is a topic that is rarely discussed in our community, and some members of our community even believe that information about violence in lesbian and gay male relationships, if widely known, would only fuel the fires of anti-gay discrimination from the heterosexual world.

Another obstacle that has made it difficult to confront this issue in our community is the belief that because we are gay and lesbian people, we are not violent—that we have a non-aggressive trait that separates us from our heterosexual counterparts. Especially within the lesbian community, there is a belief that only men are violent and that a woman would never be violent toward another woman. Myths abound.

It is estimated that 500,000 gay men are victims of domestic violence each year, making it the third largest health problem facing gay men today, following substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. Annual estimates for lesbian victims is unknown due to lack of definitive research, but it is believed by professionals in the field that 25 to 30 percent of lesbians experience an incident of domestic violence in their lifetime.

Domestic violence is defined as any unwanted physical force (including unwanted sex), psychological abuse, or material/property damage inflicted by one partner on the other. Most cases of domestic violence do not involve physical violence, but, instead, the majority of incidents involve the use of psychological abuse and property damage.

Contrary to popular belief, victims of domestic violence do not seek out abusive partners. Many batterers are very charming and attentive in the early stages of a developing relationship, often showering their new lover with flowers and gifts and wanting to spend all their free time with her or him. All of this can be very flattering to a person's ego; however, the one mistake that abusers often make is that they overcompensate to such an extreme that the victim realizes that something isn't quite right. Abusers exaggerate these actions out of insecurities with themselves, thinking that they have to do more than others to win someone's affection. Entering the relationship with insecurities and, over time, letting them worsen, batterers eventually begin the process of gaining control, having successfully seduced the partner into falling in love with them. In many instances, the new couple suddenly find themselves in a committed relationship, and most often move in together shortly thereafter. Thus begins the cycle of violence.

As the honeymoon phase begins to fade, the other side of the perpetrator's personality rears its ugly head. Complaining

that there isn't enough time spent together alone as a couple, the abuser becomes jealous, and accusations are often made about infidelity, especially with friends. As time passes, the phone begins to ring less often, and contacts with friends seem to become less frequent. Eventually, isolation—a very common dynamic in domestic violence—is achieved. Suddenly the victim finds him or herself with very few contacts outside the relationship, becoming more and more dependent on the partner for attention and support.

The most common dynamic in domestic violence is emotional abuse. The abuser may begin to criticize her or his lover about the way they dress or style their hair, their weight, or the way they cook or clean the kitchen. While walking on eggshells, the victim may begin to question, and often blame, her or himself for the partner's unhappiness. Unfortunately, all the accusations, threats, put-downs, and guilt have become such a powerful force that the victim's self-esteem hits an all-time low. Low self-esteem, another dynamic of domestic violence, enables abusive partners to gain even more control over their victim. Financial control, control of the vehicle or vehicles, and in some cases even possession of the house keys can occur. All of these things may seem extreme, but for victims of domestic violence it is often their reality.

When asked if there are any signs that people who are dating or entering a relationship can watch out for, Michele Ostrander of the Houston Area Women's Center (HAWC) explains, "There are some signs, a main one being jealousy. If a person is extremely jealous of who you see, what you do, and where you go, that can be a clear sign that should send up a red flag very quickly. A lot of times in our society we are taught that jealousy is a sign of love and a kind of protection—that your partner wants to be with you all of the time. In reality though, a person who is jealous is very insecure, and batterers tend to be very jealous."

Ostrander notes that another sign to watch out for is if a person has a lack of respect for things in general, including material possessions, animals, and other people. She also adds that, if a new love interest has a bad temper and tends to go off easily, it may be another possible sign that a person is a batterer.

The abuse in a new relationship usually doesn't occur until the partners make a serious commitment to the relationship, such as committing to monogamy or deciding to move in together. However, research and statistics have shown that, once a relationship turns abusive, the frequency of the incidents and the severity of the abuse increases over time. Simply put, if it is happening to you now, it will only get worse the longer

by David N. Morales

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You Say You Love Me

Continued from previous page

you remain in the relationship.

The entire cycle of domestic violence is characterized by denial, on the part of both the victim and the abuser. For the abusers, denial may be so powerful that they deceive themselves about the extent of the violence. Nearly 100 percent of batterers do not seek help voluntarily. Denial on the part of the victim—often a factor that keeps the victim in the relationship—occurs with statements such as "It doesn't happen that often," or self-blaming thoughts like "It's my fault, if I try harder it will stop." Other mechanisms that come into play are justification ("He made me do it") and minimizing ("It's not really so bad").

Substance abuse may accompany battering, but it is regarded as a justification rather than a cause of battering. The perpetrator is responsible for every act of violence committed. No victim is ever the cause of violence done to them, nor do they ever deserve it. The perpetrators choose to use violence and are accountable for their decision.

One myth about domestic violence is that the batterer is always physically larger and stronger than the victim. This is not true. A batterer doesn't have to be built like a linebacker to smash your CD collection, cut up all your clothing, or threaten to tell everyone at your job that you are really a "queer."

Few empirical studies have examined the extent and nature of violence in lesbian relationships. Claire Renzetti, author of *Violent Betrayal* (1992), reported that of the 100 victims in her study, more than half (54 percent) experienced more than 10 abusive incidents during the course of their relationship, although 74 percent experienced six or more abusive incidents. Many battered lesbians have reported that the emotional abuse encountered along with, or separate from, the physical violence and their diminished self-esteem are more painful and difficult to endure than the physical injuries.

Men rarely talk about being victims for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the fear of being "feminized" for admitting they have been hurt. Mende Snodgrass, senior educator and a staff therapist for the Montrose Counseling Center, explains that "it may be more difficult for men, who are acculturated to be able to defend themselves, to protect themselves, and to not be victims, to talk about being abused. In our culture, when we think about victims, we think about women and children, so I think that it may be much more difficult for men to admit to themselves, let alone anyone else, that they are indeed victims."

Another reason that many men as well as lesbians do not seek help is because of the lack of resources available to them. Shelters are often unsafe, homophobic places that can cause a continuance of abuse from the operators of the shelters and from others who are there to seek help. The amount of services available to lesbians and gay men, nationwide and locally, appear to be non-existent at first glance; however, after scratching beneath the surface, there actually are a few services available.

Houston Area Women's Center

Locally, the Houston Area Women's Center (HAWC) has assisted over 600,000 women and children since 1977 with a variety of services including help in domestic violent situations. Thanks to many generous donors and their many volunteers, HAWC services have always been free of charge. In January of 1996, HAWC conducted a training program where all staff members received information about same-sex battering. Geared primarily toward lesbian battering, but touching briefly on gay male battering, this staff training was conducted as a result of an increase in the number of HAWC hotline calls from lesbians who were in violent relationships and were in search of shelter and counseling.

HAWC offers a variety of services for battered lesbians, includ-

ing the hotline, individual counseling, and access to their emergency shelter. Currently, they are in the process of creating a Lesbian Survivor Support Group, a safe environment for lesbians to come together with others to talk about their experiences and offer each other emotional support. In the past, lesbians have been placed in support groups along with heterosexual victims, making it difficult for them to openly express their feelings because of the fear of homophobic reactions from heterosexual members of the group.

For gay male victims, HAWC provides their hotline, individual counseling, and emergency shelter through the use of hotel space that has been donated by various hotels in Houston. The maximum stay in a hotel is three days, which can possibly be enough time for the victim to find another safe space or another permanent living situation.

"One of the most important things that gay men and lesbians can do to help victims in their community is to start talking about the problem and admitting that it exists," says Ostrander, community educator for HAWC. "It's amazing that once you start telling your friends that you have knowledge about domestic violence and that you have information, victims will know that you are a safe person to come to. You will be very surprised by the number of people who will come to you and say that they have been or are currently being battered."

"It's also important to have resources available to give out to people. Memorize the hotline number [713/528-2121] and, if someone tells you they are being battered, give them the number, which will provide them with more information about the resources that are available to them."

Montrose Counseling Center

Since its inception 18 years ago, the Montrose Counseling Center (MCC) has been a community mental health facility with a primary outreach to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered community in Houston. MCC offers victims of domestic violence individual counseling, and they have a support group for lesbian survivors of domestic violence that meets weekly.

"We hope some day to have a similar group for gay men, but we do not have anything like that running right now," says Mende Snodgrass, senior educator at MCC. "We attempted to run a group for men for a brief time, but we had trouble getting men to participate. I think that may be because it is a little harder for men to admit that they are victims. We sometimes have the same difficulties when we are running groups for survivors of childhood sexual abuse. It tends to be much easier to fill groups with women than with men."

MCC offers their services on a sliding fee scale, and, for victims of domestic violence, there is also some funding available through the victim's assistance program offered by the state attorney general's office. With this program, if a victim has filed charges in a battering situation, they may be eligible for funding for psychotherapeutic services.

Snodgrass feels that the gay and lesbian community is in denial about the problem of domestic violence. In working with the Houston Police Department (HPD), Snodgrass says that instances of lesbian/gay domestic violence is under-reported. Although there are a variety of reasons for this, a primary one is that some people fear that

information contained in a public record will disclose sexual orientation. According to Snodgrass, this is a legitimate concern since police are required to file a report, which will indicate the nature of the dispute.

"The information does become a matter of public record, and if someone really wanted to access those documents, they could," says Snodgrass. "What you can do is ask that they report it as a dispute between roommates."

"Another inhibiting factor is the belief that the police won't do anything," she continues. "Through my work with police officers, I do believe the police role in taking action on same sex domestic violence is changing and is becoming a more favorable response."

The progress being made with the police department, the district attorney's office, and traditional heterosexual survivor services is due greatly in part to sensitivity training about homophobia and issues that are unique to the gay and lesbian community. Last November the district attorney's office invited Snodgrass to speak to their staff about lesbian and gay domestic violence.

"They were very responsive," she says. "These are folks whose familiarity with the dynamics of domestic violence puts them in a position to understand the likelihood of those dynamics existing in any population. The biggest concern that they expressed was the under-reporting that exists in the gay and lesbian community."

Snodgrass also conducts sensitivity training workshops with the HPD. She encourages the officers to talk about their experi-

ences, and one of the repeated things discussed in the workshops is officers responding to reports of lesbian and gay domestic violence where the partners refuse to disclose their names.

"That makes it real difficult for the officers, because there is a law that requires them to take certain information in a domestic violent situation," she says. "Some officers have estimated that in better than 90 percent of the cases, people will not press charges against the battering partner."

