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Parade Photos! Page 28



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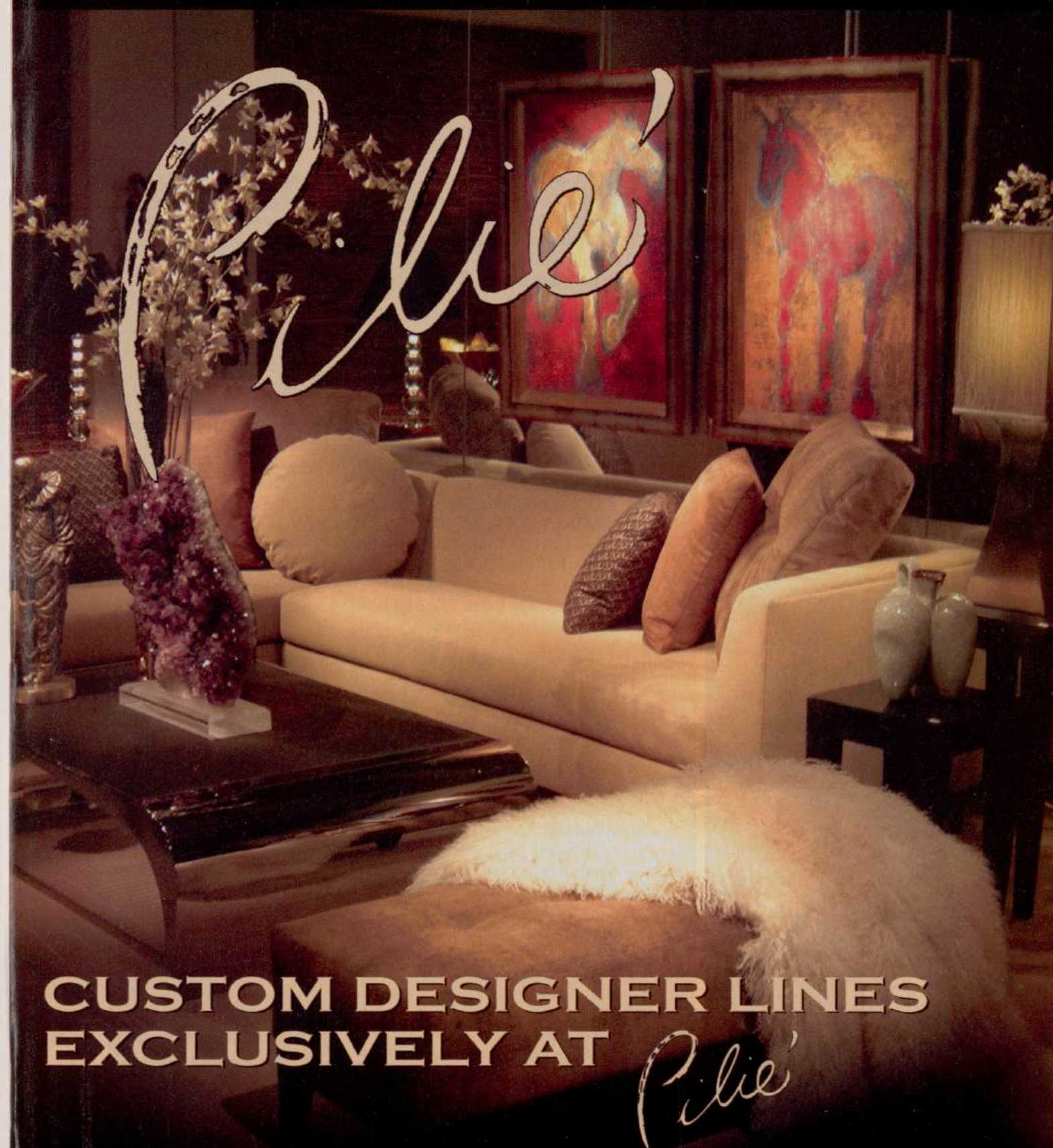


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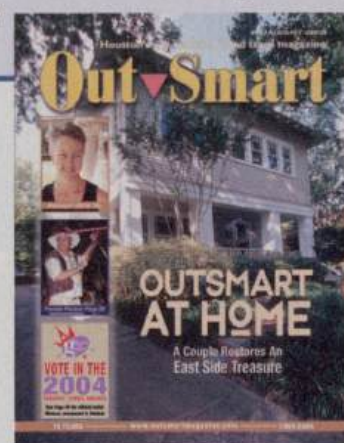
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About the cover:

Bob Jackson photographed the Eastwood residence featured this month in OutSmart at Home. Inset photos: Lynne Huffer (top) by Steven David, Pride parade (center) by Yvonne Feece. Design: klumpcreative

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Letters

PARADE PRIDE

It seems only appropriate that I write to you on the day [July 4] that America celebrates its hard-won freedom from oppression. On a holiday set aside for us to be thankful of our independence, I write to you with equal thanks and respect.

I moved to Houston less than a year ago and had never been to or experienced a Pride parade. To be honest, I didn't know what to expect despite my 40 years as a gay man. While I've never had to suffer the ignominy of the proverbial "closet," I've always lived in fairly conservative locales. It just never occurred to me that being gay was something that could be celebrated with the love and support of a larger community.

When I decided to go and see the parade, I was admittedly nervous and even a bit self-conscious. I could not have been prepared for the wonderful time that ensued. People from all walks of life, gay, straight, and everything in between, gathered together to have a special time without fear or the threat of violence.

After the parade, I came home and took to the Internet to find out who had helped to sponsor the Pride parade in Houston. It took me a week to look up all of the addresses, but I felt it important that you know how grateful even one person was for your involvement.

Thank you for taking a role in creating an event that reaches out to so many people to foster an environment of mutual respect and increased community. Not everyone, business or individual, would opt to reach out to the public in such a way. Your willingness to be a part of the celebration, to put yourself out there, is a blessing to be cherished.

Scot W. Myers
Houston

LOOKING FOR GURLZ

I just caught Collin McClure's terrific article on Gurlfriendz ["Ready to Rock" June], and I was hoping to get in touch with and the members of the band. Any information that you can supply would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Sarafina Maraschino
San Francisco

EDITOR'S NOTE: We forwarded contact info to Maraschino, who is a member of the transgender group Lipstick Conspiracy, which McClure mentioned in his article.

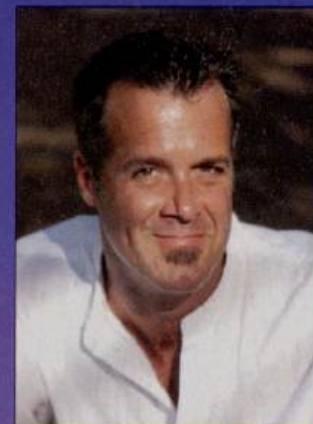
THAT'S GREAT!

Make your voice heard with your sacred vote. No, not for president, though that will be important. Complete the annual Gayest & Greatest reader-survey ballot on page 49. You can also submit the ballot online at www.outsmartmagazine.com, mail a ballot to our office, or fill out a ballot at one of six voting parties:

- August 7 Undercurrent, Galveston
- August 13 Hollywood Book & Café
- August 11 Chances
- August 11 JR's Bar & Grill
- August 16 Meteor
- August 17 Hollywood Restaurant

Check the ballot for details. Voting deadline is August 20. Look for the results in our eighth annual Gayest & Greatest section in the October *OutSmart*. ■

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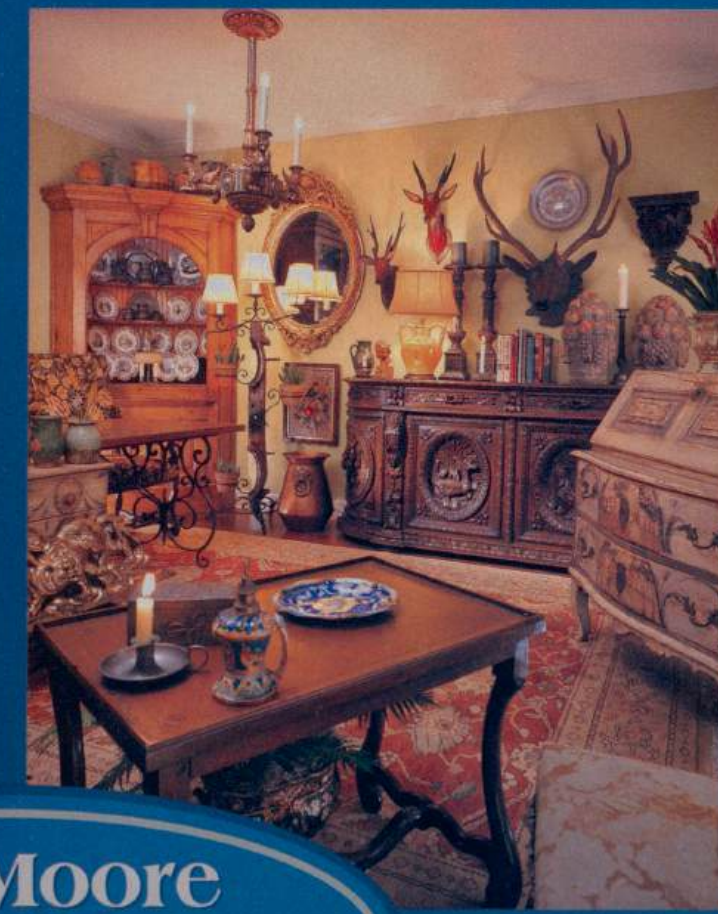
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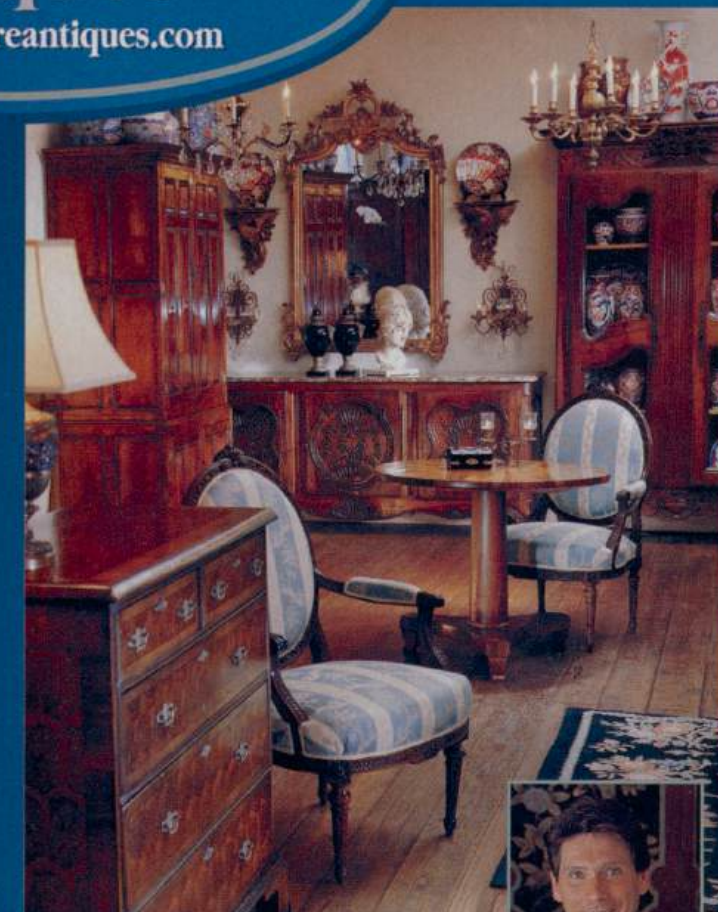
BENT, NOT BROKEN. Steve Bullitt (c), Joe Angel Babb (r), and Brady Alland appear in the Theatre New West production of *Bent*, opening at Holocaust Museum Houston on August 19 (rescheduled from last month). Joe Watts directs the searing Martin Sherman drama about gay men confronting the horror of the Third Reich, presented in conjunction with the museum exhibition *Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933-1945* ("Dark Memories," June *OutSmart*). Theatre New West will give additional performances on August 24, 29, and 31 (admission by donation; reservations: 713/522-2204, 713/942-8000 ext. 103). Watts may then present a longer run at a local theater.

Photographed by John Conroy



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NEW MUSIC. Fans of the popular, now disbanded, local six-gal band Cowboy's Nightmare will want to catch The Fematics. This new group consists of four members of the old band, originally formed 10 years ago to play for a gay pride celebration—which was rained out, recalls drummer Joni Lovvorn. The new band (previously known by the temporary name Girls of Cowboy's Nightmare) rocked the crowd in front of Chances at this year's parade. The gals—(clockwise from seated, left) Dana Starr, Shauna Pryor, Ramona Gerene, and Lovvorn—will perform at the Chances 10th-anniversary party on August 14.

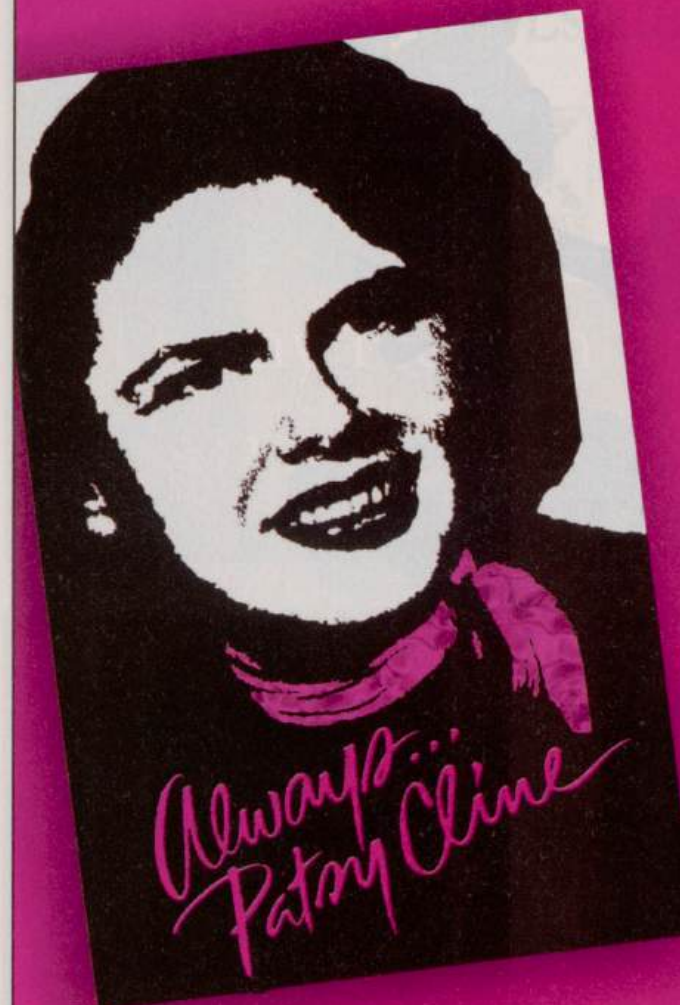
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• On Aug. 7, **Log Cabin Republicans-Houston** will meet at River Café, 3 p.m., with national board members from Texas to express views on whether Log Cabin should endorse George W. Bush for re-election. Info: Shari Goldsberry, shari2600@yahoo.com.

• On Aug. 14, **Holocaust Museum Houston** sponsors an 8 p.m. discussion and signing at Borders Westheimer of *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich*, the new book by Houston Community College history prof Irene Guenther. Details: 713/782-6066.

• On Aug. 21, **Galveston Arts Center** hosts *Starry Summer Night*, an art auction benefiting education outreach programming, with 5:30 p.m. preview and 7 p.m. live auction. Details: 409/763-2403, www.galvestonartscenter.org.

• **Houston Big Men's Club** hosts its monthly social on Aug 21, 7 p.m., at the Houston GLBT Community Center. Details: information@houstonbigmensclub.org.

• **Women in the Visual & Literary Arts** presents *Art for the Heart*, an exhibition in Heritage Hall, JPMorgan Chase Building, through Aug. 27.

• The local chapter of **Run Against Bush**, a grassroots effort to unite runners, joggers, and walkers in a national campaign, has begun meeting every Saturday, 9 a.m., in Memorial Park. More info: Bob Levy 281/468-6745, boblevy@hal-pc.org, www.RunAgainstBush.org.

• **Houston Gay & Lesbian Parents** have resumed family dinners on the fourth Wednesday of the month, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at Café Express River Oaks. Details: Joe Milano, 713/528-2085 or joe@milanofamily.com.