Snodgrass urges the community to acknowledge the existence of the problem of domestic violence. She says there is an ongoing debate questioning whether the violence is domestic violence or mutual violence.

"A lot of people want to say that when domestic partners are in a dispute that it generally reflects the use of mutual violence," she says. "It has been my experience that there is genuine domestic violence where one partner exerts physical and abusive power against the other."

She also urges the community to support individuals who say that they are survivors of violence. "If someone reports to a friend that they are being beaten up by their partner or abused in some other way, we need to believe that. People don't make those kind of allegations readily, and it is really unusual to find somebody making those claims when it's not true."

"We need to determine the scope of domestic violence in our community, and we need to get a good sense of what providers are really offering to gay and lesbian people," she adds. "That is especially significant when we are talking about services that are available to men."

Continued on next page

The perpetrator is responsible for every act of violence committed. No victim is ever the cause of violence done to them, nor do they ever deserve it.

You Say You Love Me

Continued from previous page

District Attorney's Office

Cindy Merrill, assistant district attorney and chief prosecutor in the family criminal law division, is very adamant about prosecuting batterers regardless of sexual orientation, according to both Ostrander and Snodgrass. The district attorney's office is important for victims who are in fear of further physical violence from their abuser through issuing a protective order, which can be obtained free of charge through the district attorney's office.

With a protective order, as opposed to a restraining order, a victim doesn't have to wait to be abused again in order for the abuser to be arrested. If the abuser violates any of the stipulations listed in the protective order, they can be arrested immediately. In order to qualify for a protective order, the partners must have been in a live-in situation at one point in their relationship, and the victim must be able to prove a minimum of two incidents of violence. One incident must be physical violence, but the second can be just a threat of more violence.

"It is important to tell someone about the abuse before you apply for a protective order. This will provide you with someone to back up your charges," Merrill says. "A protective order is a much more 'in your face' document than a restraining order, and it sends a much stronger message to the perpetrator. Once a protective order is issued, it is very rare that any cases go to trial, because most perpetrators respect the order."

Getting Out of an Abusive Relationship

For most victims of domestic violence, leaving their abusive, violent partners is not easy. Threats of more violence, feelings of isolation and powerlessness, criticism and blame (including self-blame) for being abused, and societal homophobia all combine to form powerful forces that make leaving abusive relationships incredibly difficult.

"The most dangerous time for a person who is being abused is when he or she attempts to leave the relationship, so it is very important that you don't tell your partner that you are thinking about leaving," says Ostrander. "Also, prepare your escape as best as you can. Most victims never think that it is ever going to get bad enough that they are going to have to leave. So inevitably, what ends up happening is they leave with nothing but the clothes on their back. They leave everything."

Many of us place an enormous amount of pride in our long-term committed relationships. However, if your relationship has turned into an abusive one, you must set aside all foolish pride and do what is right for you. While batterers are solely responsible for their violent behavior, it is the responsibility of the victim to get out of the relationship. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and to be considered an equal in their relationship. No one should ever be allowed to control you through the use of intimidation, psychological games that erode your self-esteem, or physical violence.

If you are in an abusive relationship, please take the necessary steps you need to in order to get out. Remember, it is better to plan and prepare for an escape than it is to wait until the last minute and flee with only the clothes on your back. It is much easier said than done, but your future will only get brighter if you make the necessary changes that will enable it to get brighter. ▼

Resources: Men Who Beat The Men Who Love Them by David Island, Ph.D. and Patrick Letellier, M.A. Naming The Violence edited by Kerry Lobel. Violent Betrayal by Claire M. Renzetti.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Houston Area Women's Center Montrose Counseling Center
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Houston, TX 77019 Houston, TX 77006
Hotline: 713/528-2121 Phone: 713/529-0037

District Attorney's Office
1310 Prairie, Room #880
Houston, TX 77002
Phone: 713/755-5888

HELPFUL TIPS ON GETTING OUT

1. Admit that you are being abused. One of the first steps a victim must take is to overcome their own denial about their situation. They must admit to themselves that they are being abused and need to get out of their relationship.

2. Start telling people about the abuse. Telling others about the abuse will help you stay out of denial. It may also help you find a safe haven to escape to whether through a friend, a coworker, or a supportive family member. Also, by telling people about the abuse, you will have witnesses to back you up, if you should need to take legal action against your partner to protect yourself. It is much easier to obtain a protective order if you have one or more people who can back up your statements.

3. Find a safe haven. There is an extreme lack of shelter facilities for victims of domestic violence in the heterosexual community, and the situation in the gay community is even worse. This may make getting out seem impossible at first, but the more you talk about the abuse with friends, coworkers, and family members, the more likely you are to find someone who is willing to take you in for a period of time that will enable you to get yourself situated in a new living arrangement.

4. Develop a mental map. Look around your apartment and map out all alternative ways to escape your home if another violent incident erupts before you are ready to leave.

5. Pack a bag. It will be much easier for you to survive the first few days after an escape if you have prepared a bag with essential items that will make life away from home more comfortable. Some items to consider are toiletries, any important papers, extra clothing, refills of medications that you take on a regular basis, and your valuables. After you pack the bag, place it in a safe place where your partner can't find it, such as at work or at a friend or family member's home.

6. Get a post office box. This should be done before you leave since a change of address can take up to a week and a half to take effect.

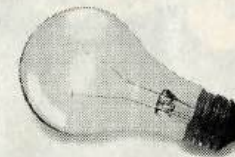
7. Open your own bank account. If you don't have your own bank account, now is the time to open one.

8. Save money. If your batterer has gained financial control over you, this may mean putting away small amounts of money in a safe place over a period of time.

9. Call for help. The hotline at HAWC or the Montrose Counseling Center could help you in getting some kind of support for yourself. Individual counseling or participation in a survivor support group will offer you the emotional support that you will need to stay out of the relationship and to begin the healing process, and can be a big help in rebuilding your self-esteem.

10. LEAVE! LEAVE! LEAVE!

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Nelson Mandela, and Tarzan movies.

Out in Africa

The Wildlife Safari...
One of Life's Richest Experiences

I had lunch with my Dad a couple of weeks ago, and having turned 70, he is finally considering retirement in the normal sense of the word. It looks like part of his retirement dreams will be to travel six months a year or so. My sweet dad, Jimmy, launched my wanderlust at age 16, when he had me accompany him on a business trip to Rome and of all places, Libya, North Africa. More years later than I wish to acknowledge, we both still love to travel, and as we sipped our espressos after lunch, Dad leaned over and asked, "Sas, where haven't you been you still long to go?" I thought for a moment and then replied, "Dad, I tend to return to my favorite places in Europe and the U.S., but there are three specific places I haven't visited that are tops on my list. They are Bali in Indonesia; Turkey, somewhere between Europe and the Middle East; and Africa, the part I haven't seen."

The part of Africa I'm most interested in is the extraordinary safari countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, and South Africa. You grow up watching movies like *The African Queen*, *Hatari*, *Out of Africa*, *The Nun's Story*, *Mogambo*, and *Naked Prey*, and who wouldn't want to experience the almost unbelievable natural beauty and rich culture of those places? So, tops on my wish list for some time now is to do an African safari.



Masai women in traditional dress, Arusha.

Being good homosexuals, we'd never consider the old-style safari where real men with real guns killed real bambis. No, thank God, a modicum of control now exists to prohibit the wanton killing of all that beautiful wildlife indigenous to Africa. Replacing this hideous form of sport is the now popular "photographic safari," where one still gets the thrill of the bush, the pampering of the camp, but substitutes firing a Nikon instead of a rifle at the animal.

The history of safari is intriguing, and worth recounting. According to Ross Gore of African Pride Safaris, "The word 'Safari' has its origins from the Arabic verb 'Safara,' which means 'to discover' or 'to journey.' Originally, the word characterized the adventures of the early voyagers who came to the 'Black Continent' to survey, trade, and convert the natives to Christianity. Today, the word is being used to describe an organized game hunt in Africa (of course, only with your camera).

The first person recorded as going on the first true safari was Cornwallis Harris in 1836. He traveled 1,800 miles with 42 oxen and 12 horses. Sent by the British Government to recoup from a fever he had acquired in India, his journey confronted him with every imaginable situation—from civil war in South Africa (the Zulus with their neighbors) over feuds among tribes to rumors that he had died during



by Sandra Wilkins

the Boers battles (the Dutch South African). On the European front, David Livingstone's mid-19th-century journeys promoted more than any other single individual introducing Africa to the Western world. Meanwhile in America, the 19th century delivered a sweep of adventure stories that captured the hearts and minds of many. During Theodore Roosevelt's term in the White House, Mr. Frederick Selous made his first trek to East Africa, and having impressed the President with his adventures, Teddy requested that a safari be tailored to suit his needs. In 1909 Teddy Roosevelt and his 500 porters arrived in Mombasa and ended up in Nairobi, Kenya's capital and the starting point of most safaris.

For centuries the word "safari" has been synonymous with Kenya. Explorers in quest

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we'd never consider the
old-style safari where
real men with real guns
killed real bambis.

of fabled snow on the equator, hunters enticed by big game, and pioneers drawn to the unknown have all been awed by the staggering array of colors and life they found. As one of the first countries to open protected game parks for the preservation of wildlife, Kenya maintains the same grandeur and abundance which has lured adventurers in the past. The country's special appeal lies in its teeming wildlife as well as its unique and

varied terrain. Lying in Eastern Africa on the equator and bisected by the Great Rift Valley, Kenya embodies rugged desert landscapes, golden savannah grasslands, glacial-capped mountains, expansive lakes, and lush forests. It is here that one comes close to the world's greatest natural wonders and still enjoys the luxuries and comfort of sophisticated life.

Ross Gore, president of African Pride Safaris, pioneered the idea of gay and lesbian safari tours to this magical part of the world. In 1994 I was asked to produce a travel event during Gay Pride Week. Reaching out to the best gay and lesbian tour operators, I remember it was Ross and his company who first responded with great information and brochures. African Pride Safaris now operates tented photographic safaris in Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, and Botswana.

A special opportunity to experience this thrill of a lifetime is available to adventurous gay and lesbian travelers, who may join a special tour, "Out in Africa," sponsored by Harvard University's Gay and Lesbian Review. This fantastic tour is set for August 23-September 3, 1996. This 12-day wildlife safari includes the very best of Kenya, featuring the annual migration of wildlife. The highlight of the trip is a two-day visit to the Maasai Mara National Game Reserve, set on the northern edge of the Serengeti Plain.