• The inter-denominational **Cathedral of the Holy Spirit** worships every Sunday, 6:30 p.m., and Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. Details: 832/372-6300, www.CathedraloftheHolySpirit.org. ■

MICKEY BUSINESS



Lone Star, by local artist Kermit Eisenhut, is one of fifteen 6-foot statues of Mickey Mouse traveling to Houston this month as part of the 75th-anniversary celebration of the Walt Disney icon. The statues will be on display at Plaza in the Park, August 20–October 21. All 75 of the Mickey Mouse figures on view around the country, including many designed by celebrities, will be auctioned in 2005 with proceeds benefiting charities designated by the artists. Eisenhut has selected Texas Children's Cancer Center.

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IMPERILED AIDS TROUBLE FUND SETS BENEFIT

The Colt 45's AIDS Trouble Fund, which has helped hundreds of people living with HIV/AIDS since early in the epidemic, now finds itself low on funds for the direct client services that it offers. To raise money, the nonprofit group will stage *A Bare Bones Benefit* on August 8, 6 p.m., at Brazos River Bottom.

"We are down to the bare bones in emergency rental and utility assistance for our disabled clients living with AIDS," Trouble Fund chair Rose Smith reports. "We've had to cut our assistance levels in order to compensate for the increase in client load and decreases in charitable donations due to budget cuts with other agencies."

The AIDS Trouble Fund, a program of the Colt 45's, provides temporary, emergency financial assistance for people with AIDS on disability who are unable to pay for basic necessities, including rent and utility payments. ■

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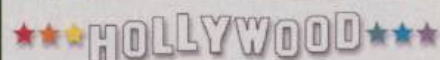
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WEDDED MISS

The commander in chief defends marriage, but from what?

George W. Bush has never been accused of being intellectually honest. How could he be? He's neither an intellectual nor honest. But politically, he's not stupid. He'll take whatever position he must if he thinks it will help get him reelected. Right now, the hot-button issue is same-sex marriage. Bush and his handlers have apparently come to believe it is a cultural issue that will drive voters into Bush's column on Election Day.

Initially, when asked a few months ago about the need for a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, Bush reserved judgment. But now that the election is heating up and Bush needs to shore up his base, he has begun pushing for a constitutional amendment to define marriage as "a union between a man and a woman."

In support of his argument for amending the Constitution, Bush has stated that the nation needs an amendment because "mar-

riage is the basis of an orderly society, and [is] the defining promise of a life." He added, "For ages, in every culture, human beings have understood that traditional marriage is critical to the well-being of families," and "is also critical to the health of society." He concluded, "Our policies should aim to strengthen families, not undermine them. And changing the definition of traditional marriage will undermine the family structure."

Most of Bush's statements could be argued in support of same-sex marriage. If traditional marriage is "the basis of an orderly society," why not let gays and lesbians marry and be part of that orderly society, instead of the promiscuous miscreants the religious right makes us out to be? If marriage is "critical to the well-being of families," then it is critical to let same-sex couples with children marry since the well-being of those families is important,

too. And if "our policies should aim to strengthen families, not undermine them," then why not let same-sex couples marry and strengthen our families?

And before Bush runs around and starts touting "traditional marriage" as an institution that can't be changed, he should crack the seal on that Bible he beats people over the head with and read it. If he does, he will discover that "marriage" is a concept that has repeatedly changed over time to become the "tradition" it is today.

Indeed, if Bush would read his Bible, he might learn that wise old King Solomon had multiple wives. The Samaritan married five times. And both Abraham and Jacob had more than two wives. Hell, Bush's brother Neil just got married for the second time, after acknowledging during his divorce proceeding that he slept with prostitutes while married to his first wife. Which one of Neil's

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REAGAN AND AIDS

The former president's death prompts a re-assessment of the record

For gay Americans, any evaluation of Ronald Reagan's legacy begins and ends with his record on AIDS. According to the conventional view, Reagan was responsible for the deaths of thousands of gay men.

On the official day of national mourning for Reagan, the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force closed its office to mourn those who have died of AIDS. Executive director Matt Foreman issued an open letter blasting the president for "years of White House silence and inaction." Eric Rofes, a gay author, complained that Reagan "said nothing and did nothing" about AIDS.

But Foreman and some other critics have gone even further, suggesting that criminal malevolence and antigay bigotry drove Reagan administration policies on AIDS. "I wouldn't feel so angry if the Reagan administration's failing was due to ignorance or bureaucratic ineptitude," Foreman wrote in

his open letter. "No, . . . we knew then it was deliberate." According to Wayne Besen, a former spokesperson for the Human Rights Campaign and author, "We were considered expendable and forsaken by the President." Larry Kramer wrote in *The Advocate* that Reagan was a "murderer," worse even than Adolf Hitler.

Though exaggerated and somewhat misplaced, the negligence theory is arguable. The malice theory is not supportable.

First, it's untrue that the Reagan administration "said nothing" in response to the disease. In June 1983, a year before the virus that causes AIDS had even been publicly identified, Reagan's secretary of Health and Human Services, Margaret Heckler, announced at the U.S. Conference of Mayors that the department "considers AIDS its number-one health priority." She specifically praised "the excellent work done by gay networks around the nation" that had

spread information about the disease.

Despite the oft-repeated claim that Reagan himself didn't mention AIDS publicly until 1987, he actually first discussed it at a press conference in September 1985. Responding to a reporter's question about the need for more funding, Reagan accurately noted that the federal government had already spent more than half a billion dollars on AIDS up to that point. "So, this is a top priority with us," Reagan said. "Yes, there's no question about the seriousness of this and the need to find an answer."

Still, Reagan could have said more. He could have offered sympathy for the dying and inveighed against discrimination. He could have urged prevention education. A master at using the bully pulpit for causes he believed in, Reagan manifestly failed to use it on the subject of AIDS.

In this, it must be noted, he was hardly alone. Most politicians of the age either →



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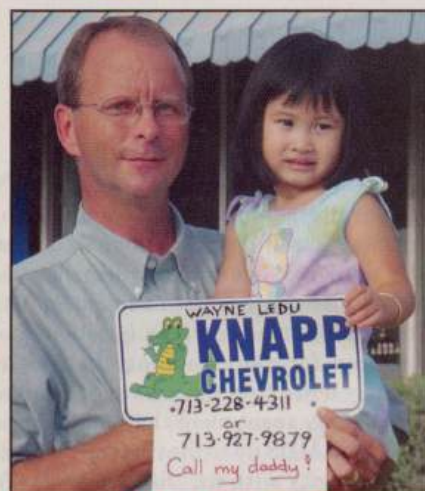
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marriages qualifies as the traditional one?

Marriage does not need Dubya to defend it. It has endured for thousands of years. It has transformed from a concept that included polygamy to one that permits a man to be married to one woman—at a time. It has survived individuals who have had multiple divorces between trips to the sacred altar (Newt Gingrich, Liz Taylor, Donald Trump). It has accepted annulments for individuals who went out single in Vegas and woke up hitched (Britney), or for individuals who just didn't want to count their years of marital bliss as a marriage (Rudy Giuliani, dissolving his 14-year marriage to his second cousin).

Marriage has withstood being used as a ploy for foreign individuals who want to move to America and gain instant citizenship by marrying an American they hardly know to providing cover for gay politicians seeking a Senate seat (Michael Huffington, Arianna's ex, came out and got a divorce after losing his bid to unseat Dianne Feinstein). If one thing has been proven over time, it is that marriage is tough. Marriage will endure.

Still, if Bush is really serious about defending marriage, and he really wants to be intellectually honest, he will support a constitutional amendment that defines marriage as "a monogamous lifetime union between a man and a woman." That would really be defending traditional marriage from the abuse it has suffered at the hands of straight couples for thousands of years.

If marriage can tolerate heterosexual couples, it can tolerate same-sex couples. There's nothing we can do to the concept of marriage that straight people haven't already done to it themselves.

Writing from the liberal side, Houston attorney Daryl Moore has a general practice and is board certified in civil appellate law.

OutRight continued from previous page

failed to grasp the seriousness of AIDS or, grasping it, were reluctant to discuss openly a disease spread primarily through anal sex and dirty needles. For years, New York City mayor Ed Koch, a liberal Democrat presiding over the epicenter of the disease, refused even to meet with AIDS groups. AIDS was not mentioned from the podium of either national party convention in 1984. "Silence" about AIDS was a national failing, not one peculiar to Reagan.

Second, it's untrue that the Reagan administration "did nothing" in response to the disease. Deroy Murdock, a gay-friendly conservative columnist, has reviewed federal spending on AIDS programs during

the Reagan years. According to Murdock, annual spending rose from \$8 million in 1982 to more than \$2.3 billion in 1989. In all, the federal government spent almost \$6 billion on AIDS during Reagan's tenure.

It's true that Congress repeatedly added to low-ball Reagan budget requests for AIDS. But that is a familiar dynamic between any White House and any Congress: The White House under-funds a program knowing that Congress will add to any proposal. In the 1990s, for example, the Republican Congress added to Bill Clinton's budget requests for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program.

Reagan's stinginess on AIDS funding, if that's what it was, was not due to antigay malevolence, but was an extension of his stinginess on funding other domestic programs. In this, too, Reagan was not alone. In his book *And the Band Played On*, Randy Shilts notes that in 1983 New York governor Mario Cuomo, a hero to liberals, nixed (on fiscal grounds) the Republican-dominated state senate's bid to spend \$5.2 million on AIDS research and prevention programs. Cuomo's state health commissioner responded to criticism by saying that hypertension was a more important health issue for the state.

Yes, we could have spent more, but that can always be said of federal spending. And it's unclear that additional funding would have accomplished much. "You could have poured half the national budget into AIDS in 1983, and it would have gone down a rat hole," says Michael Fumento, an author specializing in health and science issues. We simply didn't know enough about the disease early on to spend huge sums wisely.

Gay journalist Bob Roehr, who has closely followed AIDS developments for 20 years, concurs. "I have little reason to believe that a different course of action by Reagan would have significantly altered the scientific state of knowledge" toward a cure or vaccine, he says.

Aside from spending, it was Reagan's surgeon general who sent the first-ever bulletin to all American homes warning explicitly about AIDS transmission. Reagan created the first presidential commission dealing with AIDS. And, in 1988, Reagan barred discrimination against federal employees with HIV.

As for Reagan being a murderer, we should remember that he didn't give anybody AIDS. We ourselves bear the lion's share of responsibility for that.

Writing from the conservative side, Dale Carpenter began his column for OutSmart in 1994, when he lived in Houston. Now residing in Minneapolis, Carpenter is a University of Minnesota Law School professor.



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by Annise D. Parker

POLITICAL MOM

The controller shares her family's adoption story

The Road to Adoption

Daddy Les taught me to fish, to love baseball, and to play chess. I handed him tools while he worked and followed him everywhere I could. I was lucky to have a father like Daddy Les. He raised me and nurtured me.

We weren't related by blood, as I am to my biological father, wherever he is. Daddy Les married my mom when I was 3 and formally adopted me (and my little sister) when I was 12.

There are many ways to make a family, and many kinds of families.

December 6, 2003, was one of the proudest nights of my life. I had just won the runoff for Houston city controller. Family and friends stood beside me on stage as I introduced my life partner, Kathy Hubbard, and my new daughters Marquitta, 8, and Daniela, 13, to the world. The morning paper carried the photo of our increasingly common American family.

Kathy never thought she wanted children. I am either very persuasive or I just wore her down over the 12 years we discussed it off and on. As difficult as raising any child can be, the biggest hurdle may have been the early adoption discussions between two middle-aged, career-oriented lesbians! We weren't getting any younger. We agreed to seek to adopt older kids in the United States.

Most of us know people in the community who have adopted children. It's reaching epidemic proportions! Like most states, Texas doesn't ban gay adoptions. Potential parents find kids privately, through this or other states' agencies or abroad. The need for good homes in this country alone is staggering. There were 130,000 children in foster care in 2002. About 50,000 were adopted.

In Texas, most foster kids are older (2-17), minorities, and have troubled pasts. To improve the odds, President Bush increased funding for adoptions, made them easier, and created a special website, www.adoptuskids.org.

Adopt 2000

In January of 2001, we filed papers through Adopt 2000 (www.adopt2000houston.org), an organization established to streamline the process and enhance cooperation among local adoption agencies to try to dramatically increase the number of adoptions. The alliance represents seven Houston adoption agencies, including Catholic Charities, DePelchin, and Spaulding for Children, and works with the Department of Family & Protective Services (formerly Child Protective Services) to place children who are in state custody and available for adoption. →

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InsideOut continued from previous page

We chose Spaulding as our adoption agency. I began the process by applying to be a single adoptive parent, living in an openly lesbian relationship with my life partner. The first step was completing a preliminary questionnaire and a criminal background check. From the very beginning, Kathy and I intended to co-parent, and all the agencies treated us equally. Since this state doesn't acknowledge our relationship, I was the adoptive parent on all the paperwork. (As you might have read in the *Chronicle*, we planned to file this way because conservative Republican judges in Harris County won't allow gay or lesbian couples to adopt jointly.) I finalized the adoption in November 2003. Kathy formally adopted the girls this July in San Antonio. Like Austin and Dallas, San Antonio hasn't been bitten by the Harris County strain of judicial homophobia.

Getting Things Done

Parenting classes are mandatory. We waited for the next cycle to start. We were a little nervous about our first class. Out of 10 couples and a few single parents, we were the only GLBT couple, but not the oldest. Our classmates included several couples in their mid-50s.

The classes seemed designed to scare the hell out of us. They focused on the traumas that most kids in the state foster care system have experienced and the kinds of scars, literal and figurative, those traumas can leave. We were taught techniques for dealing with a range of possible behaviors, from difficult to dangerous to disgusting. Adopting special-needs children is definitely not for the faint of heart!

The Home Study

After we made it through the initial checks and the classes, the real process started. We completed a very detailed questionnaire, and we each wrote a personal essay about our families. We were asked to be very honest about the type of child we wanted—age, race, gender, disabilities.

We scheduled a home visit with the caseworker Spaulding assigned us. First crisis: She never showed up for the appointment. We finally called and were informed she had had a medical emergency. We were assigned a new caseworker. We waited a few more weeks. It was a nerve-racking but relatively painless process. The caseworker observes your living conditions. And she asks everything: What kind of discipline would you give a child?

How were you disciplined as a child? What was your upbringing like? Why do you want to adopt? How strong is your relationship? What are your attitudes about sex? Kathy and I were interviewed together and individually.

Waiting

The agency had warned us the process could take a while. It had taken us eight months to get to the point of waiting for a child. Parents can either submit preferences and let their caseworker search for children or look through pictures and profiles on websites. We were approved for one or two children, 2 to 10 years old, of any race. We waited. And waited. And waited through summer and early fall. When I asked the social worker, he said he had kept our home study out of the local pool for adoptions to protect my privacy because I was such a well-known lesbian elected official.

To Be Continued...

I'll finish this story next month, even though you know how it ends.

Annise Parker is city controller and the highest-ranking openly GLBT elected official in any of the 10 largest U.S. cities. Her city website is www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/controller.

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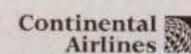
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MY STORY

"I made it. I stand victorious."

Matt, 18*

My name is Matt, and I would like to talk to you about how being bisexual has affected my life and everyone around me. It all started when I was in the eighth grade. I started noticing that I was staring at the other guys in the locker room (and I am not talking about your friendly hello stare either). My friend noticed that I was "checking out" the other guys. I tried to deny myself the pleasure of being bisexual by lying and saying I was "straight." It wasn't till later on when I finally came out that I understood that when a person lies to himself, it only gets suppressed deep in the subconscious and starts to eat him alive.

Since I have come out, people have asked me if I am gay, which football jock I would sleep with, if I have multiple sex partners, and whether I go to "gay clubs." Now, hearing all these questions might spark some anger in some people, but the truth is that a lot of straight peoples' perception of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning community is that we only live for sex, drugs, and rock and roll (which some of us do), but that's not even close to the truth. I mean, we have emotional feelings and experience anger, joy, lust, and even depression just like they do. The only difference is that we like the same sex, both sexes, or we're just not sure what we want.

Now, I was only in the eighth grade, and I had just lost my grandfather two years earlier. I had a lot of emotional baggage to handle, so imagine what it was like to suddenly realize that you are also either gay or bisexual. It was a really tough trans-action that has changed my life. I am happy to say that now I have fully discovered who I am and what I am about. It has taken a lot for me to get here, but I made it. I stand victorious while most of the other people from eighth grade are living miserable lives.

Another interesting thing happened to me before I got to this point. When I was

starting my first semester as a graduating senior, I went through a really tough and difficult time. I wasn't accepting that I was bisexual. I wanted to be "normal" like the rest of the student body. I kept hearing different things like, "Oh, you're gay" or "Well, at least I am normal and come from a normal family." That was very, very degrading, not only to me, but also to all the other gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in the school. I mean, there is no such thing as normal when it comes to one's life and personal choices. I didn't know where to turn or where to go. I felt like my family hated me and always wanted to put the blame on me, so I ran away and turned to drugs and alcohol to try and solve my problems. As it turned out, that only made

things more complicated. I started by missing one day of school—that one turned into three, the three into four, the four into five, and so on. I missed from November 2003 until January 2004. I almost didn't graduate and went back to school with a "well, if I don't graduate this year, then screw it" attitude. I cursed out teachers and got an attitude because I thought I wasn't going to graduate. But as I had the good fortune of knowing Bertiss Norris (my teacher since seventh grade), I graduated on time with the class of 2004.

Since I have come out, I have noticed that I have been extremely happy, worked harder in all my classes, and started to become more active in my community. I am currently a member of the H.A.T.C.H. Youth Steering Committee and a member of my school's GSA. I would also like to say that I have only achieved these feats with inner strength and with an incredible will to survive and the support of my family and friends. There have been many times when I thought of hurting myself or worse. Without my mom or stepmom, there is no way I would have made it this far. And without my sister, I would still be out on the street doing drugs and alcohol. I kept thinking to myself that I could

not trust anybody, that I was alone. Well, as it turned out, I was not alone. In fact, I had more support from friends than anybody I know from my school. I have learned that when a person is in greatest need, his mother will always be there no matter what the situation. A mom can be a powerful aid when you need her. And that will end my story. Just remember, your mother will always be there, even miles away.

Some of the writers involved with H.A.T.C.H. contribute a regular column to OutSmart. The phone number for the Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals is 713/529-3590.

**Because of the age of the writers and the need many have for confidentiality, OutSmart will identify most H.A.T.C.H. contributors by first names only.*



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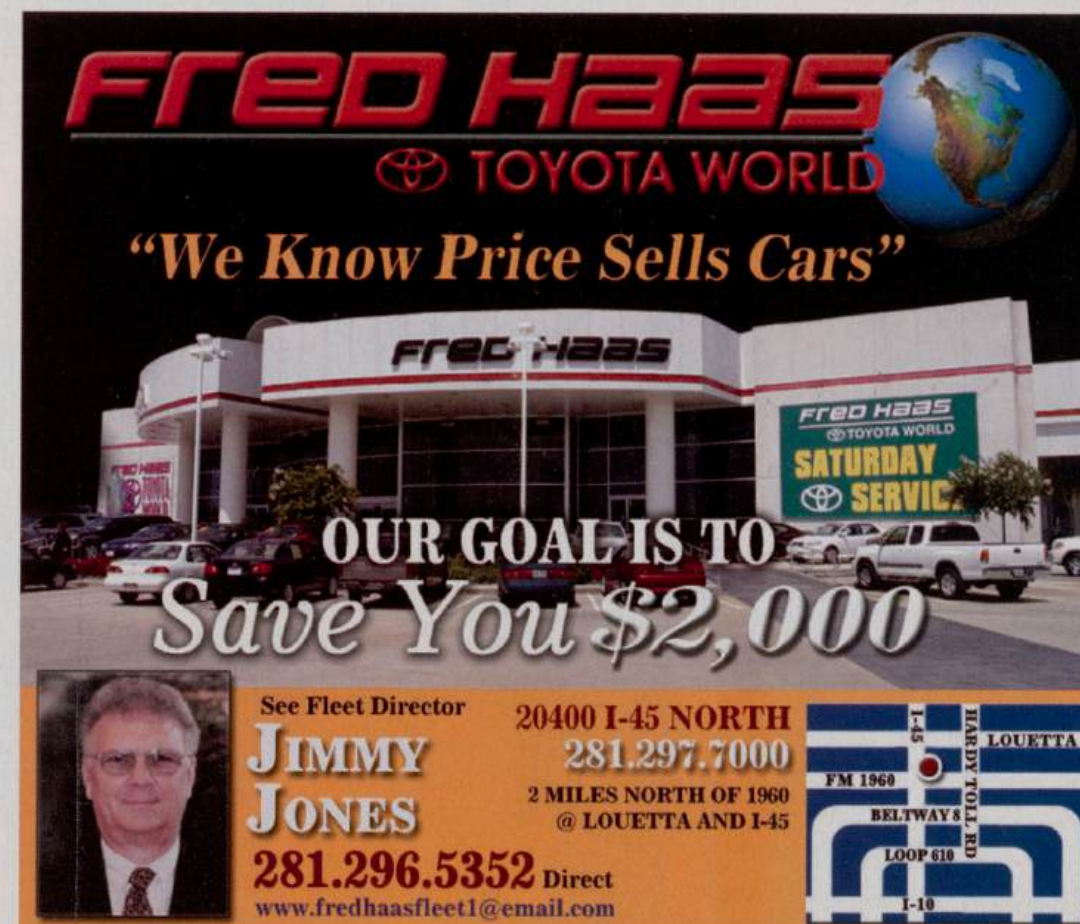


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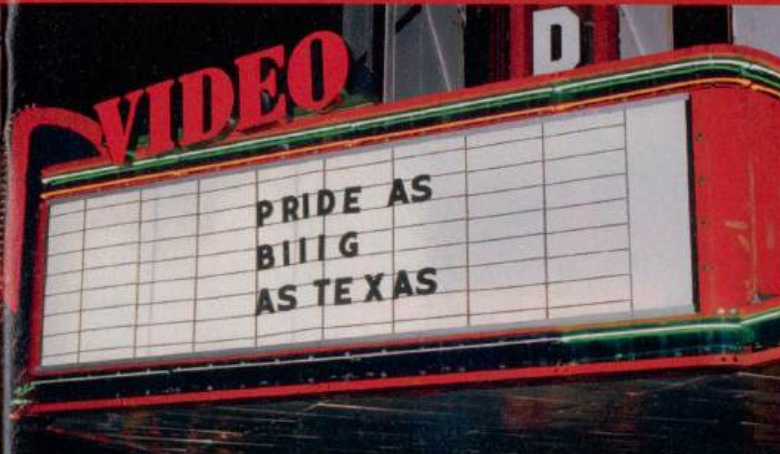
Steady rain soaked Montrose in the week leading up to the June 26 GLBT Pride Parade. But on Saturday the rain held off. The precipitation perhaps deterred some people, which seemed smaller than last year's throng, though every bit as enthusiastic.

Bill White became the first mayor to walk in the annual parade. Earlier mayors had traveled the route by car, a distinction without much difference—except to some local rabble on the right, which for some inscrutable reason seemed more offended by White's on-foot jaunt.

On these pages, a few scenes from the parade.



*Photos by
Dalton DeHart
and Yvonne Feece*



More photos

Don't Rain on Our Parade!!

continued from previous page



THE WINNERS

The judges evaluated the 137 parade entries and bestowed 13 awards:

- Judy Garland (best performance): **Krewe of the Moons of Uranus**
- Rainbow (best lighting): **Bering Memorial United Methodist Church**
- Ruby Slipper (best walking): **Continental Airlines**
- Fabulous (best costume): **Smirnoff / Diageo**
- Stonewall (best social commentary): **Holiday Inn & Suites Galleria**
- Pride as Big as Texas (best interpretation of theme): **EJ's**

- Aria (best creative sound): **Houston Pride Band**
- Pink Diamond (best for-profit float): **JPMorgan Chase**
- Priscilla (best nonprofit float): **Community Gospel Church**
- Spirit of Montrose (best overall entry): **Krewe of Olympus**
- Judges Choice: **Countrywide Home Loans**
- Judges Choice: **Halloween Magic**
- Judges Choice: **Unity Through Sports**

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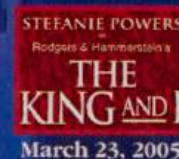
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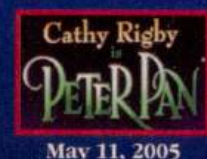
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Going to the Chapel?

Not yet, but at least some news is good on the gay-marriage front

Last month, the Republican-led effort to bring the Federal Marriage Amendment to the Senate floor failed, thanks in part to some GOP senators who defected from the president's camp and voted no. Give no thanks to our state's senators, however. Not only did both John Cornyn and Kay Bailey Hutchison vote yes, they helped lead the charge.

But don't order that frame for your legal-binding marriage certificate yet.

There is a long, difficult slog ahead. And rest assured that the right wing and the religious right will continue to use the same-sex marriage issue as a tool for attempting to inflame and frighten the electorate and to make money. Things promise to get ugly before this presidential election—and beyond.

"An informed community is a strong community," as radio host Cindy Freedman states every week on This

Way Out (airing on KPFT's Queer Voices). With that in mind, we offer some recently received same-sex wedding books—some educational, some inspirational. Jonathan Rauch provides an excerpt from his compelling new book, *Gay Marriage: Why It Is Good for Gays, Good for Straights, and Good for America*. Then in a compelling essay, Lynne Huffer offers an entirely different take on the issue—though certainly not the Republican one.

In his new book *Gay Marriage: Why It Is Good for Gays, Good for Straights, and Good for America*, Jonathan Rauch makes an impassioned case for legalizing same-gender bonds. Here, an excerpt.

Try to imagine life without marriage. If today you are married, imagine that tomorrow, as though in a Kafka tale, you wake up to find that your marriage has never occurred. Moreover, your marriage cannot occur. There is no one for you to marry, or at least no way for you to marry the person you love.

Your spouse may still be with you but now is not your spouse at all, but your "partner," or your girlfriend or boyfriend or companion or live-in lover or significant other or just, so to speak, your squeeze. You are not exactly sure how to introduce this person. You and your companion may think of yourselves as married, but your friends and family and coworkers may not see you and your partner (or is it companion? or lover? or friend?) as married, and certainly the government and the law do not. Then again, perhaps you are single. Without the special bonds of marriage, and without the familial and social and legal support which marriage conveys, your relationship broke up during a bad patch a few years back. Now you are unattached, possibly looking for someone—someone whom you know you cannot marry. You are no longer a single person looking to marry or between marriages. You are between "relationships." That is not the same thing. Your future has changed, probably not for the better.

Now push your imagination a step further. Erase marriage not just from your present but from your past. Imagine looking back on a childhood and youth without the prospect of marriage. From the dawn of adolescence, when you first felt the beat of love in your breast, you have known that you would never marry anyone you felt passion for. Your first kiss was a kiss →



Jonathan Rauch is a correspondent for *The Atlantic Monthly*, a senior writer and columnist for *National Journal*, and a writer in residence at the Brookings Institution. He is the author of several previous books on public policy, culture, and economics, including, most recently, *Government's End: Why Washington Stopped Working*. He is vice president of the Independent Gay Forum and lives outside Washington, D.C.

gay marriage

*Why It Is Good for Gays,
Good for Straights, and
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JONATHAN RAUCH

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BOOKS Planning, Pictures, and Politics

Gay and Lesbian Weddings: Planning the Perfect Same-Sex Ceremony

David Toussaint with Heather Leo



So, you're looking for a wedding planner, something short of Martin Short—no pun intended—or J.Lo? Well, *Gay and Lesbian Weddings* (Ballantine Books, www.ballantinebooks.com) may just be the only planner you'll ever need! From announcements to

invitations, to caterers and honeymooning with your honey, Toussaint and Leo cover it all and everything in between. Having planned and planned and even carried out my own big fat "Jewish" wedding, I read this book with a keen and sometimes jaded eye but, overall, I wasn't disappointed. The authors definitely cover all the topics, answer most of the questions, and provide worksheets and timelines for planning and budgeting for the big event. And, not to worry, the authors do recognize that everyone is different and weddings in the backyard in bare feet and cutoffs are just as valid as weddings on a yacht cruising to the Greek Islands. But, really, this book is best suited for those who are going to plan a traditional wedding gay and lesbian style! Filled with tips and advice as well as cheeky little comments, this book, if nothing else, will bring some humor to what is otherwise a pretty stressful process. Big pluses are the wedding countdown calendar and the list of resources at the end of the book. So, go forth with this book in hand and plan the wedding of a lifetime! From Ballantine Books (www.ballantinebooks.com). For more info: www.davidtoussaint.com.

—Colleen R. Logan

We Do: A Celebration of Gay and Lesbian Marriages

Edited by Amy Rennert

We Do captures the historic moment when, in one city, all United States citizens were granted the right to marry. When San Francisco's mayor Gavin Newsom (who wrote the foreword for *We Do*) ordered City Hall to begin issuing marriage licenses to gay and lesbian couples on February 12, thousands of couples from around the world lined up to take their vows, inspiring other cities to follow suit. As intense public debate continues, *We Do* captures—in all its joy and diversity—the humanity and celebration of the country's first history-making weddings. Drawing from news photography of ceremonies in San Francisco,



two lesbians who have been together 51 years to dads with babies in arms. A joyful celebration, *We Do* stands witness to the fact that we are all created equal in love. From Chronicle Books (www.chroniclebooks.com).

—Suzie Lynde



Same-Sex Marriage: The Personal and the Political

Kathleen A. Lahey & Kevin Alderson

The first of its kind, this landmark book presents an in-depth look at contemporary same-sex marriage, documenting the activism and legal victories that made this issue front-page news, and detailing the stories of couples who have married. Shunning the typical practice of obscuring names and faces, these couples share their experiences, joys, and pains. At the heart of *Same-Sex Marriage* is how we define our civil liberties: the distinction between heterosexual and homosexual legal unions, between interpretation of religious and civil law, and society's definition of "family." The authors explore these issues through their individual strengths as legal expert (Lahey) and psychologist (Alderson). Chronologically, Lahey presents the legal history and cases that stand as milestones, which have defined new legislation in several states and countries. Alderson reveals the experiences of 16 gay couples who, in their own words, tell us about their lives as individuals, as parents, as activists, as gays or lesbians, as members of society, and as married partners. From Insomniac Press (www.insomniacpress.com). —Troy Carrington

The Updated and Revised Version of Same-Sex Marriage: Pro and Con, A Reader

Andrew Sullivan

Perhaps now more than ever, the GLBT community needs to have their facts straight about the pros and cons of same-sex marriage. Today, we are looking down the →



DVD Four Weddings and No Funeral

Gay Weddings, a warm and funny, poignant and surprising eight-part (a total of four hours) documentary series, explores the hearts and minds of two gay couples and two lesbian couples as they navigate the roadblocks to their unions. The series showcases the four very different ceremonies—a private backyard wedding in the high desert, a tropical beach party in Puerto Vallarta, an elegant deco restaurant affair, and a Hollywood extravaganza—that are the culmination of months of planning, dreaming, fighting, and forgiving. • *Gay Weddings* originally aired in 2002 on the Bravo channel. This new DVD release includes never-before-seen footage and an update on each couple (over 60 minutes) and how they are doing today. From Ventura Entertainment (www.venturadistribution.com). —SL

Going to the Chapel?

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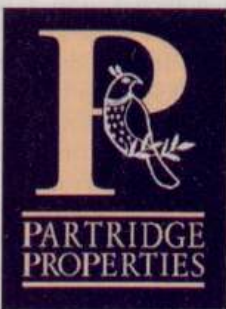
without hope of marriage. Your first date was a date without hope of marriage. When you discovered sex, it, too, was without hope of marriage. True love means, first and foremost, a love which ends in lasting marriage. For you, true love in that sense is not possible, and never has been possible, and you have grown up assuming it would never be possible. Your heart, now, is not the same heart. It has changed, and perhaps not for the better.

And now, if I may try your patience, push your imagination still further, to the outer limits of strangeness. Imagine not only yourself without marriage: imagine a whole community, a whole culture, without marriage. In your community, no one is married, no one has ever been married, no one ever will be married, and everyone has grown up from childhood taking the absence of marriage for granted. What is this community, your world, like? More unstable than the one you were accustomed to before your Kafkaesque metamorphosis, no doubt: probably less healthy, less happy; perhaps full of sex but not as full of love. It is a world of fragile families, a world marked by heightened fear of loneliness or abandonment in old age, a world in some respects not civilized, because marriage is the foundation of civilization.

Over time, many people in your marriageless world, possibly with you among them, succeed in forming and sustaining enduring attachments, and that success, against considerable odds, is a credit to human resilience. But, without society's help and encouragement, finding and forming lasting bonds has been hard. Even if, over time, most people in your marriageless world manage to pair off and act married, without marriage their relationships and their world are not the same. The law sees only individuals, never couples; the larger society is not sure what to make of these so-called partners. Their world remains incomplete, unfinished.