This tour is comparable to the legendary Abercrombie & Kent luxury tented safaris, and features camp accommodations at The Ark in Aberdare National Park, on to the

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DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH BY REV. JANET

Have you ever been guilty of putting God in a box? What I mean by this is that we set boundaries and limits to what God can and will do for you and me. A box is a certain size and generally has a lid on it. Putting God in a box restricts God in many ways. When we "size up" God we do it because of small thinking. What I want to share with you this month is that we serve a God who cannot be "sized up." God will break out of every mold and box that any of us try to put God in. The God of the Bible is able to do more than we could ever ask or expect. What we must do is determine where the problem lies with each of us. Is it in your thinking? Is it in your believing? Is it in your faith? I would venture to say that most of us have a problem in our thinking. We get stuck in the natural realm of life. We think we must figure things out to see if it makes sense BEFORE we are able to believe for it. God doesn't always work in the confines of our natural

realm. God works in the supernatural realm. In Ephesians 3:20 we read, "Now to God who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to God's power that is at work within us...." Being able means that God has the ability, the power, and the energy to do far beyond what we could ever ask or imagine. Some of us never get to the place where we even ask God for something. Maybe it is because we do not feel deserving of God's goodness. God wants us to know that we must realize that God is able to do anything for us. Secondly, God wants to bless us abundantly. This means not just a little bit, but with an enormous amount. What is it that God will give us abundantly? God gives abundant forgiveness and grace so that no matter what you do, God will forgive a repentant heart. Secondly, God gives abundant provisions. God wants to give you the best of everything. Where most of us get into trouble is when we want the best BEFORE we are able to manage it. Thirdly, God gives us abundant joy. We serve a God who loves to celebrate. Angels rejoice everytime a person is reunited with God through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. God rejoices over every reconciliation that takes place. God rejoices over every homecoming whether it be through death or renewal of faith. Joy gives us strength and stamina for the daily routine of life.

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Out in Africa

Continued from previous page

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What a wonderful chance to experience the Africa of your imagination. If you'd like additional information and a detailed brochure, please give me a call.

Have you been somewhere special or noteworthy? Want to share your experience with me and *OutSmart* readers? A future article will spotlight readers' travel experiences, so if you'd like to contribute, just let me know. Till next time, Happy Trails! ▼

Sandra Wilkins is owner and president of The Travel Partnership, Inc., a travel company proud to serve gay and lesbian travelers. For more information, call 713/526-4471.

Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach.
Those who do and teach, coach.

Coaching

(And Why It Isn't Just About Sports Anymore)

When he began his practice 14 years ago, Dr. Ivan Gay, a nationally known plastic surgeon, understood the importance of finding his niche. His marketing efforts really paid off for him in the early years, resulting in a thriving professional practice, financial abundance, and recognition. Yet Ivan feels like he's chasing himself all the time in order to keep up with the changing marketplace. He confesses to his closest friend that he no longer experiences joy or fulfillment from his work. His staff still sees him as an inspiration, but Ivan is feeling less than inspired. He's even beginning to see a small but persistent drop-off in business. One voice tells him to just "get over it" and work harder, while another voice says "there's got to be a better way."

In a sense, coaches are professional nudges for the '90s, gently prodding people to create clarity and to take action in their lives.

Pamela Les owns and operates a successful health products business. She took over the family owned business only seven years ago and has developed it from a "mom and pop" operation to three locations in Houston and a new location in Austin. Pamela is a woman of vision and has worked hard to grow her business, yet she feels anxious about her success much of the time. She hasn't taken a vacation in over five years, and she feels like she "lost herself."

The world of career and work is in a period of unprecedented change. Individuals are being prompted to consider "what's next" because of corporate downsizing, or they are simply at a point in their lives where it's time to focus on "what do I really want to do?" Many of the "successful" people are realizing, like Ivan and Pamela, that they are wanting more out of life than "just success." To help answer these questions, professionals and business owners more and more are seeking the services of a professional coach.

Personal and professional coaching—once a perk confined to high-level executives—is now expanding to help people with a range of needs. People ranging from the freelance writer in San Francisco to a gas turbine engineer in Houston are hiring coaches to help

balance career and private lives, to inspire them to pursue their long-delayed dreams, or to create sustainable growth plans for their business. In a sense, coaches are professional nudges for the '90s, gently prodding people to create clarity and to take action in their lives.

Clarity, the first step in crafting personal and professional change, is about knowing what you want, creating a vision of your ideal future. Notice what excites you. Notice what you talk about most. For example, if you are a business owner, what do you work on when you

have free time? If you are a therapist, do you keep wanting to talk about certain types of things with your clients? Where your thoughts and conversations focus is a clue to what you want next.

For many people, getting clear requires the courage to go to deeper levels of self-honesty, the willingness to identify and let go of limiting beliefs and learning to trust the truth of their inner urgings. Dennis, a registered nurse with a powerful "green thumb," wants to open a floral shop. Wanda has a Ph.D. in public health and a passion for different cultures. Her dream is to form a non-profit foundation focused on young women's health in the Caribbean. Both Wanda and

Continued on page 69

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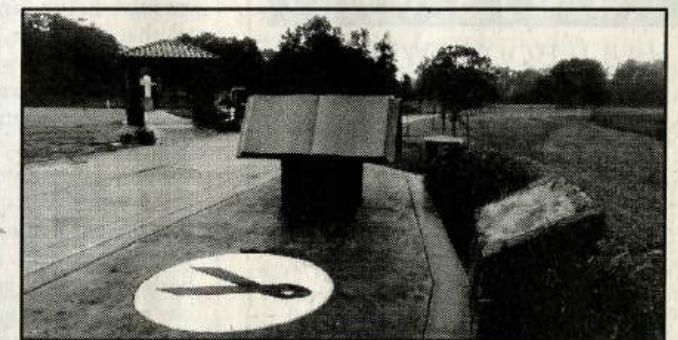
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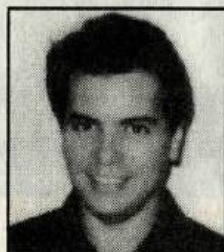
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O U T ▼ S M A R T H E A L T H

There are other ways to promote better health besides looking pretty at the gym. Sometimes just going around in circles can be very productive.

Beginning & Maintaining an Exercise Routine

So you're ready to be fit and beefy for the summer, right? It's that time of the year when most of us wish we were a few sizes smaller and are secretly conniving a new plan to make it there in record time.

As you fantasize about commanding attention at the beach with your fabulous physique, here are a few ideas to keep in mind just so you don't sacrifice your health in the process of attaining that fantasy physique.

Exercise is an important component of today's concept of a healthy lifestyle. We've heard about stress reduction, beta endorphins, cardiovascular health, and

all that. However, what is seldom talked about are the downright rules for a nice, sweaty, fat meltdown! So here it goes!

The most reputable research to date still advocates the idea of moderate physical activity for 30-40 minutes several days a week for those wanting to lose body fat. It is also true that aerobic activities tend to stimulate the maintenance—if not enhancement—of body muscle. An aerobic workout or exercise need not be a grueling task. However, it does need to be performed within the target heart-rate zone for optimal benefit.

Determining your target heart rate is accomplished by subtracting your age from a maximum heart rate of 220 beats per minute (that's the maximum for anybody, anytime, anywhere) and obtaining 60 percent to 85 percent of that number as your range. For example, a person of age 40 would calculate as follows:

- 220 - 40 = 180 (the maximum heart rate)
- 180 x 60% = 108
- 180 x 85% = 153
- 108-153 is the target heart-rate range for this individual.

So how does one correctly

monitor the target heart rate? It's as simple as applying your index finger of one hand to the wrist of the other hand, just at the base of the thumb and the crevice of the obvious bone process that's right at your wrist and thumb. And it's usually easiest if you take pulse readings palms up.

As always, consult your physician before beginning any exercise regimen. Consider trying a credentialed personal trainer, especially if you're more interested in building

body mass. Those who are mainly interested in losing fat can usually figure out the path around Memorial Park. In either instance, a registered dietitian can further pro-

vide accurate and reputable information regarding food intake, a necessary consideration when your trimming off the fat. Seek one out if you're serious about learning fact from fad when it comes to proper nutrition.

Should you decide to develop your own exercise regimen (again with an MD's approval), do keep the following points in mind. These are a good checklist for your personal trainer's knowledge base as well. Training involves three basic principles: frequency, intensity, and duration. Frequency goes back to the "How often do I have to do it?" question, and the answer is about five times a week if you really want to see results. Intensity answers that question of "Do I have to get sweaty, too?" and the answer is yes, yes, yes.

Last, but not least, is the issue of duration—"I have to go around Memorial Park *how many times???*" And again, the optimal exercise duration for metabolism of body fat for energy equates to around 45 minutes of constant activity for a given session.

Warm-up and cool-down phases are of significant importance as well. Remember to al-

"I have to go around Memorial Park how many times???"



by Ron Cummings

O U T ▼ S M A R T B O O K R E V I E W

And This Too Shall Pass

Reviewed by S.T. Carter

And *This Too Shall Pass*, the third novel from E. Lynn Harris, marks this author's continuing journey into the African-American gay community. Harris' style and flavor for fiction writing take us to the threshold of a people who ask that daily question: Am I black or am I gay? *And This Too Shall Pass* informs us that there is a happy medium.

Set in the Windy City, this pastel-colored novel introduces us to four very likable, yet unlikely, characters. Mia is a television sportscaster whose personal bout with an addiction creates more than its share of problems for the ensemble cast of characters. Zurich Robinson is one of the few African-American quarterbacks in the NFL whose dreams of a perfect Christian life are shattered by false accusations, a non-aggressive nature, and his own budding sexuality. Tamela is a brilliant young attorney who has seen her share of hardship but finds it better to keep it a secret than expose it. And Sean Elliot is a brilliant young freelance sportswriter who has also

seen his share of hardship but finds it better not to keep it secret.

While Mia's abrasive attitude toward her career, life, and men is refreshing, it does tend to get her into unknown perils and personality clashes with all around her. Only when she confronts her addiction to control the world around her does she begin to understand that sometimes it's not the other people with the problem, but you yourself. Zurich bounces along this novel praying his way out of adversities, which isn't such a bad

lesson, but his total avoidance of his sexual issues reminds us all of the high-school locker room and the awkwardness of our first non-female-spawned erection. His good nature is believable but sometimes as unwarranted as a slice of pineapple upside-down cake served with pineapple soda—too much of a good thing.