I think it is difficult, probably impossible, for most heterosexuals to imagine life without marriage. If, on the other hand, you are gay, you have not had to exercise your imagination much at all. For generations, homosexuals have come of age understanding that their love separated them from marriage instead of connecting them to it. They lived in a world turned upside down. →

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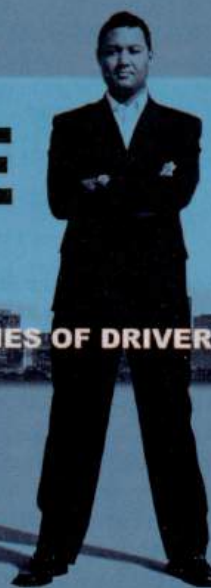
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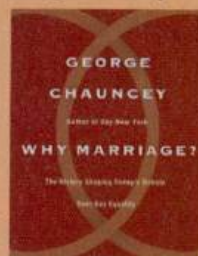
SAME-SEX MARRIAGE PRO & CON A READER

barrel of a congress ready to pull the trigger and vote to actually amend the Constitution and ban same-sex marriages. An act that reeks of such blatant discrimination that it makes its sister vote, the unprecedented and unheralded Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) vote almost make sense. Almost.

Clearly, same-sex marriage is a political and social tinderbox that has ignited controversy in the press, the courts, legislative chambers, and kitchen tables across this great nation. It is an issue that is and continues to be one of the most contentious cultural issues and one that is likely to figure prominently in November's presidential election. Whether you support same-sex marriage or not, Andrew Sullivan's anthology of the 2000-year-old debate surrounding same-sex marriage is a must read. It covers the issue across a wide range of historical settings from Plato and Montaigne to the landmark court decisions in Hawaii and Massachusetts to DOMA, civil unions in Vermont, and the current drive for a Federal Marriage Amendment. In looking through each lens of history as well as the broader lens of the conservative right and liberal movements, Sullivan methodically and cogently presents the arguments for and against same-sex marriage. You will be surprised by some opinions, comforted by others, and downright pissed off by more than a few. Wade through it anyway—knowledge and the ability to articulate a position may be our greatest weapon as we brace for this latest national convulsion. From Vintage Books (www.vintagebooks.com). —CRL

Why Marriage? The History Shaping Today's Debate Over Gay Equality

George Chauncey



Just as he drew upon the unparalleled historical knowledge that established him as the principal author of the influential Historians' Amicus Brief filed in the landmark Supreme Court sodomy case *Lawrence v. Texas*, in *Why Marriage?* George Chauncey

shows how the demand for the freedom to marry emerged from a decades-long struggle. Chauncey also reminds us of the pervasive discrimination faced by lesbians and gay men only a few decades ago, when the federal government fired thousands of gay employees and restaurants were shut down for serving homosexuals. And he shows how the continuing discrimination faced by gay families—in insurance, pensions, and child custody struggles—led them to campaign for the protections of marriage. Chauncey offers an electrifying analysis of the history of the shifting attitudes of heterosexual Americans toward gay people, from the dramatic growth in acceptance to the many campaigns against gay rights that form the background of today's demand for a constitutional amendment. He also develops a riveting analysis of how the religious opposition to interracial marriage and desegregation just 50 years ago sheds light on the sources of opposition to same-sex marriage today. Drawing upon his deep understanding of American history, Chauncey illuminates what's at stake for both sides in this contentious debate. Available August 17 from Basic Books (www.basicbooks.com). —TC

Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano

- President Bush wants a Constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriages. A Constitutional amendment—oh, yeah, yeah, like he knows what a Constitutional amendment is. (David Letterman, *Late Show with David Letterman*, 2/04)
- My friend Merrill Markoe once wrote that one of the most compelling reasons to hope that gay marriage becomes legal is that gays may end up doing for marriage what they do for run-down neighborhoods: restore it to its original splendor. No question that the photos of gay couples getting married these days are far more moving than those perfectly posed pictures of men and women in the Sunday Styles section. Gay couples are usually celebrating love that has lasted, which is, of course, the hard part about marriage. (Writer/director Nora Ephron, *The Nation*, 7/05/04)
- Same-sex marriage boils down to property and inheritance rights, or, to use the current relevant terms, to medical benefits and Social Security. No problem there. When it veers into soppy sentiment about the state's affirmation of love and a lasting union, I think about prenuptial agreements, divorce rates, and deadbeat dads. (Author Susan Brownmiller, *The Nation*, 7/05/04)
- . . . There is nothing spiritual, mystical, or romantic about the state's license to marry—it's a legal contract. Thus, George W. Bush is right when he says that "marriage is a sacred institution" when speaking as a Christian, as a member of his Methodist church. But as President of the United States and leader of all Americans, believers and unbelievers, he is wrong. (Rev. Howard Moody, *The Nation*, 7/05/04)
- *The Sopranos* rocks, even though it's on the same time as *Alias*. I guess that's what TiVo's for. I love my TiVo. In fact, I would marry TiVo if President Bush would allow it. (Actor Kevin Weisman, *Entertainment Weekly*, Summer Issue '04)

Going to the Chapel?

continued from page 34

As hard as it is now for heterosexuals to imagine life without marriage, that is how hard it was, until comparatively recently, for homosexuals to imagine life with marriage. If homosexuality has long seemed grotesque and threatening to heterosexuals, and if heterosexual convention has often seemed cruel and oppressive to homosexuals, the main reason is not the difference in sexual orientation as such but, rather, the marriage gap, which is really an imagination gap. Neither side could imagine the other's world. To be homosexual meant not to be married. To be married—happily and honestly married—meant not to be homosexual.

One of my childhood memories is of a day when, as I sat on the piano bench in the family room, it dawned on me that I would never be married. I have a distinct recollection of that moment. I did not discover or learn that I would never be married; I merely recognized that I knew it. That day was a long time, I think about fifteen years, before I understood I was homosexual. Throughout my childhood and youth, I had no notion of sexuality, but I did understand that marriage was not for me. Much later, after struggle and delay, I established caring relationships, but by that time I had grown up seeing life through the weird prism of marriagelessness. I assumed things would never change. I would never have two wings and fly, and I would never be married.

During the last decade of the twentieth century, a miracle happened, although some would call it a nightmare. In the early 1990s, gay people started talking as never before about getting married, and a lawsuit in Hawaii, where a same-sex couple sought a marriage license, forced the country to listen. The lawsuit failed (Hawaii foreclosed it by amending the state constitution), and the initial public reaction ranged from panicky to dismissive. Most states passed laws against same-sex marriage, and so did Congress. Some Americans kept listening, however. Polls showed that young people were not nearly so opposed to same-sex marriage as were their elders. A sprinkling of churches began to conduct gay wedding ceremonies (not legally binding, of course). The law edged toward same-sex marriage, too. Vermont's Supreme Court

ordered legal parity for gay and straight unions, and the state responded with "civil unions" for homosexual couples. Some European countries moved in the same direction, with the Netherlands adopting full-blown gay marriage in 2001. The idea of gay marriage, though still politically hopeless, began to seem at least less bizarre.

Then, in 2003, something else happened. It was as if a trigger had been pulled and a gunshot was fired in a quiet room. A Canadian court ordered the province of Ontario to recognize same-sex marriages. Only days later, the United States Supreme Court struck down sodomy laws, in a decision—*Lawrence v. Texas*—which conservatives widely (and wrongly) believed would soon lead to the legalization of gay marriage by the federal courts. Gay activists used the sodomy decision as grounds to file suit in Arizona demanding a marriage license. (They lost.) Other Americans sued for U.S. recognition of Canadian gay marriages. Conservatives panicked. Some of them said not just that same-sex marriage might happen but that it was practically a done deal. Gay marriage, wrote Ramesh Ponnuru in *National Review*, was "not quite inevitable." In the same magazine's online edition, Maggie Gallagher, a conservative columnist, gave notice of the apocalypse. "We are poised to lose the gay-marriage battle badly," she said. "It means losing the marriage debate. It means losing limited government. It means losing American civilization." As if in answer, in November the Massachusetts Supreme judicial Court declared the exclusion of gay couples from marriage to be in violation of the state's constitution, and gave the legislature six months to take action. "The marriage ban works a deep and scarring hardship on a very real segment of the community for no rational reason," ruled the court. "We construe civil marriage to mean the voluntary union of two persons as spouses, to the exclusion of all others." Even for friends of same-sex marriage, things seemed to be moving disconcertingly fast.

The bang Americans heard in 2003 was an opening shot in what promised to be a political and social conflict of years' duration. More even than that, however, it was the sound of the imagination gap snapping shut. Hardly anyone was ready to imagine same-sex marriage. Now everyone must imagine it.

Excerpted from *Gay Marriage: Why It Is Good for Gays, Good for Straights, and Good for America*, by Jonathan Rauch. Published by Times Books. Copyright © 2004 Jonathan Rauch. For more info and an audio reading: www.writtenvoices.com.

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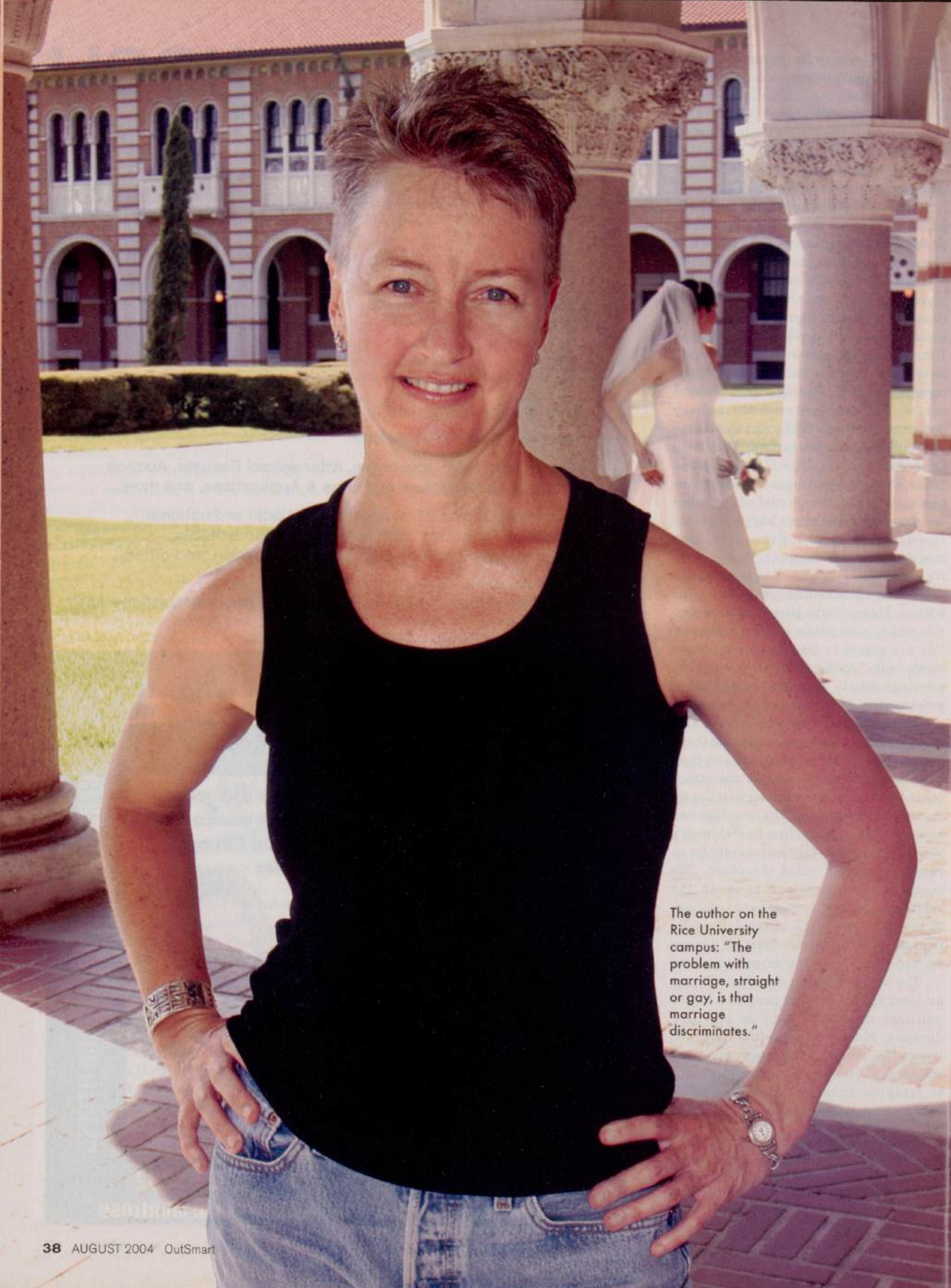
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The author on the Rice University campus: "The problem with marriage, straight or gay, is that marriage discriminates."

A Contrarian View

Same-sex marriage? No thanks.

by Lynne Huffer
Photo by Steven David

When people find out I'm a lesbian, they immediately assume I'm for same-sex marriage. I'm not. As a woman who used to be legally married to a man, I want to say, "Been there, done that. No thanks." Lesbian comedian Kate Clinton puts it well: "I thought one of the advantages of being a lesbian was that you didn't *have* to get married."

Let me be clear: I abhor the current effort by Bush and other conservative Republicans to amend the Constitution, thereby adding discrimination to our country's founding document for the first time in history. I abhor discrimination of any kind.

And this is my point: The problem with marriage, straight or gay, is that marriage discriminates. Marriage discriminates because it legitimizes some relationships at the expense of others. Achieving the right to same-sex marriage will not change that fact. It will simply create a category of "good" gays and lesbians who will now receive the benefits that "good" heterosexuals have always had.

In the meantime, unwed parents, single people, those who set up households that differ from the married norm will continue to be second-class citizens because of their unwed status. Those relegated to the categories of "good" and "bad" will shift somewhat, but the categories themselves will remain. Not only is this unjust, but it will intensify the pressure to conform to the married norm.

And what, precisely, is this norm? The deeply revered, hallowed institution we call marriage is, more often than not, a smoke screen that hides nasty little problems like adultery, domestic violence, and escalating divorce rates. Given the reality of what the norm actually is, I find it difficult to understand why people want it so badly. Wanting rights I understand. Wanting love, absolutely. But marriage?

The key question here is, How can we as a culture envision a just society? Moral

philosophers have long agreed that a policy is unjust if its benefits for some are achieved by harming others. Gay and lesbian activists fighting for same-sex marriage agree with this. They argue that we must push for gay marriage precisely because the numerous benefits conferred on heterosexual married couples—access to health insurance; tax advantages; property, inheritance, and custody rights; next-of-kin privileges in-hospital visitation and medical decision-making; immigration and naturalization benefits; to name just a few—should be available to same-sex couples as well. Conferring those benefits on gays and lesbians, the reasoning goes, will erase the discriminatory effects of marriage.

But I don't buy this argument, any more than I buy the conservative position that affirms the sanctity of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman. I'm irritated by the clichés on both sides of the issue. I've seen far too many "balanced" panels and newspaper editorial pages where the pros and cons are carefully presented, as if promoting "both sides" of a debate about how precisely the lines of discrimination should be drawn will somehow lead to a just policy. Justice is not achieved by debating a question that itself reflects an unjust position. The question itself is wrong.

Missing entirely from the mainstream debate is a political analysis of the institution of marriage itself. Same-sex marriage will do nothing to undo the discriminatory effects of an institution that ties basic rights like health care to whether or not the government sanctifies the forms of our loving relationships. Despite the Hallmark images of marriage as the expression of private, individual love, marriage is in fact a three-way relationship involving two people and the state. I have yet to hear a convincing argument about why receiving basic rights and benefits means bringing the state *back* into my bedroom. (Wasn't the Texas sodomy law just recently struck down?) Marriage is founded on the premise that the state must regulate our most intimate relations, including what we do in

bed and with whom. The rewards we receive for allowing the state to police us have nothing to do with sex. So why do we insist that those rewards and marriage remain bundled together?

Gays and lesbians will object that by arguing against gay marriage, as I am doing here, I end up supporting the forces of homophobia. It's a risk I'm willing to take. At stake here is the possibility of true public debate about the problems that affect our lives. We live in an age where opinions about issues ranging from the war in Iraq to Janet Jackson's breast are reduced to sound bites labeled *for* and *against*. Surely as a society we are more intelligent than that.

Others may object that critiquing marriage itself is impractical and unrealistic. Same-sex marriage advocates will argue that marriage is the only way to achieve equality. I disagree. There are many ways to improve access to health care, negotiate child custody arrangements, or ensure the more just distribution of tax revenues. The strategies we pursue to achieve those goals link our ethical commitments to our political choices. Take, for example, the issue of access to health care. Rather than focusing solely on marriage, the GLBT movement could choose a very different political path. Gay, lesbian, and transgender activists could form coalitions with universal health care activists to work toward the goal of creating a system that would provide quality health care for all members of society, not just those who, through marriage, may reap the spousal health care benefits that come with employment or economic privilege.

Putting everything in the marriage basket limits our vision of what the good life might be. We must be willing to strive for creative forms of living *beyond marriage* that do not privilege some at the expense of others.

Lynne Huffer is director of the Program for the Study of Women and Gender and professor of French studies at Rice University. She and her partner of 10 years, Tamara Jones, were both on the Outsmart People to Watch list in 2003. They do not want to get married.

East Side Story

*In a neighborhood near downtown,
a couple revives a 91-year-old house*

by Troy Broussard • Photos by Bob Jackson



In the living room, a Venetian mirror over the mantel adds a touch of sparkle and repeats the open space of the abundant windows. The furniture is an eclectic mix, downplayed against the lovely architecture and the daring art. The painting over the draped table is by Taos artist Linda Tasch, who conceived the dreamy, breathtaking image while she underwent a devastating battle with blindness. The orchid on the table evokes the painting—only one example of how every piece in the room flows effortlessly from itself to the next. →

In 1913, the *Houston Daily Post* hailed the neighborhood of Eastwood as "a model suburb . . . one of the most convenient, attractive, and beautiful homesite additions in the city of Houston." That very year, Oscar Weyrich, president of Houston Bank and Trust, built his family residence in Eastwood. With a deep, shady veranda and a screened second-floor sleeping porch across the width of the façade, it was the very first house on the street.

Bill England and Sonny Garza purchased the old Weyrich home 10 years ago, thus beginning its transformation into a comfortable backdrop for peaceful living and gracious entertaining while stabilizing the integrity of the structure to insure its continued existence.

Both being men of substance and flair, England and Garza acted as their own decorators and contractors for the renovation. Working on a house of that vintage, the couple faced a myriad of obstacles worthy of making the average homeowner surrender—or, as many Houstonians do, bulldoze. Aside from making decorative and cosmetic changes to this lovely old architectural find, the owners installed central air and heat, replaced rotten wood, gutted and rebuilt kitchen and bathrooms, refinished floors, replaced electrical and plumbing systems, and erected a high iron security fence. For England and Garza, this home project has clearly been a labor of love. At the same time, the spirit of the fine old structure has seemed to act as an entity of its own, driving the owner's enthusiasm.

The interior of the England-Garza home now projects a daring mix of classic furniture and contemporary art with a sophisticated Southern air. Upon entering, a visitor might be struck by a sense of elegance, even grandeur. But once the initial dramatic impression subsides, the whimsical and playful personal touches of the owners become evident. The unexpected details and engrossing art pieces set this residence apart. →



Art isn't always at home without a proper vignette. A focal point in the dining room, the Sergio Bustamante sculpture of Frida Kahlo is displayed on a simple pedestal, with a Mexican cross above it and a patinated piece of art pottery below. Knowing how to mix fine art with whimsy can express appreciation for a great artist.



With its symmetrical architecture and unassuming street appeal, the Craftsman-style residence was built in 1913 by a Houston banker.

When a room is the epitome of eclecticism, it is, for lack of better words, just fabulous. One of the most beautiful rooms in Houston, the upstairs study boasts a comfortable mix of antique furniture and personal mementos. The conte crayon drawing of the couple over the antique sofa is by Yi Lee. The massive painting over the dresser is by Dixie Friend Gay.



In the dining room, for example, a sculpture called *Plumb Bob Tomato* by the artist Laura Levy hangs in a corner. Almost chandelier-like, the piece is constructed of buttons, wire, and bisque doll arms.

The couple also shares an affinity for the work of local artists. Major examples of work by Dixie Friend Gay hang in the formal dining room and in the study. In both paintings the plain of the flat canvases and classically rendered surreal subject matter is shattered by the insertion of deer antlers. England and Garza also admire the work of Eastwood resident Ryan Geiger, whose home and studio is less than a block away.

The surprising juxtaposition between old and new, between reverent and cheeky, extends from inside to out. There seems to be a visual surprise at every turn. For example, outside on the veranda, swinging languidly in the breeze between sturdy white columns hangs a massive curvilinear stainless steel mobile with static, seemingly dangerous, frayed edges. An art piece purchased in Wimberley, its presence is quite unanticipated—especially when coupled with sweet, white-painted Victorian-style wicker furniture and the soothing song of wind chimes.

"Until three years ago, the backyard was unusable," Garza says of the home's surroundings. So with the help of landscape designer Richard Dawson, he embarked upon the renovation of the yard and addition of the pool.

"Sonny is especially good with placement," England compliments. "And he designed the pool area for entertaining."

Once again, trouble arose due to the age of both the house and the neighborhood. "We encountered a septic tank when digging the pool," Garza explains with a wince of revulsion. "The house had never been connected to the city sewer." An ambitious project from the start, the yard ended up taking twice the time to complete and costing twice their original budget. But the couple considers the expenditure money well spent and only one more step in the responsibility of preparing a 91-year-old house for the 21st century. →

In the guest bedroom, the couple's whimsical side is evident. Furniture that is period to the house mixes with an unexpected collection of Venetian masks, antique toys, and curious art objects.

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East Side Story

continued from page 44

England and Garza surround themselves with playful art in the master bedroom. Simplicity is key here, but the luxurious mink throw across the footboard of the antique sleigh bed is a year-round staple.



Just as England and Garza are proud of their home, they are enthusiastic about the neighborhood's history. England has become somewhat of an authority on Eastwood.

Developed at the turn of the previous century by William A. Wilson, the neighborhood sought to be a "distinctly high-class home center and a tangible example of modern community development," according to promotional materials of the time. Eastwood was only a 15-minute ride from downtown on the streetcar.

The 1950s and 1960s took a toll on the neighborhood as more and more residents moved to the suburbs. Eastwood began to show its age as the fine old custom-built homes fell into disrepair. "Through the 1980s, nothing east of downtown was even on the radar screen," England says. "But many attribute the gay and lesbian residents as holding the neighborhood together during the hard times."

In fact, there are five gay-and-lesbian-owned homes on England and Garza's block alone. "Eastwood has always been very accepting" England says.

With the rejuvenation of downtown, many Houston residents have rediscovered the oak-lined streets and stately Craftsman-style homes of Eastwood. "We just love it here," Garza says.

Bill rejoins, "Plus it's much less hectic than Montrose."

Troy Broussard writes about interior design for OutSmart. The magazine's readers named him best interior designer in the last Gayest & Greatest survey ("So Gay, So Great," October 2003).

In Eastwood, Bill England and Sonny Garza have preserved a piece of forgotten heritage in a city that is sometimes reluctant to recognize its historical past.



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JR'S BAR & GRILL • Wed, Aug 11 • 10 PM • 808 Pacific

CHANCES BAR • Thurs, Aug 12 • 8 PM • 1100 Westheimer

HOLLYWOOD BOOK & CAFE • Fri, Aug 13 • 8 PM • 2409 Grant

RAINBOW ROOM • Sat, Aug 14 • 8 PM • 527 Barren Springs (off Ella Blvd.)

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 Most Valuable Volunteer _____
 Leading Male Fundraiser _____
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 Most Divine Drag Queen _____
 Favorite Politician _____

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 Best Female GLBT Business Person _____
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 Best Female Personal Trainer _____
 Best Veterinarian _____
 Best Astrologer _____
 Best Interior Decorator _____
 Best Male Insurance Agent _____
 Best Female Insurance Agent _____
 Best Male Real Estate Agent _____
 Best Female Real Estate Agent _____
 Best Male Hairdresser _____
 Best Female Hairdresser _____
 Favorite Community Photographer _____
 Best DJ (and where does he or she spin?) _____
 Best Male Bartender (where does he tend bar?) _____
 Best Female Bartender (where does she tend bar?) _____
 Favorite Radio Personality _____
 Best TV Guy _____
 Best TV Gal _____
 Favorite Male Pro Athlete _____
 Favorite Female Pro Athlete _____

*** COMMUNITY ***

Favorite Social Organization _____
 Favorite Philanthropic Organization _____
 Favorite Community Organization _____
 Favorite Benefit Event of the Year _____

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 Most Supportive of the GLBT Community (National) _____
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 Best Place to Buy Women's Clothes _____
 Best Place to Buy Men's Clothes _____
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 Best Gay Cruise or Tour Company _____
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 Best Day Spa _____

*** DINING ***

Best New Restaurant _____
 Best Restaurant for People Watching _____
 Best 24-Hour Restaurant _____
 Best Restaurant for Elegant Dining _____
 Best Restaurant for Cheap Eats _____
 Best Restaurant for Outdoor Dining _____
 Best Breakfast _____
 Best Brunch _____
 Best Lunch Spot _____
 Best Dessert _____
 Best Coffee House _____
 Best Barbecue _____
 Best Cajun _____
 Best Chinese _____
 Best Cuban _____
 Best Greek _____
 Best Hamburger _____
 Best Indian _____
 Best Italian _____
 Best Mexican _____
 Best Pizza _____
 Best Sushi _____
 Best Thai _____
 Best Vegetarian _____
 Best Vietnamese _____
 Best Dining Category We Forgot _____

*** OUT & ABOUT ***

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 Best Downtown Night Spot _____
 Best Place to Worship _____
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 Best Tanning Salon _____
 Best Theatrical Production (National Tour) _____
 Best Theatrical Production (Local) _____
 Best Concert of the Year _____

Favorite Pro Sports Team _____
 GLBT News Event of the Year _____

*** AFTER DARK ***

Best Club for Dancing _____
 Best Club After 2 a.m. _____
 Best Women's Bar _____
 Best Piano Bar _____
 Best Drag Show Bar _____
 Best Place to Two Step _____
 Best Club If You're Under 21 _____
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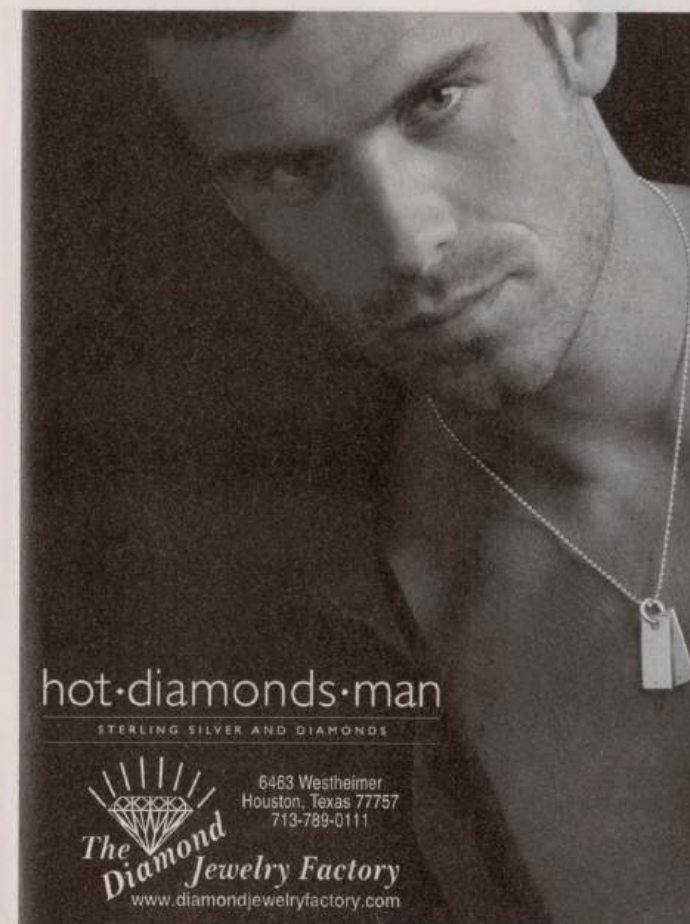
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Dykes No Like Spike?

Tristan Taormino, lesbian consultant on Spike Lee's controversial new film *She Hate Me*, talks about serving as resident dyke on the set, agreeing to disagree, and Lesbian Boot Camp

by Olivia Flores Alvarez



Spiked?: Tristan Taormino

Why did the lesbian cross the road? To get pregnant, according to Spike Lee's latest movie *She Hate Me*. Why did the film critic cross the road? To get away from *She Hate Me*.

Despite a well-crafted performance by Anthony Mackie and a half-dozen hot-button topics such as corporate fraud and lesbian parenting to distract the audience, *She Hate Me* manages not only to miss the mark, but to also offend most of its viewing audience in the process.

Anthony Mackie, a talented and intelligent actor, plays lead character Jack. A biotech exec who gets blacklisted when he reveals that his company's claims of developing an AIDS vaccine are fraudulent, Jack is desperate for money. In walks Jack's ex-girlfriend Fatima (Kerry Washington) and her new lesbian lover, Alex (Dania Ramirez). The couple want to have children and are willing to pay Jack \$10,000 to impregnate them. After some haggling, Jack agrees. Then, Fatima brings around some of her lesbian friends who also want to get pregnant, each with \$10,000 in hand. Jack manages to knock up 19 lesbians before he gets arrested for securities fraud, a frame-up by his old boss.

OK, a little messy, but not bad.

Now add the fact that Jack not only brings each and every lesbian to orgasm on his sperm-squirting assembly line, but he even tempts the "I don't do dick" Alex into not only "doing dick" but also watching while her lover does some, too.

Oops.

Lee has presented these women as healthy, happy lesbians who have chosen to have female-female sex and are suffering an under-the-sheets session with Jack only in an attempt to get pregnant, but somehow they each have an orgasm during a three-minute hump with a man they don't love.

Can you say "statistical improbability"?

Tristan Taormino, a consultant on the film, recently visited Houston during a national *She Hate Me* promotional tour. She spoke to me about the controversial film. A journalist and sex educator who has written for *The Village Voice*, *Penthouse*, and *On Our Backs*, Taormino led a "Lesbian Boot Camp" for the *She Hate Me* actresses, educating them about lesbian culture and acted as resident lesbian on the set during filming.

Olivia Flores Alvarez: How did you get involved with the *She Hate Me* project?

Tristan Taormino: Spike found me through my writing. He called the publisher of *On Our Backs*, which also publishes *Girlfriends*. That's how he tracked me down, but I'm still not all that clear what it was about me that drew him to me, although I think it's an interesting match, an interesting meeting of very different minds.

What was your first reaction to the project?

I read the script and I thought, *Wow, this is going to make a lot of people very angry*. So I was faced with a decision—do I run screaming or do I stay?

I stayed. And now I'm getting heat for it; but, to me, Spike's a powerful guy and he has access to a huge audience, especially in the African-American community. It's a good thing to have someone with as much visibility as Spike to discuss the kinds of issues [covered in this movie].

You worked with the actresses, exposing them to lesbian culture, right?

We had a period before the production where we did something called Lesbian Boot Camp. This probably sounds more fun than it was. We did lots of presentations and meetings to give the actresses the information they needed for their characters. Obviously, the majority of women in this movie are women of color, and I'm not. Spike somehow picked a white woman to come in and tell them about being a lesbian of color. That meant that I had to bring in lots of other women to talk to them, too.

We talked about identity, community, politics, and history. I brought in panels of speakers, dykes from all walks of life who were different from me, so the actresses could quiz them. I took them to a couple of lesbian bars.

And I was on the set for most, but not all the days of shooting. So I was sort of a resource for them and for Spike to kinda quiz about any questions they might have had.

What has the audience reaction been in the screenings you've been attending?

The screenings have been very complicated and unpredictable. We've done New York and Chicago, and I think people there have had very different readings of the film. They interpret things differently and are offended by different things.

Everyone seems universally offended by the three-way kiss [between Jack, Fatima, and Alex].

Straight and gay people have both been offended by that. After that, the sensibility seems to change with each audience.

What has their reaction been like to you? You said you've been getting heat for working on this film.

People in Chicago were telling me, "I can't believe you could stand to stay in the same room with [Spike]." And I had to tell them, "Spike might not be the spokesperson for GLADD [Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation], but I think he has evolved. I haven't lost hope that people can continue to evolve, continue to learn. Spike has certainly done that, and I'm willing to work with anyone who at least has an open mind."