Tamela, again, is an excellent attorney, but she has allowed her misguided past with one particular boyfriend to cloud her judgment and color her own prejudices about the people who hold her dear. She inadvertently breaks away from fear and finds comfort simply by accepting the things she knows she can't change. Sean moves through life one gig at a time, paycheck to paycheck, like most of us do. His adventures in helping Zurich find himself seem at times a lost cause and waste of effort, but Sean knows

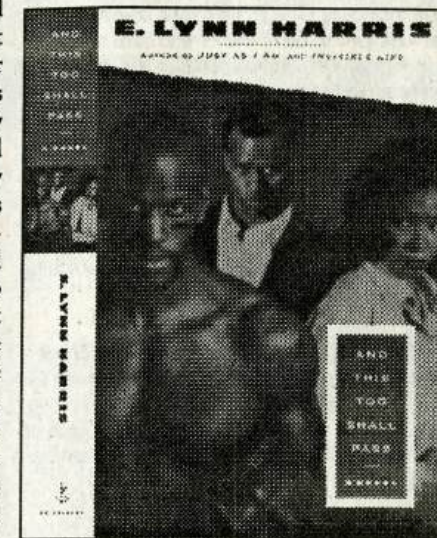
what he is doing. His own personal quest for God helps us to understand that there is a place in everyone's life for the Creator if you, like Madonna, open your heart.

Some of the book's other more notable characters include: Gina Demarco, publicist-at-large; MamaCee, Zurich's old-as-time, wise-as-the-wind grandmother; Tamela's mother, Blanche, who didn't raise her daughter to be a bigot; and Caliph, a brother who can and wants to fulfill all of Babyface's promises...as soon as he gets home from work.

All together, E. Lynn Harris has spun a wonder tale about black and white people and how easy it is to get along. In this book, he invokes a challenge to anyone who has allowed their past to harden them and place a sty in their perception of the truth. Harris addresses the issues of addiction and spirituality with such a vigor that even your mother would be proud to read this one.

If the cover—very innovative and enticing—isn't enough to make you buy the book, then scan through a few chapters where Harris' words will weave a spell on you. On the *New York Times* bestseller list for more than six weeks, you simply must read this one. And when you finish this novel, just like good gossip, pass it on. In the words of Gina Demarco, *Am I wrong or am I right?* ▼

S.T. Carter is a freelance writer whose work has been published in *Inches* magazine. He resides here in Houston.



Exercise Routine

Continued from previous page

ways start an activity slowly and increase the pace after five minutes or so. Complement the end of the session with five minutes or so of the activity at a slower pace so the body has a chance to slow down a bit. It's never a good idea to abruptly stop an exercise of moderate intensity unless you really want sore muscles, dizziness, or even an occasional faint. Exercise responsibly, please.

Some final notes. Remember that your body can grow accustomed to any activity situation or "steady state" and, as a result, must occasionally be forced to work a little harder if persistent results are desired. Monitor the resting pulse rate by checking immediately upon waking in the morning—abiding by the ground rules set out above for checking pulse rate. The resting heart rate (and blood pressure), believe it or not, will decrease as the level of fitness increases. This also means that duration or intensity will have to be periodically increased to continue to see results in the mirror. So go to it, because we will all be looking! ▼

Ron Cummings is a Registered Dietitian who provides bio impedance body composition analysis and nutritional counseling at no cost to individuals who are HIV positive. He is also conducting HIV nutritional research which offers free monthly office visits, lab work, and six months supply of nutritional supplement to those who qualify. For more information, please call 713/285-1293.

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HIV/AIDS Watch

Body Positive/Houston to Start HIV Support Group

Body Positive/Houston is continuing its ongoing cycle of Peer Counseling Support Groups for HIV-positive individuals. The group's basic objective is for clients to share information and feelings with other clients who have similar life issues. Studies have shown a greater degree of client participation and satisfaction in counseling when clients can more easily relate or bond with the other participants.

Body Positive/Houston has successfully operated a peer counseling program for HIV/AIDS clients since 1988. Meetings are facilitated by trained leaders who are also HIV positive, under the supervision of a licensed psychotherapist. Topics addressed include Working With Your Doctor, Healing Alternatives, Relationships, Lifestyle Issues, Stress Reduction, and Relaxation.

Body Positive's Peer Counseling is free of charge, and each group session last nine weeks. The sessions are closed and confidential. If interested in participating or for more information, call 713/524-2374.

HIV/AIDS Outreach Art Course Continues

The Art League of Houston has announced that a grant has made it possible for artist Patrick Palmer to extend his popular art course. The course, started in 1990, is free to anyone with HIV/AIDS. Classes are held through the Art League of Houston, 1953 Montrose, and meet every Thursday and Friday from 1-4 pm. For more information, call 713/523-9530.

HIV Moms

More Likely to Suffer Miscarriages

Mothers infected with HIV are three times more likely to miscarry than are healthy mothers.

"HIV infection predisposes women to spontaneous abortion during the first trimester," said Dr. William T. Shearer, an immunologist at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

In a study funded by the National Institutes of Health, Shearer and colleagues followed 125 women from the time they learned they were pregnant. More than 10 percent had miscarriages, compared to less than three percent for non-HIV pregnancies of longer than 10 weeks.

Settlement Offer in HIV Hemophilia Suits

WASHINGTON—Four drug firms have offered to settle hundreds of U.S. lawsuits by hemophiliacs and their families for a total of \$600 million. The proposed

settlement would pay some \$100,000 to each of approximately 600 patients who were accidentally infected with HIV from tainted blood or blood products. The settlement offer requires that all the U.S. litigants accept the settlement or it will be withdrawn.

The companies, which admit no legal responsibility or wrongdoing in the proposed settlement, are Bayer, Baxter International, Rhone-Poulenc Rorer, and Alpha Therapeutics.

Three-Drug Combo More Effective Than Two

BOSTON—According to a report in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, a three-drug combination of AZT, DDC, and saquinavir is more effective in combating HIV than any two of the drugs taken in combination. The report says that the three-drug combo was both more effective in fighting the ability of HIV to replicate as well as showing the lowest illness and death rates compared to any of the combinations of just two drugs.

AIDS Demographics Shift, Rate of Infection Declines

WASHINGTON—According to federal health officials, the U.S. rate of HIV infection fell seven percent in 1994.

Centers for Disease Control figures indicate states hardest hit by the epidemic, including New York, New Jersey, California, and Illinois, show declines, although Alabama, Kansas, Nebraska, and Nevada show increases.

African-Americans continue to be the most vulnerable racial group and were six times more likely to have AIDS than whites, and twice as likely as Latinos to be infected. Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders continued to have the lowest infection rate among ethnic/racial minority groups.

Military HIV Discharge Measure Repealed

WASHINGTON—The House and Senate have agreed on a federal spending measure for the final five months of fiscal 1996, the subject of an ongoing partisan struggle all year.

One part of the compromise measure that would repeal a requirement that the armed forces discharge service members infected with HIV was being hailed by human rights advocates. Rich Tafel, executive director of the Log Cabin Republicans, said the repeal showed "the importance of Republican moderates in the 104th Congress."

A spokesperson for the Human Rights Campaign agreed, calling the repeal a "tremendous victory for service members and their families, and for fairness."

Representative Bob Dornan (R-Calif.), sponsor of the original HIV military ban amendment, reacted by saying that "the homosexual lobby is what drives the Senate" and called the repeal a "disgusting act of cowardice with my purported leaders caving in to a pro-homosexual, draft-dodging pathological liar in the White House."

The compromised funding measure also includes a six-percent increase in research funds for the National Institutes of Health, and an added \$105 million in Ryan White AIDS Care funding over last year's levels.

NIH Launches Controversial Interferon Trials

WASHINGTON—Amid charges of racism in the battle against AIDS and claims of a "cure" that many researchers have dismissed as spurious, the National Institutes of Health have begun clinical trials of Kemron, a low-dose interferon. Kemron has been endorsed for several years by leaders in the Nation of Islam, and the group's Washington, D.C. clinic routinely treats people with AIDS with the unapproved drug.

Although most NIH AIDS researchers believe Kemron is entirely ineffective as an AIDS drug, the agency decided to go ahead with the clinical trials in an effort to resolve the debate over the treatment.

Andrew Sullivan Steps Down From 'New Republic'

WASHINGTON—Andrew Sullivan, the conservative Catholic British gay man who took over five years ago as editor of the *New Republic*, has announced that he is infected with HIV and is resigning from his post at the magazine.

Sullivan told the *Washington Post* that he had learned of his infection three years

ago, saying it was an accident and not a result of "reckless" behavior—a remark that is already drawing stinging criticism from AIDS activists.

Lawyer's 'Philadelphia'-Type HIV Bias Suit in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO—A San Francisco attorney who has AIDS has filed a discrimination suit against his firm saying he has been removed from major cases and been given administrative duties since his HIV status was discovered.

Andrew Mead has been with the firm of Heller, Ehrman, White and McAuliffe for eight years. In the suit, Mead charges the firm also breached its contract by not paying him the wages, bonuses, and benefits he was due.

A spokesperson for the firm said he could not comment on the suit until they've seen it. Mead is seeking \$1 million plus punitive damages. He is now on long-term disability leave from the firm.

Michigan AIDS Group TV Spot Hits the Showers

DETROIT—A public service announcement that the Midwest AIDS Prevention Project (MAPP) has taped in hopes of getting it aired on local TV stations is taking a somewhat different approach to HIV education efforts.

The 30-second television spot, called "The Morning After," looks more like a bath soap commercial than more common PSAs, using upbeat music, quirky camera angles, and showing a good-looking young man as he showers.

The voice-over, however, tells us what he's thinking: "Wow, what a great time...met someone really hot...maybe I should have used a condom...what if I caught something...I hope I don't have AIDS."

MAPP officials say they wanted to produce something that would catch the attention of younger gay men between the ages of 18 and 29 and figured that "sex sells," so they decided on the brief peek-a-boo shower scene.

"We use the same technique to get the viewers' attention, and then make them think twice about their own risky behaviors," a MAPP spokesperson said.

Study Finds Genetically Altered AIDS Vaccine Ineffective

BETHESDA, Md.—Government officials say a five-year study of the genetically engineered AIDS vaccine, gp160, has shown the prevention effort is not effective in halting the progress of the disease in people.

The study, one of the first of its kind, used the Microgenesys experimental vaccine and was a joint venture between the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Disease in conjunction with private medical facilities.

With some 600 military and civilian volunteers, the study showed no improvement in their ability to fend off the infection.