People have been having a little bit of trouble understanding that I was not the writer or the director of this film. I gave opinions, not orders. Spike asked me what I thought and I told him. Then he added that to his own opinion, along with the actress involved and lots of other decision-makers. I was not a decision-maker. I was a consultant. Big difference.

"I read the script and I thought, *Wow, this is going to make a lot of people very angry.*"

Did you think your opinions were listened to?

He listened to me. That doesn't mean he changed his own thinking or changed what he was going to do in the film. But yes, I think he took what I told him into account.

We have so many battles, Spike and I, to this day. We disagree a lot, about a lot of things. To be in the same room with someone

and disagree, but still be able to respect each other, still be able to discuss without attacking each other, is wonderful. To keep butting heads, but in that process to keep moving an inch toward each other, is great.

There were lots of times that I would be talking to Spike and he would be rolling his eyes. Other times when he would be talking and I would just be shaking my head.

Some of the discussions at the screenings have been like that, where people disagree with Spike and disagree with each other but still all stay in the room, still continue to talk to each other. That's what I want to be part of, not just name-calling or boycotting. I'd rather have people talk to each other, even if they don't change each other's mind, than to have everybody just shut up.

Is the film what you expected it to be?

Not really. I was there for the filming, and yet when I saw the final cut, I thought, *Wow, the mood of all this is completely different from what I saw being created*. With the music and the editing, everything sort of shifts and changes.

Are you happy with the way the film shows lesbian characters?

This is not my vision of 19 lesbians of color who want to get pregnant. This is not my vision, and I'm pretty sure it's not going to be lots of other people's vision of 19 lesbians of color who want to get pregnant. This is Spike's vision, and I totally get that as a filmmaker and an artist, he has his own goals.

For me, the more that's out there, the better. Even if it isn't exactly what I would want to see, I'm still glad it's out there. I feel that this will help to pave the way for other representations and maybe those will be closer to my vision, closer to my truth.

I don't need everyone to run in and love the movie. I just want there to be dialogue and discussion about this stuff.

I think it is brave of Spike to tackle all this. Sometimes it isn't very clear what he's saying about all these issues, but the fact that he's at least discussing them is great. He's throwing all these issues out there and saying, "You decide."

It raises so many issues, that that's enough for me.

I think this is a beginning. I think he's breaking new ground. I don't think it's perfect, but it's a start down the right road.

An entertainment writer, Olivia Flores Alvarez interviewed RuPaul for the July issue of OutSmart.



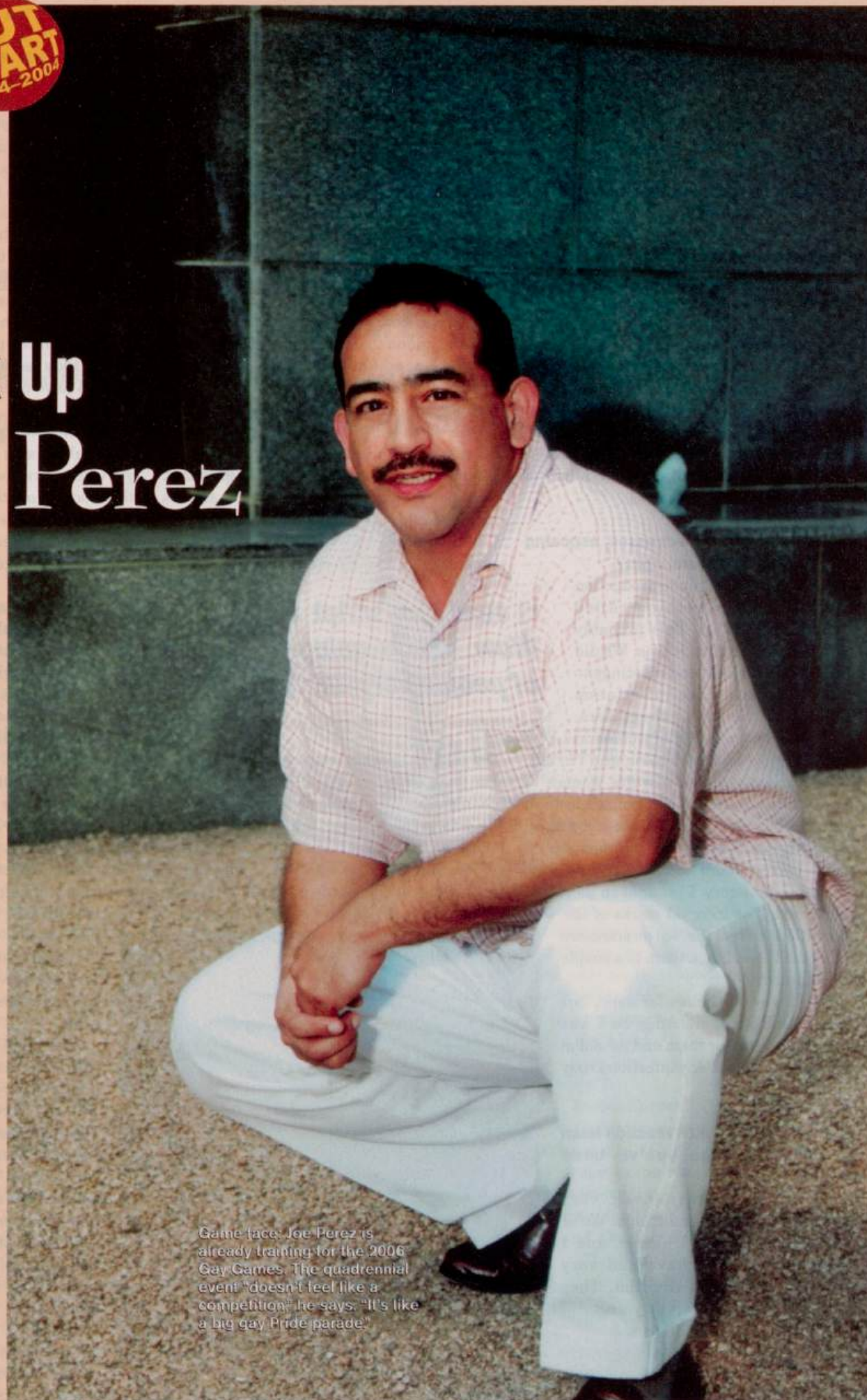
Need a man?: Alex (Dania Ramirez, l) and Fatima (Kerry Washington) want a child and are willing to pay for it.

Check Up Joe Perez

The
gold-medal
athlete
switches
from
aerobics to
bodybuilding

by
Thomas Blanton
Photos by
Todd Rainer

Every month
during our 10-
year celebra-
tion, we revisit
an individual
we interviewed
or who played a
significant role
in the issue
published a
decade ago.



Game face: Joe Perez is already training for the 2006 Gay Games. The quadrennial event "doesn't feel like a competition," he says. "It's like a big gay Pride parade."

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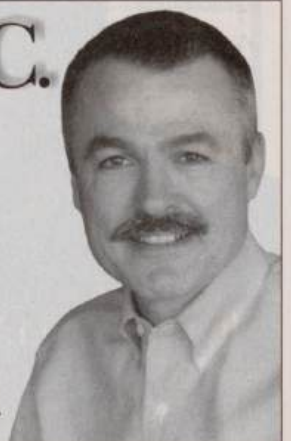
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Check Up continued from page 56

When my doctor gave me 10 years to live, I thought, *Well, I'm going to live my life,*" says Joe Perez Jr., who *OutSmart* featured a decade ago after he took the gold medal in aerobics at the 1994 Gay Games. "I would say to myself, *Okay, I made it this far. Let me try three more years.* I didn't want to start something and not finish it."

Ten years later, and 18 years after he was diagnosed with HIV, Perez continues to train, compete, and excel in all aspects of his life.

Perez believes his athletic success followed from the renewed awareness of health he developed after his HIV diagnosis. "My focus on health led to aerobics, which led to teaching, which led to the Gay Games," he says. And of course, the Gay Games led to New York and the gold medal.

Winning the gold, especially at a competitive, international event like the

considering the limited amount of preparation time. Perez is already getting ready for the next Games, to be held in Chicago in 2006.

"With the Gay Games, there's a lot of substance there," Perez says. "It doesn't feel like a competition. It's like a big gay Pride parade. I still train together with my teammates. We've become a close-knit family."

In 2002, Perez suffered a major personal tragedy when his mother died suddenly. Always his biggest fan, his mom, who sold homemade tamales to finance his first Gay Games trip, had offered profound moral and emotional support to her son. Even after her death, she continued encouraging Perez to do his best.

"Before she died, she told me, 'You need to take care of yourself. You need to go back to school,'" Perez says. "When she passed, I remembered that conversation."

During the first year after his mother's death, Perez spent much of his time taking care of various family affairs. Soon,



"When my doctor gave me 10 years to live, I thought, *Well, I'm going to live my life.* I would say to myself, *Okay, I made it this far. Let me try three more years.*"

Gay Games, is often viewed as the capstone of one's athletic career. Not so for Perez, who by day works as an administrative assistant for the Installed Channels Department at Pennzoil-Quaker State, where he handles contracts for developing independent operators. Instead of resting on his well-toned laurels, Perez continued competing in national aerobics tournaments. He now has an impressive collection of awards to keep his first gold company. To date, he has won two more gold medals, a silver medal, and a bronze in competitions around the country, including events in Miami, Dallas, and Washington D.C.

Perez has since switched his athletic gears. In late 1997, Perez's trainer, Johnny West, approached him with the idea of exploring competitive bodybuilding. Perez agreed, but on the condition that he would only compete in the Gay Games. Eight months later, Perez traveled to Amsterdam to compete again, this time as a lightweight novice bodybuilder. He made the finals and came in fourth—an amazing achievement,

though, he realized that he was going to need a degree if he wanted to continue moving forward in his career.

In 2003, Perez started taking classes through the University of Phoenix (which has a Houston campus and offers online classes). Perez has succeeded at school, consistently maintaining a 4.0 grade point average. He plans to transfer to a four-year school like University of Houston or University of St. Thomas in the near future, to complete his degree in management.

Perez credits his mother's faith in him for both his scholastic and athletic achievements. He says he still works hard to please her, and he dedicates his successes to her memory.

"This is a way to get closer to her spiritually and keep making her proud of me," he says. "I hear her voice saying, 'I'm proud of you.'"

Thomas Blanton interviewed author Michael Thomas Ford about his new book, Ultimate Gay Sex, for our May issue.

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LookOut

by Tim Brookover



HOT SHOT. During her astonishing career, **Diane Arbus** (1923–1971) crafted penetrating images of some of society's most beautiful outsiders, including transvestites and drag queens (pictured, *A young man in curlers at home on West 20th Street, N.Y.C. 1966*). The most complete survey of her work ever assembled, *Diane Arbus Revelations*, remains on view at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston through September 6.

GOOD WORKS. On August 11 and 13, Sippora Gallery and Erotic Cabaret Boutique will host two events supporting breast-cancer research. On Wednesday night, models from the saucy shop will present fashions during the Erotica Trunk Show. On Friday night, the *Erotica* exhibition will feature works that explore that sensual theme. Participating artists include **Salli Babbitt** (who also curates), **Richard Fluhr**, **Nicola Parente**, and **Earl Staley**.

Last month, Sippora owner **Amy Meyers** called to report that some local breast-cancer service groups declined to accept money from the benefit events because of Erotic Cabaret's role. Undeterred, she and Erotic Cabaret owner **Bonnie Wills** pressed on, deciding they will just deliver the funds raised to M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. "Salli, Bonnie, and myself are going to hand them the check personally," Meyers said.

Human Rights Campaign Houston will welcome new members and a few strikes on August 22 with its second annual Equality Brunch & Bowl event at Palace Lanes. **Amber Batson**, **Shari Heyen**, and **Steven Wagner** co-chair.

Later the same day, **Don Gill** will host his annual LIVE show benefiting the Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History and the Montrose Clinic. **Clay Hardy** and **Jules co-**

direct the Keys West show, which every year features a host of tuneful performances. When you stop by on August 22, wish Gill a happy birthday.

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

Congrats to the new board and officers of Team Houston, the jock group prepping for the 2006 Gay Games: president **David Fagan**, vice president **Al Amado**, secretary **Keith Wright**, treasurer **Helen Martell**, and board members **Harold Gilliland** and **Mike Griswald**. The next meeting is August 8 at the Houston GLBT Community Center. Amado reports that the Gamers will then repair to Hollywood Café for dinner.

The charity-minded Imperial Court of Houston-Space City Empire will hold elections for emperor and empress on August 14 at 1415 California (absentee voting: August 12 at EJ's). Emperor candidates are **Jerel McNeil** and **Lloyd Powell**. The estimable **Eartha Quake** (a.k.a. **Tony Wadford**) runs unopposed for empress.

On August 14, **Dave Mathis** and **Milton Ressimann** will host a pool party to celebrate the Houston Outdoor Group (HOG) 20th anniversary. Details: Call the Hogline, 713/KAMP-OUT.

Stop by the August 27–29 American

Society of Interior Design Bazaar and meet some talented local experts, including **John Robinson**, and pick up some bargains during the annual sale. The event takes place during the Houston Home & Interior Design Show in Reliant Center.

Kim Gustavsson, Concierge Travel boss-man, e-mailed with news that he and spouse **Charles Caliva** will lead a group of six locals taking an Atlantis cruise to Athens to catch some of Olympics fun.

Yes, that was massage therapist **Alan Davidson** on Channel 2 on June 16 instructing a room of apparently straight couples in a segment on Kissing With Confidence, a Leisure Learning pucker-up class that he teaches.

ON THE ISLAND.

In Galveston, Paradise Guest House owner **Eldrege Langlinais** has just released a gay cookbook, *When In Doubt Whip It Out*. Assisted by his alter ego, **Miss Lottie Lou Lovely**, Langlinais has produced a volume of home-style recipes leavened with dollops of humor. He is also marketing his line of Uncle Mary's Gourmet and Fun Foods, which include Butch and Bold Spicy Pickles and Sister's Pecan Apple Butter. Check out www.LottiesKitchen.com. ■

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Out in the Arts

by D.L. Groover

GREEKS ACTIVE. Eons before Nazi propagandist filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, turned youthful athletes into soft-core porn idols in her classic documentary on the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, *Olympia* (1938), images of sporting young godlets in motion have stirred the hearts of men—and women, too, of course. Because August 13–29 are the dates of the 2004 Summer Olympic Games held in Athens, what better way to commemorate the games, the participants, the excitement, the bodies, than a brief chronicle of those ancient times and sweaty contests?

There was no other civilization, ancient or modern, so in love with the male human body as the Greek. Worshipped, transcended, and lusted after, the male body was the embodiment of all things godly—heaven on earth, you might say. In sweeping epic poetry, in unsurpassed bronze statuary, in minimalist black and red pottery, the Greeks celebrated the male nude. Countless legends and myths relate some love-hungry god, besotted equally by beauty and lust, who abducts a hunky young mortal to serve him in the columned halls of Mt. Olympus. Zeus and his boy-toy Ganymede is but one of many legendary same-sex couplings.

It's no surprise that the Greeks invented athletic contests to honor the gods: What better way to cruise men than under the guise of religion? Most of the Greek art that we know (or the Roman marble copies, the original bronzes melted down long ago) are the representations of athletes: the discus thrower; the young man scraping dirt and sweat from his body; the javelin thrower. Statues and pottery, drinking bowls and plates, even armor was decorated with images of Olympic champions in action. Graffiti, too, has survived, which tells a much more up-close-and-personal vision: "Akrotatos is handsome" reads one inscription in the tunnel leading into the stadium at Nemea, one of four Hellenic sites where games were held. Below this is scratched, "Says you."

In very contemporary parallels, yesterday's games were very much like those of today: political, commercial, and more often than not, entered into for profit. The winners—there were no prizes for second or third place—would be assured of instant fame and a free meal every day for

the rest of their lives. After a victory at Olympia, an athlete would pay no more taxes. Victors from Athens were given a staggering yearly income, and statues were erected in their hometowns and odes written about them by the leading poets of the day. Political and business careers flourished with the awarding of the paltry olive wreath cut from the sacred groves at Olympia. For 1200 years, the Olympic Games meant power and prestige. Even the word *athlete* is derived from two Greek words meaning "one who competes for a prize." Olympia was a buzzing business enterprise zone, and the city states of Greece vied for champions. Some cheated for them. Bronze statues of Zeus—hundreds of them—lined the entrance to the stadium, all with inscrip-

mother of Pisirodes was caught disguised as his coach, all subsequent trainers were forced to disrobe—thereafter dispensing their gonzo encouragement in the nude. Kallipateira, though, survived her fate when discovered among the male spectators. When her sons won their foot races, she was spared the view from Typaeum.