China to Set Up Border-Crossing Checkpoints to Stop HIV

BEIJING—At a cost of nearly \$60 million, the Chinese government says it will set up a series of six checkpoints along its borders with Vietnam, Laos, and Burma in an effort to keep people infected with HIV from entering the country into Yunnan province in the south.

Chinese health officials say some 70 percent of all the nation's AIDS cases are in Yunnan. The government believes most of those were drug-related infections involving people trafficking in drugs traveling to and from its three southern neighbors.

Agency Calls for Shift in Texas AIDS Medication Purchases

AUSTIN, Texas—Budget tightening from the federal government to state agencies to county health programs is continuing to hit HIV/AIDS programs around the nation. With a \$6.4-million budget shortage for the coming fiscal year, the Texas HIV Medication Advisory Committee has recommended prioritizing what kinds of medicines the state buys for state residents who aren't adequately insured and don't have enough money but who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid.

With growing numbers of people infected and very little increase in federal AIDS funds, state and local AIDS treatment subsidies are being further limited by the availability of a class of expensive new drugs, protease inhibitors. These new medications, the most effective so far in fighting off the infection's progression, are

Continued on next page

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HIV/AIDS Watch

Continued from previous page

significantly more expensive than earlier drugs and put an even greater strain on already limited funds, the committee noted.

Eventually, the committee's recommendation says, earlier drugs should be dropped from the state purchasing program altogether.

California Lawmakers Reject Medicinal Pot Measure

SACRAMENTO, California—A California state Assembly committee has crushed a bill to reduce the penalty for growing marijuana for medical use. The legislation would have lowered the felony charge to a misdemeanor. It received just one "yes" vote. The bill's sponsor, Assemblyman John Burton of San Francisco, says sick and dying people should not go to prison for doing something to ease their pain.

Several similar attempts in the past few years to decriminalize the medical use of marijuana have also failed in the state legislature.

NY AIDS Council OKs Some Mandatory Testing in Assaults

ALBANY, N.Y.—The New York state AIDS Advisory Council has recommended to Governor George Pataki that suspects charged in criminal assault cases that might have exposed the victim to HIV should be tested for the virus, with or without their consent.

The council's recommendation is broader than current New York state law, and includes assaults other than just sexual crimes, but the proposal is still narrower than a measure now in the state legislature that would include a huge assortment of crimes, many of which would be highly unlikely to result in HIV infection, according to the council.

The council's proposed recommendation was adopted unanimously, though in the past the council had always opposed mandatory testing.

School Boots AIDS Educators for Answering a Question

LANCASTER, Calif.—According to a report in the *Los Angeles Times*, the Antelope Valley Union High School trustees have banned an AIDS education program from its schools because one of the Catalyst Foundation's educators answered a student's question about what protections should be used during oral sex.

The *Times* quoted Sue Stokka, the school district's president, as saying, "They could live the rest of their lives without any knowledge of oral sex. What they need is to be steered away from any form of sex outside of marriage."

State teaching regulations require AIDS education to emphasize abstinence, which officials with the Catalyst Foundation say they follow, answering specific questions about sexual activities only when they're asked.

Dr. Susan Lawrence, the head of Catalyst, told the paper that Stokka's attitude was "not in touch with reality" about young people. "If we don't give them this information," Lawrence said, "we are depriving them of information they need in order to live."

University Dental Student with HIV to Continue Seeing Patients

OMAHA, Neb.—Creighton University officials say a dental student at the school who is infected with HIV will keep treating patients at the dental clinic despite his infection. The university said, however, that it is preparing a special patient consent form that patients seeing the unidentified student will have to sign before receiving certain types of dental treatment.

University officials and federal health experts said the chances of any patient being accidentally infected by an HIV-positive healthcare worker were "almost nil."

Possible Early-Stage Hiding Place of HIV Found

NEW YORK—Reporting in the medical journal *Science*, researchers say they believe the mucous membranes in the throat may be the location where HIV replicates in hiding after individuals are infected with the virus but still show no outward signs of the infection.

The researchers, led by Ralph Steinman of Rockefeller University, said they made the discovery after examining enlarged adenoids removed from 13 patients and found large amounts of the virus replicating in the glands' dendritic cells, the immune cells found in the membranes.

Eleven of the 13 infected people were unaware at the time that they were HIV-positive.

ACLU Sues Medical Center for Unauthorized HIV Test

CHICAGO—The ACLU has filed a federal lawsuit against the Alexian Brothers Medical Center in suburban Elk Grove Village and Dr. Joseph Lagatutta, charging that they broke federal and state medical laws when they tested a man for HIV without his consent.

The unnamed man found out about the testing only after he discovered charges for it on his hospital bill following a minor operation at the facility.

Condom Classes in Florida County Schools

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.—With the HIV infection rates in Florida spiraling rapidly upward, even schools in conservative Pinellas County on the state's Gulf Coast have had to drop their objections to teaching kids about sex. Eighth graders in the county's schools will soon be given the opportunity to learn all about condoms in a special class devoted to safer sex practices.

Until recently, health and sex education teachers weren't allowed to talk about condoms in class unless students asked specific questions about them. Under a new policy, the teachers will discuss the "how-to's" of condoms with students taking the sex ed classes. The teachers will still stress abstinence, and parents have to consent to their children taking the condom classes.

HIV May Prove Breakthrough in Gene Therapy

BOSTON—Researchers report in the journal *Science* that use of a genetically benign version of HIV

may be the key to an important breakthrough in gene therapy treatment, serving as the carrier system or "vector" to deliver therapeutic genes to target cells in the human body.

Researchers with the Salk Institute in San Diego and the Whitehead Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, have reported that they successfully used the HIV vector to inject therapeutic genes in the cells of live rats in laboratory experiments. If the use of the HIV vector proves as successful in human gene therapy, the researchers say it could be a potentially important treatment for such genetic disorders as cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, and Alzheimer's disease.

Unapproved Medical Treatment Program Halted

SAN DIEGO—William Stacey of the Taylor-Stacey Center for Advanced Medicine in San Diego has been arrested on charges of selling and injecting a drug called Immunostim, an unapproved medication, into more than 108 patients with severe diseases, including AIDS, according to the San Diego city attorney's office. Stacey's partner, Dr. Lawrence Taylor, is on probation, and his medical license has been revoked by the state.

Immunostim is composed of so-called "quaternary ions," chemicals that are the basis for some household cleaners, and which are not approved for use in humans. When injected, it causes inflammation and painful swellings. Fifty-five of the 108 patients that Stacey and Taylor claimed they had cured with the substance are dead, according to the city attorney's office.

Resolution to Make AIDS Memorial Grove a National Monument

WASHINGTON—U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) has introduced a measure that would declare the AIDS Memorial Grove in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park a national monument. The grove, which is planted with trees commemorating those who have died in the epidemic, encompasses some 15 acres in the park. The Pelosi resolution would acknowledge the "significance of the grove for those whose lives have been affected by HIV or AIDS."

AIDS Agencies Seek to Block Auditors Access to Patient Records

BOSTON—Social service agencies in Boston have gone to U.S. District Court in an effort to block auditors from the Department of Health & Human Services' Inspector General's office from getting access to client records that identify patients with AIDS by name.

The federal auditors say having the records is the only way they can determine if the clients are in fact AIDS patients eligible for federal funds. The Boston agencies, however, say having access to such information is a violation of patient confidentiality, and that information could be verified without violating the patients' privacy.

Massachusetts Officials Shut Down AIDS "Cure" Scam on Internet

DEDHAM, Mass.—The Massachusetts attorney general's office has gotten a temporary restraining order against Marjorie Phillips of Brockton, south of Boston, and her "New Discoveries" World Wide Web site on the Internet where she offered a book selling for \$24 that she claimed included a cure for HIV.

"In six weeks you are HIV negative," the Web site claimed of the "cure" outlined in the book, which consists of a formula composed of black walnut hulls, cloves, and wormwood.

The attorney general's office said in asking for the injunction that there was no medical indication the compound would be effective in fighting HIV or AIDS and is seeking to have the injunction made permanent.

Officials said they don't know if Phillips has actually sold copies of any of the books, which prospective customers had to call a 900 number, with a \$1.99 per-minute charge, just to order.

AIDS Rate Staggering in U.S. Prisons

ATLANTA—According to a report in the *Baltimore Sun*, the federal Centers for Disease Control & Prevention reports that inmates in the country's largest correctional institutions are nearly six times as likely as the general population to have AIDS. The paper reports that according to the CDC, the U.S. prison population has an infection rate of 5.2 cases per 1,000 prisoners, while the general U.S. population has less than one case (0.9) per 1,000.

CDC officials said most inmates are already infected with HIV when they enter the prison system, but that they also spread the virus through shared IV needles and sexual activities once behind bars.

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**Why wait till you're between the sheets
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Great SEXpectations

In the course of my work at AIDS Foundation Houston (AFH), I encounter many friends, acquaintances, and strangers from the community who are concerned about safer sex. They come from many backgrounds and experiences, but share an almost universal perspective about HIV and safer sex—they feel they know enough about HIV transmission to stay safe.

For the most part, this is true. Most people in our community already know enough about sexual precaution—you get infected from unprotected intercourse. Using a condom/prophylactic/jimmy cap can keep you safe, if properly used.

Unfortunately, it's not that simple. Knowledge alone does not change behaviors. This is evidenced by consistently high HIV-infection rates for gay men, although knowledge about HIV transmission and protection is clear. The problem lies in the perception of risk. Among minority men and men under 30, the statistics show an alarming climb in the second decade of AIDS. The message is not reaching a whole new generation at risk.

To better understand this situation, we must consider it in the context of human habits and behaviors. Neither of these are easy to affect with "health warning" campaigns. Note how many people smoke cigarettes and cigars; drink and drive; don't use seat belts. Many individuals take blatant risks with their bodies as long as they think the odds are with them. Awareness of the risk is a beginning, but sexual lust and passion are two of the most powerful human intoxicants. They can easily overshadow one's best intentions.

As one recent gay caller put it, "You don't have to really think about HIV unless

the other person you're with tells you they have it. It's *their* responsibility, isn't it?" This seems to be a common game many people play, whether gay, straight, bisexual, or lesbian. They assess their personal risk by analyzing AIDS statistics to see where "people like me" fall among the numbers.

Typical calls from gay men involve someone who is panicking because they have met someone or recently had sex with someone who has told them they are HIV positive. In

**It doesn't matter how
young, how pretty,
or how healthy you
think you are—
you cannot have
unprotected sex and
not be at risk.**

general, people rarely think about their actions until HIV becomes real (e.g., once you find out that your partner is HIV positive).