As to the nude part of the Games, no one knows why this particular custom began. One legend has the runner Orsippus tripping over his loosed tunic during the *stadion*, the 600-foot sprint, breaking his neck, thereby scaring everyone thereafter out of their *chitons*. Another says it was those unsmiling Spartans, who always trained in the nude, who brought the custom with them when they crossed the Isthmus.

Since the word *gymnasium* derives from "to exercise naked," I think the Greeks had this idea from the very beginning; they always did have a word for everything. (Only the charioteers were allowed to compete wearing clothes.) Visitors from foreign countries were either shocked or amused at this peculiar un-Asiatic habit, but it certainly set the Greeks apart from every other civilization, then or now.

Impossible as it may seem, we know the name of the first recorded Olympic champ: a cook

named Koroibos, who won the *stadion* in 776 B.C. Thanks to a "victors list" first compiled by Hippias of Elis, and revised through the centuries by the likes of Aristotle and Eusebius, we also know the names of 794 other winners. Philip II of Macedonia, Alexander the Great's father, was a three-peat in the chariot race. Nero won in fixed competitions, even winning his chariot race after he fell out of his moving vehicle. Eubatus, a runner from Cyrene, was so self-confident of victory that he arrived at the Games hauling his own statue. Then there was the famous wrestler Milo, who, on a bet, devoured a whole cow before his bout. He won his match. The most regimented of contestants had to be Ikkos of Tarentum, a champion pentathlete (discus, javelin, long jump, wrestling, and foot race). Plato says of him that "he never touched a woman, or a boy, while in training."

Let the Games begin!

D.L. Groover writes monthly on the arts for OutSmart.

It's no surprise that the Greeks invented athletic contests to honor the gods: What better way to cruise men than under the guise of religion?

tions that detailed the fines that paid for them levied against athletes caught cheating, lying, or bribing.

The two most startling differences between the ancient Games and the modern contests: the absence of women athletes and the fact that the men played in the nude.

Women in ancient Greece had no rights to speak of, other than those bestowed upon them by their husbands, which were usually no rights at all. They were kept in the house to bear children, while their husbands traipsed off to the gymnasium bearing gifts for their boyfriends. Unmarried women had an Olympic festival of their own, dedicated to Hera, wife of Zeus, but scholars still debate whether they were allowed into the stadium during the men's games. Married women could own a team of chariot horses, but (Zeus forbid!) could not witness the driving of their own teams. If an unfortunate gal sneaked in, she was unceremoniously carted off to nearby Mt. Typaeum and tossed off the cliffs (so says the second-century travel writer Pausanias). When the

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The Beastie Boys

(Entertainment Weekly, 6/18/04)

Pastor Craig Minich: I like your music a lot, especially the early and middle albums. As a gay man, however, I don't like the song "Girls" [*Licensed to Ill*]. I understand it may be tongue-in-cheek ["I asked her out, she said, 'No way!'/I should've probably guessed they're gay"], but as a person who works with teens, the song sends a pretty poor message to females and males alike ["Girls to do the dishes/Girls to clean up my room"]. Defend yourselves, fools!

Ad-Rock: Craig, I appreciate your question. I like the way you stated your question. I like where you're coming from. There is no defense. I agree with you. It means we were stupid teenage boys.

Mike D: I think at the time we definitely didn't realize what a serious effect it would have putting that record out there. But, ya know, hey—maybe Craig will appreciate what we're putting out now.

MCA: I had nothing to do with it, man! My voice isn't even on that song. Those fools made the record when I was outta the studio. But I'm not makin' any excuses—it's a jackass song.

Jon Stewart

(CNN Larry King Live, 6/25/04)

Larry King: So are you saying that all politicians hide themselves from us, their real selves? Is that what you're saying?

Jon Stewart: Please tell me you didn't just ask me that. . . .

But wait a minute, are you saying, therefore, it's impossible for a politician to be great?

That is correct. . . . You know what it is? They should come out of the closet. It's like when gay people feel like they have to be closeted, and [then] they come out, a huge burden is lifted off their shoulders. Politicians should come out of the closet. . . .

Will same-sex marriage be an issue in the campaign?

Same-sex marriage is a very difficult situation, and I was freaked out by it, too. . . .

Why?

Well, until I found out that it wasn't mandatory. Because I love my wife and I'd hate to have to leave her for a dude. So I didn't want that.

You thought it was mandatory.

You never know. . . . They said "gay marriage" and people got upset, so I figured, well clearly this means that there's a law being passed that we all now have to be gay.

Oh, I see.

Once it was explained to me that it was only gay people, I seem much more comfortable with it. It doesn't seem like such a big deal anymore.

You think it will be an issue?

Oh, I think they'll try to make it an issue. It's one of those wonderful red herrings that people throw into elections like as though that will in any way be crushing the culture. It's like the Ten Commandments issue. That's another one that's culturally divisive and societally meaningless—putting the Ten Commandments in the school and that way kids won't shoot each other, because they'll [go to school] with an AK-47 and go, *Thou shall not kill. You know, I really have got to look at this thing.*

10 Years Ago This Month

Stevie Nicks

(singer with Fleetwood Mac)

(Details, 8/94, Lance Loud)

Lance Loud: Do you still see [Prince]?

Stevie Nicks: No. I was at the premiere of *Purple Rain*, and in the scene where he slaps Apollonia I freaked and had to go sit in the bathroom. Afterward, I went back to see him, and when he asked why I'd left, I had to tell him, "When you popped Apollonia, it kinda popped my brain." He looked at me like it just killed him. We've never spoken since. (sighs) It's a shame, really . . . we were alike in so many ways.

Such as?

Well, for one thing, we both liked wearing black chiffon around the house.

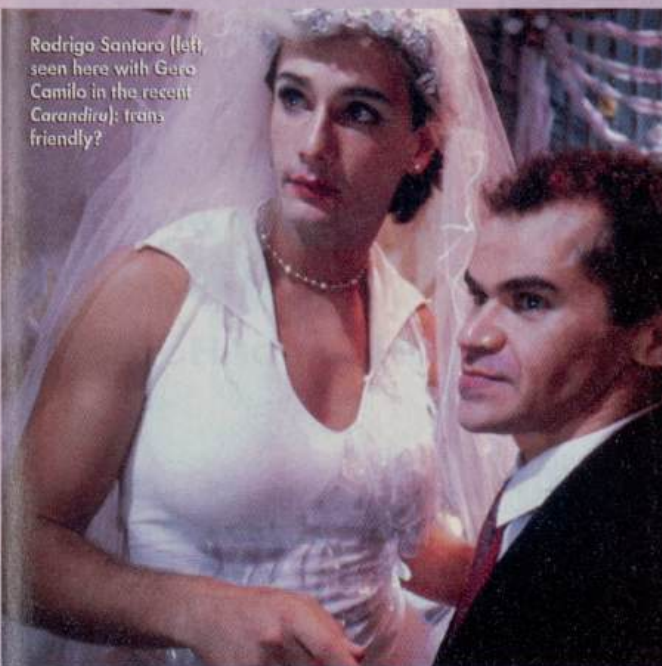
Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano

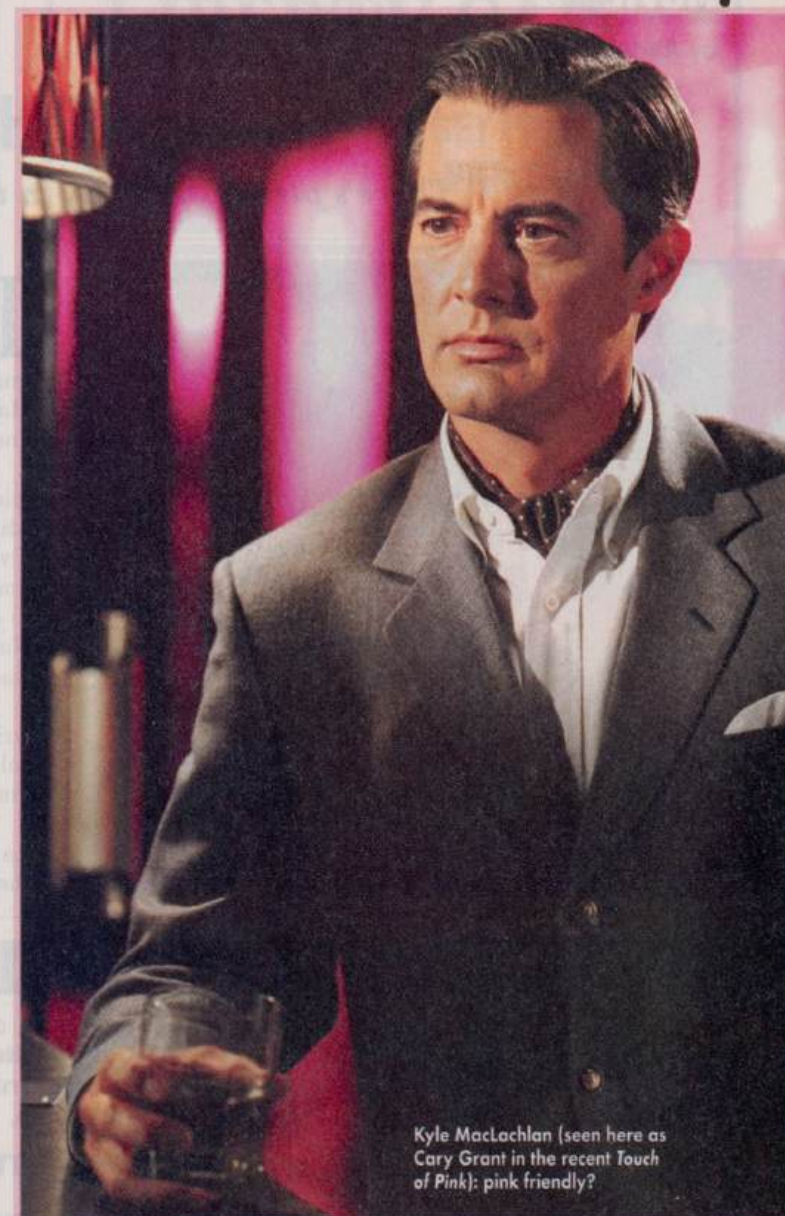
Rodrigo Santoro

(Interview, 7/04, Richard Dormant)

[Santoro] admits he didn't fully grasp the impact his performance [as a tender-hearted transvestite in Hector Babenco's *Carandiru*] would have in Brazil, where masculinity remains an especially tricky topic. "When girls saw me kissing a guy on the screen, they would scream and leave the movie," recalls the 28-year-old actor. "But it was great to open minds a little bit. People would say, 'That guy we consider so macho is doing that.'"



Rodrigo Santoro (left, seen here with Gero Camilo in the recent *Carandiru*): trans friendly?



Kyle MacLachlan (seen here as Cary Grant in the recent *Touch of Pink*): pink friendly?

Kyle MacLachlan

(The Advocate, 7/20/04, Lawrence Ferber)

In the film *Touch of Pink*, MacLachlan plays Cary Grant. "[In the film, Grant's] sexual orientation is completely open," says MacLachlan. "It's not established one way or the other. But more important, he has tremendous feelings of care for Jimi's character and doesn't want to see him hurt."

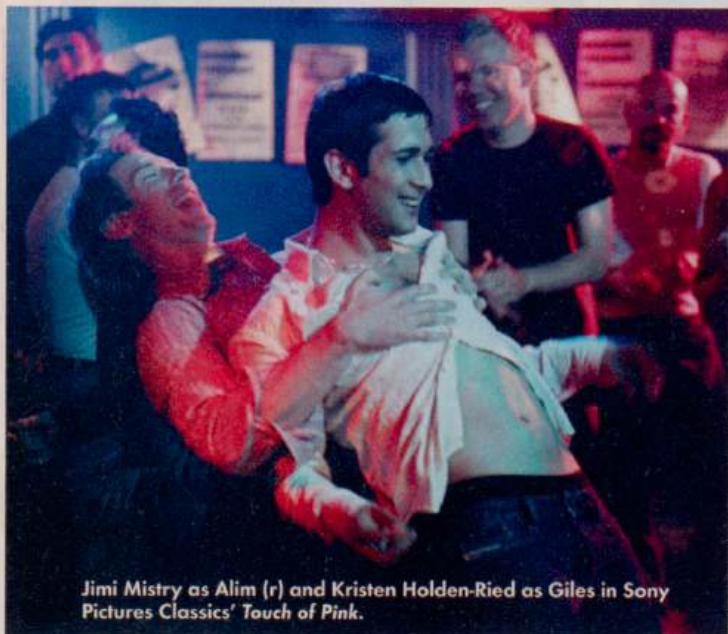
MacLachlan remembers feeling much the same when his best friend came out to him. "It was during the '80s," he says. "And my only words were, 'Please be careful, because of the situation with AIDS, because I don't want to lose you.'"

MacLachlan instantly lightens up. "And then [I said], 'Why are you telling me this? I've known for years. Come on!' He's still my best friend."

by Andrea Rodricks

COLOR HIM PINK

There's plenty of gaiety in the new film *Touch of Pink*



Jimi Mistry as Alim (r) and Kristen Holden-Ried as Giles in Sony Pictures Classics' *Touch of Pink*.

An Iqbal Rashid's directorial debut *Touch of Pink* is a romantic comedy featuring Alim (Jimi Mistry), a young Pakistani living in London. Caught up in the romance and style of old movies, Alim imagines he is living with the debonair ghost of Cary Grant (Kyle MacLachlan). This imaginary friend has stood by Alim, commenting and advising him his entire adult life.

Alim's partner Giles (Kristen Holden-Ried) is a handsome economist who is charming, intelligent and, comfortable with his sexuality. Alim has not only hidden his sexuality from his family, he has also divorced himself from his South Asian culture. When his devout Muslim mother Nuru (Suleka Mathew) shows up for a visit, Alim is forced to come face to face with his culture, values, and his own sexuality. Nuru is determined to get Alim back to Toronto to attend his cousin's wedding and hopefully find a nice Muslim bride.

The film has some great lines by Nuru and Cary Grant. Openly gay writer-director Rashid's feature film debut is a whimsical look at cross-cultural family and gay relationships and coming out in a South Asian family.

At press time, *Touch of Pink* was scheduled to start in August at Landmark's River Oaks Theatre (713/866-8881, www.landmarktheatres.com). For more info: www.sonyclassics.com/touchofpink.

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RELAX... IT'S JUST POLYSEX

Jennifer Tilly stars in this film that celebrates the gay "family of choice"

This 1998 film was something new for gay filmmaking. While the characters of most films would have a uniform sexual orientation, this was polysexual. Likewise, the cast was a remarkably "colorful" mix of white, black, and Latino. *Relax... It's Just Sex!* was also one of the first films to celebrate the gay "family of choice," and it was one of the very few films to feature an out, proudly gay lead actor—Mitchell Anderson, star of *Doogie Howser, M.D.* and *Party of Five*.

Anderson stars as lovelorn gay playwright who is a member of a close but wildly varied group of friends. The "mother," played by Jennifer Tilly, longs to have a child, but her boyfriend is getting the "itch." His brother has just discovered that he is HIV positive, and he is also very attracted to Anderson's new, and very opinionated, boyfriend.

Meanwhile, an interracial lesbian couple breaks up when one of them starts dating her lover's male cousin, and the "baby" of the family (Lori Petty) is eager to offer her shoulder. A harrowing street crime—a gay-bashing unlike any other shown on film—breaks the family apart, but they all come together in the face of unexpected tragedy.

Other cast members include Cynda Williams (*Tales of the City*), T.C. Carson (*Living Single*), Serena Scott Thomas (*The World Is Not Enough*), and Billy Wirth (*Boys on the Side*). Openly gay Paul Winfield, who recently died, has a fabulous cameo as Anderson's "Auntie Mahalia."

From TLA Releasing (www.tlareleasing.com, www.tlavideo.com). —Suzie Lynde



Just friends: *Relax... It's Just Sex!* stars Jennifer Tilly (l) and openly gay Mitchell Anderson.