No matter what your race, age, sexual orientation, or moral code, HIV is an issue for anyone who is sexually active. Denying the problem doesn't make it go

away. The disease is easily preventable, but we have to start seeing it as real.

The typical scenario was exemplified by a friend of mine, Jack, who was worked up over a sexy guy he had met. They never discussed HIV status or safer sex. It wasn't until they were under the sheets that Jack realized they had very different views of what was considered "safe." His partner didn't feel he needed a condom because he was "always a top." Needless to say, it wasn't their passion that became heated.

It doesn't matter how young, how pretty, or how healthy you think you are; you cannot have unprotected sex and not be at risk.

But you do have options.

Sex in the '90s does not have to be scary or a hassle. The whole idea of safer sex is to create fun and erotic sexual options for a couple whether one, both, or none of the partners is positive. If we actually "treated every partner as if he or she were HIV positive," as the axiom goes, practi-



by Bart Loeser

cally no one would be getting infected today. It's really that simple. Assume all of your partners are positive for HIV, Hepatitis-B, and all other sexually-transmitted diseases.

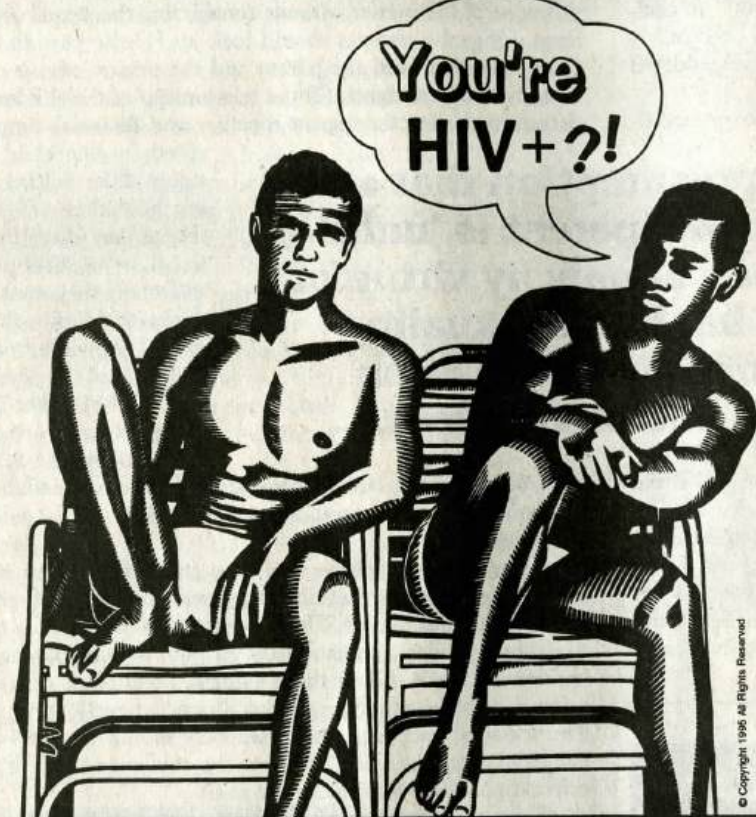
AIDS Foundation Houston offers workshops, the "Great SEXpectations" series, focusing on much more than condom-wear facts. They entertain. They teach us more about ourselves (and other sensual and sexual options). They teach us about communication, negotiation, and relationships through lively discussions.

There are two workshops currently available: "Sex, Toys, and Videotape," a standard safer sex journey, and "Love, Lust,

and Intimacy," exploring our quest for love, self-worth, and relationships. The workshops are always free and open to all. They are offered monthly at the AFH office (May 21 and 28, respectively, for the month of May).

You can also share this information with your friends in the comfort of your own home by hosting these workshops in our House Party format. It's a great way to get involved in slowing the spread of HIV in our community. Call me anytime at AFH, 713/623-6796.

Bart Loeser is coordinator of AIDS Foundation Houston's "Great SEXpectations" program.



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KEEPING KIDS: Custody Concerns for Our Community

Many lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered persons in our community have children from prior relationships. The day the other parent threatens to "go to court" to challenge custody or visitation rights strikes fear in the very heart of any person, but especially so for lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered litigants.

The two major areas of conflict that arise in a divorce or modification proceeding involving a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered individual are custody and access. In some cases, the sexual orientation of the litigants becomes an issue in the property division portion of the divorce, but by far there is more litigation over parental rights than furniture and bank accounts.

The beginning point for evaluating a custody case is analyzing how the facts fit the law. There are no Texas appellate cases directly addressing sexual orientation as a factor in the family law context. Most references to homosexuality in reported cases occur in criminal matters. For this reason, Texas judges have broad discretion in making family law decisions when sexual orientation is a factor. As in any custody case in Texas, the court's primary consideration is supposed to be the "best interest of the child."

It is sometimes helpful to assess a case involving a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered parent by evaluating it in terms of the positions of the parties without considering the sexual orientation issue. Litigating parents should look at: (1) the past and present relationship between the parent and the person who is opposing custody or access rights; (2) the relationship of the children to this person, including time spent together and financial support provided for the child; (3) the status of the children, including how they are doing in school, any discipline, emotional, or medical problems, and where they want to live if they are old enough to consult; (4) how the home environments of the parties compare; and (5) what impact a change of living arrangement or visitation plan is likely to

have on the children. Only after a parent has determined the overall strength of the case should issues regarding sexual orientation be explored.

In any family litigation regarding children, the best witnesses besides the parties are non-biased persons who frequently come into contact with the children. These are usually adults such as teachers, day-care providers, pediatricians, neighbors, and parents of the children's friends. Often these witnesses will learn of the sexual orientation of the parent for the first time in connection with the case. The focus of each witness's testimony should be both parents' primary caregiving skills and how the challenged parent's sexual orientation affects the children, if at all.

There are other issues besides primary custody that sometimes arise in the case involving lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered parents. One involves conditions or restrictions which may be placed on custody or access. Often during the negotiation process the parties will consider prohibiting any unrelated persons from being in the presence of the children overnight, or even prohibiting all contact with the partner of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered parent. Sometimes the court will consider this restriction as well. It is important to anticipate the possibility that restrictions might be imposed or requested. Litigants should pay particular attention to whether the proposed restriction against unrelated adults living in the home applies equally to both parties, and whether the restriction is temporary or permanent. The heterosexual party has the advantage of being able to marry, thereby getting rid of the "unrelated" status of their



by Connie Moore

new partner. If at all possible the parties should keep any restrictions limited to temporary orders so that each party is free to start new relationships once the divorce is final.

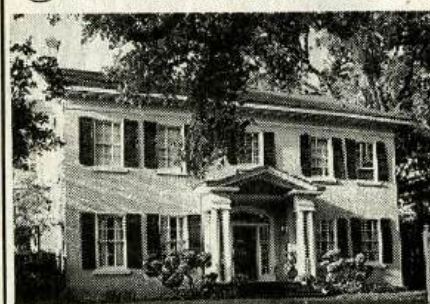
Custody litigants should also explore the motivation of the non-lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered parent for raising the sexual orientation issue. Common motivations are to achieve a better property settlement or to avoid paying child support. Considerable caution is required when deciding whether to concede property rights or financial support out of fear of a custody battle. While the property settlement will be final, custody and access rights are modifiable. The settlement may only protect the lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered parent for a limited time. Worse, conceding too many issues to avoid a fight may create a blackmail scenario that will continue between the parties long after the divorce or modification is final.

On an encouraging note, the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers has released the following policy statement regarding child custody cases: "Any presumption that a homosexual parent is 'unfit' for custody simply by virtue of his or her homosexuality is a doctrine based upon prejudice and stereotypes which deprives a parent of fundamental rights and privileges guaranteed under the Constitution, while simultaneously ignoring the best interest of the child." The American Bar Association has also adopted a resolution supporting the "enactment of legislation and the implementation of public policy providing that child custody and visitation shall not be denied or restricted on the basis of sexual orientation." The resolution was co-sponsored by the Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities, Family Law and Litigation Sections, together with the National Association of Women Judges, National Association of Women Lawyers, and the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that the overriding concern of the courts is the best interest of the child. The facts of each situation must be carefully evaluated with this standard in mind. These cases prove the wisdom of the saying, "You can't judge a book by its cover." Just as there are good and bad parents who are heterosexual, there are good and bad parents in our communities. Each person deserves to have a fair and honest review of all the factors of this complex and emotionally charged area of law. ▼

Connie Moore is a partner at Moore & Hunt, a lesbian/feminist law firm. 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/gay issues, the firm concentrates in family law, contract negotiations/disputes, corporation/small-business formations, wills, estate planning, and probate matters. For more information, call 713/522-4282.

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Future Outlook

The World

A major truth is about to descend into the hearts and minds of the people of our nation. An acceleration is moving within the collective psyche, inspiring these revelations to float to the surface of our ocean of human experience. A shocking breakthrough takes the form of major natural disasters, or expect a continuation of what we've already seen. In either case, the steam cooker of our collective conscience is bursting to ventilate steam.

May 4-15, Mercury retrogrades through the sign of Taurus. This is a good time to evaluate expenses and the ways you spend your money, and to verify your financial stability. While you're at it, you may notice yourself re-evaluating your self-worth and the meaning of your life. For now, prepare for action by collecting data for job applications, contractual agreements, or the closing of any type of property or money deals. But as far as implementation of any of these plans, definitely wait until after May 21.

Indications present a most perplexing picture of the summer of '96. A major atrocity will occur as Man shakes up the planet once again, and freedom fighters choosing to challenge the status quo will make their mark again.

Aries (3/21-4/19)

Aries experiences an unexpected turn of events that will be opportunities disguised as setbacks. Be prepared to hear information that could leave a bad taste in your mouth. If you're looking for new job possibilities, the one you hope to get may not be the one to manifest. You are likely to be thrust head first into "high society," which could give you a very strong sense of uneasiness with new associations formed at this time. Stay true to your honorable nature as you encounter people who challenge the authenticity of your ways. Ignore the gossip, or more gently, colorful descriptions that follow the grapevine back to you. This will assist you in cutting ties with individuals no longer complementary to your growth, however painful that may be.

The focus of May into June is on the archetypal experience of Change. All of life is in constant motion as Mother Earth revolves and rotates around the Sun, and as the Sun, in turn, swirls around the center of the Galaxy. Without its constant motion and the change it brings, our world would become stagnant and inert. This reality is reflected in the experiences of human life. Often with this reoccurring natural cycle, when one thing is left behind, something new and refreshing fills the void in place of what was released. You are encouraged to sit back and relax. Jump each hurdle when you come to it. Not before.

Taurus (4/20-5/20)

The period of May leading into June coats you with security, delivering you out of emotional anxiety and tension. A lingering relationship from the past, the loss of someone that you have loved, or some emotional lesson presents itself as you settle into the radiance of your happiness. The contrast heightens your appreciation of your comfortable home and



by Joseph Molina

your true friends. You develop a powerful optimistic outlook regarding where your life is going.

Be aware of conditional assistance. When help is offered, your reward should be the joy of giving. Don't intermingle help with selfish intent. It could present imaginary obstacles, causing you to experience nervousness or shortness of breath. Pay attention to your sleeping patterns; this will be your red flag to let you know that this challenge has hit you.

Breaking free and leaving residue energy behind could bring a moodiness about you. You are likely to become very particular in future enterprises that you are considering, which could cause you to overlook important matters in the present. Careless mistakes could cause your personal endeavors to seem futile and burdening. To counteract this influence, be totally secure in your desires, set free from lingering ties, and, of course, learn patience.

Gemini (5/21-6/20)

How in control of your emotions and moods are you? Experiences challenging your responsible nature will arise from May into June. You're prone to over-excessiveness: Wine! Food! Sex! You could find yourself full more often than not. Repressed feelings of isolation challenge you to distribute your phone number perhaps too indiscriminately. It is always better to allow relationships time to grow; consuming two (or six) social drinks at night will not help your memory the next morning.

Many Geminis should be aware of distrustful or weak-willed individuals who will tend to throw you off course. You are challenged to be in control of your world, however tense that may cause you to be. The various experiences you encounter test your will to be true to yourself. This situation could involve your circle of friends, a lover, or a spontaneous evening event that results in a heavy feeling. Try recovering with a bottle of Advil, as you examine your feelings of shame over inequities in dealings with others.

Your power card is the Chariot, instilling in you a sense of self-power and the abilities to triumph over your difficulties. It tells you that you are truly in control of the present. If any obstacles should occur, it will be only when you let down your defenses. The future is now before you; be aware.

Cancer (6/21-7/22)

June represents a period of calm as you move away from moving away from stress, disrupted emotions, or nervousness. New situations present themselves while you are in retreat, but you are so wrapped up in the everyday experiences of your life that you become blind to the infinite possibilities available. Your cards highly recommend sacrifice. Look at life from a passive point of view and dwell in the silence of a conversation. Humility exerts a strength as strong as 10 men. You may experience an interruption of your plans as your projected goals take more time to manifest. Go with the flow and seize the opportunities that present themselves now; what you desire may not be closely attainable, but at this time

beggars cannot be choosers.

Remember that surrounding influences encourage you to move away from difficulties through consulting a counselor, therapist, best friend, or psychic. This will help you better understand these emotions you now interpret as loss—either of a departed aspect of your life, or of departed loved ones.

This period may find yourself questioning your present goals, but it would be better for you to just be during this cycle than to try and make any major strides. This state of being will strengthen you and may even manifest a productive streak of good luck.

Leo (7/23-8/23)

All hail mighty Leo as we come closer to the longest day of the year. A sense of power besets you, and the emblems of life's rewards surround you. You experience a strong urge to self-glorify while simultaneously re-establishing your sense of security. Perhaps you find yourself in a relationship or lay the groundwork for a potentially long-term friendship. You are apt to encounter many varied and unique individuals. Remember to stay calm, relaxed, and, above all, be yourself. There's no need to rush things; the best friendships develop, like fine wine, with time.

This is a good period to contemplate contracts, but it would be best to wait to sign any agreement or make any promises until May 21. A strong sense of harmony permeates your life during this retrograde period, producing many fruits from your previous labors. Enjoy your friends while reaffirming them. Enjoy outings, parks, the beach, or the zoo. Hug a tree. Take a breather from all the new projects you are considering. Experience the peace.

Virgo (8/23-9/22)

This period represents a tearing away from inopportune timing or ill luck. As you come to the close of a disrupting couple of weeks, initially your mood could seem low, testy, and even over-critical. You are closing a transition chapter of your life which enables you to return to the comfort of routine. This shift appears much more intense than it actually is. Think of it as an influence urging you to integrate balance back into your life. Maybe you should consider being more social, develop a more empowered drive to succeed, or bask in sensual pleasures.

Some Virgos cultivate love, while getting to know more about a friend. Others have the option of enacting human mating rituals. Gain and pleasure will commence, and it is implied (though not assured) that it will build. It all depends on your reactions to the people you meet, as well as those you already know.

Libra (9/23-10/22)

Amid the balance and stability your nature is famous for, you will experience a sense of discord. Your work could be interrupted, journeys could be delayed, and even your health could become a great issue. Yet, somehow, your base is intact, protected, and secure. Learn to look at things in a loving way. Try being more charitable and giving. You are susceptible to manipulation; be aware of how you or another is being overly strict or domineering.

This period finds you giving your assistance to another, perhaps a temperamental friend or lover, without the favor being returned. This challenges you to know when you've been too nice and it's time to stop.

Expect an unexpected experience that could cost you some money. You may have problems with transportation, money pre-spent on a delayed vacation, or bills with the illusion of being paid. Let your natural sense of harmony radiate, enabling you to attain a natural sense of balance and stability. Trust that eventually you will wade through all the difficulties, like a swan gliding across water.

Scorpio (10/23-11/21)

May into June delivers you out of a heavy period in your life. A temporary loss of self-control or personal power could be experienced, strongly influencing your mood at the beginning of this cycle. You may feel unappreciated for being the giving person that you are. Don't worry—you will soon be released from distress and there will be movement. Have faith, optimism, and hope. Toward June, your life will ease and harmony will prevail. You find strength in numbers and choose to be with friends a great deal more than usual. You are comforted with a sense of security through socializing.

The difficulties you have experienced recently in your personal relationships are about to ease. You will experience a turn of events, dramatically reducing your stress. Enjoy a relaxing vacation, whether it be for an afternoon or a week.

Those of you experiencing health issues should try to have more confidence in your body's capability to heal itself. You are given the time required to cultivate better lifestyle habits. Wholeness is a state of mind complemented with action. Love yourself and act like you mean it. Try jogging, yoga, and positive thinking.

Sagittarius (11/22-12/21)

Success in life is often measured by personal achievement. Your innate temperament is focused on the forward movement, your engines are rewired and ready to go. You step forward with will and determination. An inner cloud within you rumbles, causing you to reevaluate the meaning of this success and the amount of effort that you exert to achieve it. You question the varied degrees of happiness along your current path and experience nervous energy caused by all these questioning thoughts floating through

Continued on next page

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Future Outlook

Continued from previous page

your head. You even find yourself slightly insecure about the amount of time and effort spent in dedication to your goals, analyzing how often you get to enjoy the fruit of your labor. Is it worth it?

Prepare to evaluate the true meaning of relationships in your life. Relationships on every level will be put to the test as you place a standard on the types of connections that you form. This cycle is a particularly social period for Sagittarius, and you could find yourself out on the town often. Make sure to give new friendships the time to grow, as you're prone to rush things a bit. An inner sense of disbelief in the honesty of others could be your reason for not taking your time in cultivating productive relationships. If you find yourself out on the prowl, try to contain yourself. Contemplating the fleetingness of relationships motivates some of you to place virtue aside for a moment.

Indications point to some potentially negative choices made in the area of romance. Because of a moodiness in your emotions, you're liable to lose control of yourself and get into some regrettable situations. Even though this is a period of enjoyment and should be lived to the fullest, don't sacrifice wisdom for pleasure.

Capricorn (12/22-1/19)

A shift is occurring, inspiring you to become more active. This transition places you in an aggressive mode instead of a passive one, empowering you with energy and delivering you out of seclusion. Goals that you have long been working toward begin to manifest, projects begin to bear fruit, and relationships begin to work. You actually find yourself settling into

that routine you have previously struggled with! As long as you don't rush things, you will be offered wondrous opportunities to integrate into your life. The key is to focus; utilize all your powers of concentration. This is a test to see how badly you truly desire changes. In other words, be careful what you ask. Organize your home, office, and time. Take calm, steady steps to prepare for a more accomplished and productive future.

Delays could arise in the form of envy and jealousies. This could be your own negative thoughts or those of another toward you. Often in life when our needs are met, outsiders become envious and self-centered. Be aware of this motivation, but never lower yourself to this level. Deal with this by remaining steady, focused, and self-assured.

Aquarius (1/20-2/18)

The major focus for Aquarius is on security, money, prosperity, and health. You notice great internal swings, as though all of your energies are rechanneled for a moment to a more subtle, private, or internal way of thinking. You reevaluate the comfort that permeates your life and dwell on the validity of your stability. How really secure are you? How much cushion do you really have? Could you take a vacation right now, if you truly wanted to? These questions and many others become major topics as you move into the summer. Some Aquarians will experience dissatisfaction in your present career. It would be wise for you to begin putting out feelers, if not résumés, to be led into the direction of a preferable vocation.

You might currently sense a slight distrust in making any sudden changes. Give yourself till the first of June. If you don't find yourself any happier by then, it's all up to you to implement change. You are challenged to learn from your

past mistakes and to put these hard-learned lessons to practical use.

Pisces (2/19-3/20)

Many new, creative opportunities could be presented to you during this period. You receive advice, solicited and otherwise, to assist you in starting a new creative enterprise, business venture, or hot summer fling. Remember to base your decisions on what you truly desire, and be cautious of being too dependent on letting others tell you what to do.

You are entering an exciting phase, one of passion, energy, and assertiveness. You are being given this opportunity as a reward for all your hard work as well as your desire to climb the ladder of success. You will find yourself enraptured by these exhilarating challenges. You could be up for a promotion or a new job for which two or three others are competing. Of course, effort is required to maintain your position, and persistence is your boarding pass to Everywhere. If you keep a strong positive attitude, you are likely to achieve most of your goals at this time. Just be sure that you really want what you're calling out for.

This period is a nice time to travel, if you get that summer itch. Socialize and enjoy the center spot of the limelight. All of you unwed Pisces are entering a romantic phase; you could find potential partners everywhere, including right under your nose. If you are already wed, set up that Kama Sutra and get ready to sizzle, sizzle, sizzle.

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

Coming Out of My Shell

Continued from page 33

-ish, so he took disability leave to concentrate on its completion. I voiced my amazement of how supportive my boss was of my fellow employee.

Our conversation wandered toward Shell's image with the gay community. Eventually, he became inquisitive of my interest in the well-being of a coworker I barely knew. After receiving his personal assurance of confidentiality, I told him I was gay but not willing to come out. I spent a couple of weeks getting acquainted with the employee who left. Eventually, he and my boss convinced me that it would be better for me and for Shell if I came out.

The stage was set, the orchestra had begun to play, and very soon thereafter the curtain would rise. The night before coming out, I laid in bed and thought about all the critics. Like any premiere, coming out could be a great success or a dismal failure. It all hinged upon my commitment to the part. How's that for high drama?

The tough part was getting up the courage to tell my peers, but on October 17, 1994, I did. I started by walking into the office of a colleague I viewed as being the most homophobic. Ironically, he was one of the people in that car in San Francisco four years prior.

For the most part, he and the others seemed to take it well. I explained that for them it all boiled down to two things: 1) If they asked about life outside of work, I'd tell them, and 2) If they invited me to a social function, I might bring a date. Nothing else with regard to my appearance or behavior in the office would change.

The personal benefits of having come out were very rewarding, but I still had some reservations. At that time Shell's nondiscrimination policy didn't include sexual orientation, but progress has to start somewhere. I discussed my social life in the office, brought a date to a company function, and helped people wrestling with perceptions of the gay lifestyle. It was also demonstrated to me that there was a commitment to acknowledge the diversity of employees.

My primary focus of coming out was to be a good role model for the gay community, and promote a positive image of gay professionals. I looked for opportunities within the gay community to confirm that I wasn't unique, but rather the norm.

Coming out provides an opportunity to be visible on gay and lesbian issues in the workplace—not as an irritant, but as a resource to management regarding the issue of sexual orientation in the workplace.

In 1995, Shell Oil Company began exploring the concept of diversity in the workplace. They created the Strategic Team On Diversity which hired a consultant to interview a cross section of the work force relative to their impressions of people's differences.

Being out provided an opportunity for me to get myself and two other gay employees on the interview list. I'm not sure how influential our opinions were in the whole process, but the final report from the team called for changing Shell's nondiscrimination policy to include sexual orientation. Effective April 15, 1996, that change occurred.

Coming out isn't standing out. If you're an exceptional employee, you already stand out. Coming out is being yourself, and being comfortable in a work environment that allows one to contribute to his or her full potential. It's not asking for special privileges because you're different, it's simply expecting the respect and opportunities offered everyone else.

Coming out wasn't over at the end of that day after telling my peers I was gay. That was the day it started, and it's been a continuing process ever since, a process I don't regret.

Changing the nondiscrimination policy may seem trivial to some, but for an oil and gas giant like Shell, it's a major step—one that very few oil companies have been willing to take.

Rick Schroder chairs the Corporate Policy Research Committee of the Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

Coaching

Continued from page 55

Dennis have opted to work with a coach because it is helping them to clarify their visions and develop the courage to do what they really want to do.

The second step in the process of personal and professional change grounds clarity and gives it focus and direction. This step is known as *aiming*. Aiming is about focusing your thoughts and feelings on what you want. The combination of quality thinking, planning, and clear vision creates an environment of possibility and generates power through focused attention. Clients say that coaches are very helpful at this phase because of the coaches' ability to help them keep focus, create manageable tasks, and go toward outcomes that are most in alignment with personal values.

As clients master aiming, they are ready to take *action*. This may call for taking risks, moving out of their comfort zone, and for continued courage to confront their biggest fears. In working with clients who are making changes, coaches differ from therapists in that they are not trying to heal emotional problems. Instead, they are focused on keeping the client on track and walking through their "stops." Being "in action" can include such things as the client and coach working on marketing strategies or working out the "kinks" in moving from being a sole proprietor to being an employer to researching organizational psychology as a new career option for a frustrated engineer. Here are a few things a coach might tell you about being in action:

- Design your vision and keep it in focus.
- Review your plan routinely and revise it as you learn.
- Celebrate your big and small wins.
- Ask for help and be open to receive it.
- Have some fun with all this!

Of all the challenges individuals face in the coaching process, the biggest challenge is selecting a coach. Professional coaching is a developing profession, and as such, coaches come to it from a variety of backgrounds, styles, and disciplines, including psychology, business consulting, stress management, and even massage therapy. However, there are formal coach training programs such as Coach University (now in its fifth year) and groups such as the Professional & Personal Coaches Association and the International Coach Federation, which has developed a certification process and examination for professional coaches.

Here are some helpful tips, if you are considering working with a coach:

- Ask all coaches for references and a listing of past experience.
- Ask specifically about the coach's training as a coach.
- Look for a coach whose style matches your needs.
- Consider a three-month trial period of coaching to see how you and your coach work together.

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What a World, What a World...

Get this. I'm going to the prom.

Before you get any bright ideas, no, I am not dating a high school senior. Don't believe everything you hear. I am, however, going to indulge myself in an event I was not privy to as a high school student.

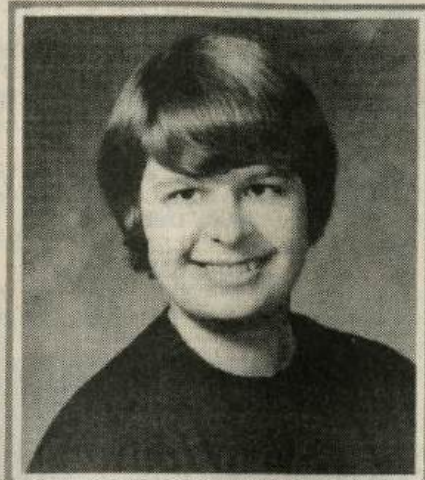
On Saturday night, June 8, H.A.T.C.H. (Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals) presents Prom '96 at the Majestic Metro, 911 Preston Avenue. It's the prom for any homo who is a student or alumni of Hetero High. That would be you, I'd wager. At a mere \$15 per ticket (\$5 for youth), the event benefits H.A.T.C.H. and provides a major portion of its financial needs for the year. For reservations and sponsorship information, call Tom Stanley at 713/942-7002.

All this prom talk, memories lighting the corners of my mind, prompted me to flip through my senior high school yearbook. That's South Range High School Class of '72, in case it ever comes up in a dyke trivia game. In a graduating class of 99, only one other female classmate, Mary Louise B., had a haircut similar to mine. After high school she left Ohio, and at some point played trumpet in a Washington, D.C.-based gay and lesbian marching band. Imagine that.

Picture it—northeastern Ohio, May, 1972. A Tuesday, let's say. There I was, about to embark upon life's

great adventure, armed with the best high school education Ohio tax dollars could buy. As spring sprang, the promise of prom loomed.

Described in my high school yearbook as "one last reckless fling," my senior prom was probably typical of most small-town Midwest proms. Dinner and dancing in the banquet room of the nicest, biggest restaurant in town that isn't a Sizzler Steak House; After Prom at the bowling alley. After that, adulthood.



by Nancy Ford (circa 1972)

All my girlfriends (a phrase which now means something much different than it did then) were in the library, giggling and talking about their new frocks for "the fling." Or maybe they were smoking and counting the days since their last periods—who knows? Anyway, though I suspected that my best friend and I were "more than just friends,"

same haircut Mary Louise B. and I did. He was probably a lesbian, too.

Proms have traditionally meant trouble for queers. In Dallas in early May, the Texas Lesbian Conference was unknowingly booked at the same hotel—same time, same place—as a local senior prom. Tee hee. Though unconfirmed, the story goes that the management of said hotel requested the conferees stay on their own side of the hotel. Do they ask that of Dianetics or Amway conventions? Now, *they* recruit.

Did it ever occur to said, sad hotel that some of those promsters might choose to check out No Man's Land (so to speak) for themselves. Perhaps there are a couple of naive but adventurous lesbians—between two and ten percent, let's say—who are "more than just friends." Maybe they wanted to go to their high school prom *together*, but settled to double-date with male proxies just to be able to share a table, if not a slow dance. It might even have been good for them to see lesbian adults, proud of who they are and

who they are with, in a public, social, and financially viable setting.

To any of you reading this who always wished you could have gone to your prom with who you wanted to go to your prom with, I hope I see you at Prom '96. I hope my date wears a pastel tux

and a ruffled shirt. I hope she brings me a corsage and keeps me out way past curfew. I hope she doesn't get me drunk and pregnant, which is precisely what happened to a couple of those aforementioned girlfriends of mine.

The simple fact that my date for the prom is a *she* is plenty for me.

Plus the corsage, that is. ▼

Nancy Ford is a comedian and writer. She will tell jokes and dance with girls at Prom '96.

Prom '72

cheesy crepe paper decorations
military in Vietnam
Karen Carpenter
pet rocks
pastel tuxes and ruffled shirts
Bob Dole

Prom '96

cheese crepes
gays in military
Mary Chapin Carpenter
crack
vintage pastel tuxes and ruffled shirts
vintage Bob Dole

going to the prom together would have been a post-Beatles, pre-disco impossible dream. In 1972, I was not quite the rad dyke I am today. Not that you could tell from that haircut.

Now I understand. This explains things. Evidently, being deprived in my youth of "one last, reckless fling" has caused me to seek it in adulthood like a Holy Grail.

Oh sure, I could have prommed—with a boy. A nice boy. But who wanted to dance with boys? Come to think of it, he had the

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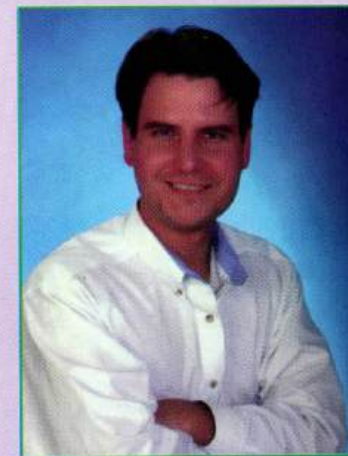
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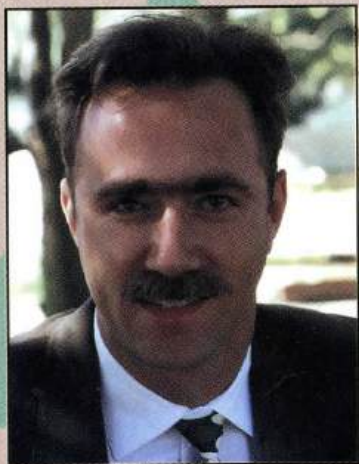
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