MORE DVD/VHS PREVIEWS

Grief



Grief follows the exploits of the dysfunctional staff of a daytime court show, *Love Judge*. It centers on the show's writer (Craig Chester), who is mourning his lover's death from AIDS and yet has a crush on a "straight" coworker (Alexis Arquette). He is fighting to get a promotion to replace the show's producer (drag queen Jackie Beat) who is leaving to get married. Offering support is a coworker (Illeana Douglas) who wants his job, if only she can stop flirting with the ever-present copy-machine repairman. The 1993 comedy was directed by Richard Glatzer, who recently wrote and directed the gay independent hit *The Fluffer*. From TLA Releasing (www.tlareleasing.com, www.tlavideo.com). —Troy Carrington

Same-Sex Parents

Teenage love can be tough, just like Olympia (Louise



Monot). With a lesbian mother (Elisabeth Bourgine), a gay father (Samuel Labarthe), and a confused boyfriend Leo (Lucas Bonnifant), life is anything but easy. Further complicating matters, enter Geraldine (Julie Fournier), a cruel classmate who takes pleasure in outing Olympia's mother and hitting on Leo. After suffering a particularly brutal day of harassment at school, Olympia demands her mother explain her relationship with her father, but her mother never seems to have the time to discuss the issue. She then decides to head to Paris to seek out her father whom she believes can answer all of her identity questions. But upon returning home and walking in on her mother making love to her girlfriend, Olympia cracks. Her mother's indiscretion, her tenuous situation at school, and her troubled relationship with Leo all drive Olympia to desperate measures. The 2001 film confronts the issues facing unconventional themes, but is at its center a story about parental love and the search for identity. French

with English subtitles. From Picture This! Entertainment (www.picturethisent.com). —SL

Smell of Camphor, Fragrance of Jasmine



In this audacious black comedy, Bahman Farjami (Bahman Farmanara), a filmmaker who has not directed for 20 years due to censorship, experiences a strange set of coincidences that convince him that the Angel of Death must be near. As a means of confronting his fears, he decides to make a film about his own funeral. Through a series of fiascos leading to a comic and cathartic vision of his own disastrous funeral, he goes on an emotional roller-coaster ride that culminates in a Fellini-esque dream so intense that it may lead to his actual death. *The Chicago Tribune*: "A cross between Bergman and Fellini with a touch of deadpan humor thrown in." 2002. Directed by Bahman Farmanara ("an Iranian Woody Allen," says *The New* →

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STRIPPING ON DVD

• Showgirls

Sick. Really sick. But not in a bad way. Forget the fact that it's a great bad film. Forget the fact that *The New York Times* called *Showgirls* a "camp classic."



The look of love?: Gina Gershon (l) and Elizabeth Berkley.

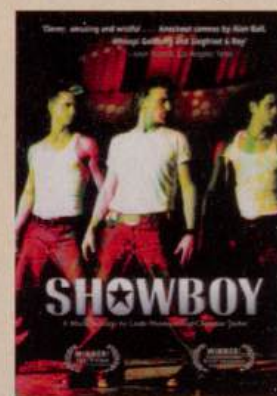
Forget the fact that Gina Gershon is probably the only one in the film in on the joke. Forget all that. OK, I can see a DVD of the 1995 film being released. Hell, I can even see a DVD with a few extras. But are you ready for this?! The *Showgirls* V.I.P. Edition is a first-of-its-kind limited edition DVD boxed set packed with special features and party-pack items! You read that right. Besides *Showgirls* shot glasses and *Showgirls* playing cards, there are four party games ("Sip or Strip," "Showgirls A to Z," "Bad Tipper," and "Champagne Room") and—my favorite—the "Pin-the-Pasties-on-the-Showgirl" game (includes two pasties, a blindfold, game rules, and a *Showgirls* poster pin-up of star Elizabeth Berkley).

I guess I could mention the film itself. While trying to make it as a Las Vegas showgirl, Nomi Malone (Berkley) takes a job as a lap dancer in a seedy club. She eventually winds up fulfilling her dream by becoming understudy to bisexual Cristal Connors (Gershon), the top(less) showgirl in Vegas. Yeah, they kiss, but Nomi has sex with only Cristal's boyfriend (Kyle MacLachlan). And what does the understudy do to become the "star"? Well, it's not sexual.

Political correctness aside, it's a helluva slide up and down and around that pole. From MGM Home Entertainment (www.mgm.com/dvd). —Blase DiStefano

• Showboy

Hailed as "terrifically funny!" by *Entertainment Weekly*, *Showboy* is a mockumentary about Christian Taylor, a real-life writer on *Six Feet Under*.



When Taylor agrees to let a British television crew film for a documentary, he doesn't realize that they overhear it when executive producer Alan Ball unexpectedly fires him. Rather than admit he's been canned, Taylor tells the crew he's got a new project and has them follow him as he begins an unusual quest to fulfill a life-long dream to become a Vegas showboy. From strip-mall dance studios to the stages of Vegas's top shows, from Siegfried & Roy to Whoopi Goldberg, the crew observes Taylor's erratic passion-fueled journey. Along the way, they meet a cast of wild and wonderful characters who are the true life and soul of Vegas. Stephen Holden of *The New York Times* called *Showboy* "a clever hide-and-seek game of

reality versus fiction." The DVD edition includes a fact/fiction trivia game and a commentary track by Taylor. 2002. Available August 17 from Wolfe Video (www.wolfevideo.com). —TC



DVD/VHS continued from page 68

York Times). Farsi with English subtitles. From New Yorker Video (www.newyorkerfilms.com). —SL

Close to Leo



At 21, Leo (Pierre Mignard) is the eldest of four children; at 11, Marcel (Yannis Lespert) is the youngest. Along with their relatively young parents, they are a happy and loving group. They all love Leo and accept his homosexuality, but when they learn of his HIV-positive status, they face a situation

that will eventually test all bonds. Worried that Marcel is too young to know the truth, the family elects not to tell the young boy about Leo's status. But when the facts slip out, Leo must repair his relationship with his baby brother and, at the same time, make major decisions regarding his own future. Directed by Christophe Honoré. French with English subtitles. 2003. From Picture This! Entertainment (www.picturethisent.com). —TC

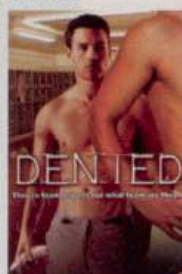
The Legend of Leigh Bowery

This 2002 documentary is a colorful and eye-opening look into the extravagant life lived by Leigh Bowery, as well as a no-holds-barred view of the underworld of London in the '80s. Residing for most of his adult life in London, Bowery became known as a musician (lead singer in the art rock group Minty), nightclub connoisseur, actor, racy performer, and, most notably, as a costume/clothing



designer. He became an inspiration to many artists and created numerous outrageous looks and styles throughout his time. In 1994, Bowery died of AIDS. Most recently, the Broadway musical *Taboo* was produced by Rosie O'Donnell using Bowery as the subject and starring Boy George. Directed by Charles Atlas. DVD special features include director/producer commentary, an interview with O'Donnell and Boy George, a photographic fashion show of Bowery's fashions, and much more. From Palm Pictures (www.palmpictures.com). —TC

Denied



Former high school hunk Troy had everything: popularity, girls, and the life of a super jock. But time is passing in a rotting small town, where Troy's truest goal and only denial is the love of another guy, his best friend Merrick. Merrick is a lazy, self-absorbed slacker whose offerings of midnight massages and cheap sex while his girlfriend is away are an endless merry-go-round of confusion for the sexy team captain. Troy soon comes to realize the one-sided love is the worst kind of denial. From Ariztical Entertainment (www.ariztical.com). More info: Culture Q Connection (www.cultureqconnection.com). —TC

TV ON DVD



• South Park: The Complete Fourth Season

This three-disc box set is comprised of all 17 episodes of the fourth season, including the twisted classic episode "Cartman Joins NAMBLA," in which Cartman decides to seek the friendship of older men. Using the Internet, he makes a connection with men who love to hang out with little boys. An organization called NAMBLA (North American Man Boy Love Association) holds a meeting in South Park, and Cartman becomes their poster child. The boys learn how much an adult can really love a child. The bonus material contains 5- to 7-minute mini-conversations on all 17 episodes by creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone. From Comedy Central Home Entertainment (www.comedycentral.com) and Paramount Home Entertainment (www.paramount.com/homeentertainment). —TC



• Wonder Woman

Viewers can once again take flight in Wonder Woman's invisible airplane as she fights crime armed with her dazzling costume, bullet-repelling bracelets, and golden lasso of truth now that Warner Home Video has released the three-disc collector's set featuring all 13 first-season episodes of the series starring former Miss USA Lynda Carter. In addition to each episode, the set includes the 90-minute movie pilot of the live-action series based on Charles Moulton's classic DC comic book. Other features include audio commentary on the pilot by Carter and executive producer Douglas Cramer, as well as the never-before-seen documentary *Beauty, Brawn and Bulletproof Bracelets: A Wonder Woman Retrospective*. From Warner Home Video (www.warnervideo.com). —TC

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Compiled by
Blase DiStefano

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Chrissy Gephardt (left), daughter of congressman and ex-presidential candidate Dick Gephardt, and Keith Boykin, president of the National Black Justice Coalition and former special assistant to President Clinton, vying for the U.S.'s highest political position in Showtime's *American Candidate*.



Unscripted and unprecedented, *American Candidate* is a 10-episode, one-hour reality series from Academy Award-nominated and Emmy-winning documentary filmmaker R.J. Cutler (*American High*, Showtime's *Freshman Diaries*).

The series will attempt to identify one individual who has the qualifications and qualities to be president of the United States. The show debuts with 12 contestants from all walks of life (including Chrissy Gephardt and Keith Boykin, both openly gay). Over the course of the next 10 weeks, those 12 will face-off against each other

in a series of challenges designed to test their presidential mettle and to show viewers what really goes on in the making of a presidential candidate. Week-by-week, the original pool of candidates will be winnowed down. The final episode will be a showdown between the remaining two candidates, and one person will emerge victorious—the “American Candidate”—by proving that he or she has what it takes to run for the highest office in the land.

Debuts Sunday, August 1 on Showtime (www.sho.com, where you can also check out the websites of all 12 candidates).

PARTY MONSTER

For their narrative debut, directors Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato return to the 1980s' New York Club Kid milieu that they chronicled in their 1988 documentary (also called *Party Monster*). This 2003 fictional version stars *Home Alone* icon Macaulay Culkin as Michael Alig, a cherubic blond who makes his way to New York hungry for fame, fortune, and fabulousness. After seizing upon the flamboyant party fixture James St. James (Seth Green) as a mentor, Michael sets about re-inventing himself as a party promoter and latter-day Warhol. Student quickly surpasses teacher in outrageousness, and even James is stunned by Michael's drug-addled odyssey—which culminates in murder. *Party Monster* costars Wilson Cruz, Chloe Sevigny, Dylan McDermott, and singer Marilyn Manson as Christina, Alig's drag queen “superstar.” The U.S. television premiere of *Party Monster* is on Sundance Channel, Sunday, August 22, at 7 p.m., with repeat airings on the 24th at 9 p.m., the 28th at 10:30 p.m., and the 31st at 12:30 a.m. To confirm schedule: www.sundancechannel.com. ■

Macaulay Culkin (l), Wilson Cruz (c), and Seth Green don gay apparel.

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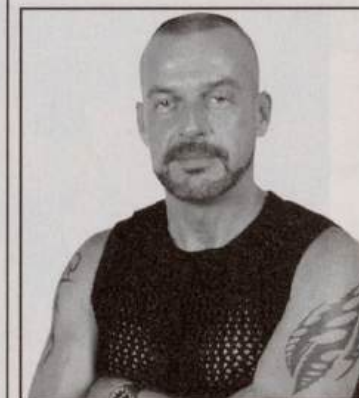
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DARK NOTES

Queer lead singer Jamie Stewart brings Xiu Xiu's somber vision to Houston

The late Ian Curtis, lead singer of the British punk rock band Joy Division, took his own life in 1979. His band's music has inarguably lived on, though. Joy Division is widely recognized as having been well ahead of its time, and its posthumous fan base exceeds anything that transpired during its active career. The surviving members of that band did go on to form the hugely successful new wave group New Order, but had Curtis lived, he likely would have been at the forefront of an innovative movement all his own. In fact, he might have even made a record like Xiu Xiu's *Fabulous Muscles* (5 Rue Christine).

The comparison is noteworthy because of the slight similarities between the voices of Curtis and Xiu Xiu (pronounced "shoo shoo") lead singer Jamie Stewart. Both have a deep, almost operatic tone, both move comfortably from a whisper to



Jamie Stewart (with the band Xiu Xiu) will perform in Houston on August 19 at Fat Cat's.

GrooveOut Shorts

Athens Boys Choir
Rhapsody in T

Proving that poetry is not just for quiet, introspective types, the Athens Boys Choir barges onto the scene with an in-your-face debut album and a take-no-prisoners attitude, more than likely blowing out a few conservative eardrums in the process. Through a traditional spoken-word style, performance poets Rocket and Katz attack controversial issues, ranging from transgender awareness to the current presidential administration ("we've got a cowboy for president, thinks he's the upper-class John Wayne") with unapologetic zeal. Throw into the mix a creative array of background tracks like horse-hoof beatboxing and a satirical sample of "Hail to the Chief," and you're left with a rousing and rhyming call to action. If you're not familiar with spoken-word poetry, political activism, or the concept of "gender queer," then *Rhapsody in T*

will provide a unique and aggressive education. Available August 10 from Daemon Records (www.daemonrecords.com). —Thomas Blanton

Franz Ferdinand
Franz Ferdinand

The quote most often associated with this Scottish outfit is "a band you wish you hated." That's really not far off the mark as far as a lot of folks are concerned. Franz Ferdinand's derivative post-punk disco tunes have had many a dance floor boiling in recent months, much to the bemusement of music fans who want a little substance with their ear candy. Musically, that might not happen, but lyrically, you'll find it on "Michael," a homorotically charged call out to the other side of the dance floor to the "boy with leather hips." Subtext indeed. From Domino (www.dominorecordco.com). —Lance Scott Walker

Broadway Cast Recording
Taboo

The musical *Taboo* produced by Rosie O'Donnell and Adam



Kentwright featured critically acclaimed music and powerful lyrics by Boy George. *Taboo*, written by the former Culture Club singer and '80s pop star, is an autobiographical musical during the '80s world of gender-bending drugs and rock-'n'-roll. The heart and soul of *Taboo* are Boy George's witty and moving lyrics that make for a great original score along with classic hits including "Karma Chameleon" and "Do You Really Want to Hurt Me?" The London production had its final performance in April 2003, and the Broadway production had its final performance in February 2004. From DRG Records (www.drgrecords.com). —Andrea Rodricks

New Broadway Cast Recording
Fiddler on the Roof

Alfred Molina stars as Tevye in this new production of an American musical classic with music by Jerry Bock and lyrics by Sheldon Harnick. This 73-minute recording is the most complete version of *Fiddler* available on CD. In addition to beloved songs like "Matchmaker," "If I Were a Rich Man," and "Sunrise, Sunset," it includes several

a roar, and both convey a dark, mysterious undertone that takes repeated listens to unearth.

But while Curtis's voice has been copied in the rock world for decades now, you don't get the impression that Stewart is following suit. Indeed, that likeness is more accidental than intentional, as this is a man far too immersed in a mission of his own. Along with Cody McCulloch, Ches Smith, Devin Hoff, Miya Osaki, Caralee McElroy, and Jherek Bischoff, this openly queer singer/songwriter has produced one of the best underground records of the year. Fraught with deep, buzzing synthesizers, slashing electronic beats, and restrained acoustic guitars, the songs—even in their finished form—are largely unsettled. Most move rapidly from the quiet parts between the verse and chorus to driving, unhinged movements characterized by Stewart's intense, guttural growl, which is at times so loud that it envelops the microphone in a haze of distortion that drowns all else out.

The element that will first draw attention to any artist is the music itself, but with Xiu Xiu (performing in Houston on August 19 at Fat Cat's) the stories concealed in the songs are equally significant. They are incredibly somber narratives about sexual, emotional, and political dominance in all their negative connotations. Off-putting as that may seem, public reception has never been an issue for the group.

"It's not really our concern how people see it," Stewart explains. "The songs are about things that are happening or have happened in our lives, and some of those →



tracks missing from the original cast recording, as well as a new song, "Topsy-Turvy," that Bock and Harnick penned for this production (their first collaboration in over 30 years). From PS Classics (www.psclassics.com). —Troy Carrington

Jane Olivor
The Best of Jane Olivor

Jane Olivor is best known for her beautifully haunting voice, which is evident from the very first verse of "The Greatest Love of All" and continues to amaze the listener to the end of a live rendition of Grace Slick's "Seasons." Olivor sings each and every song with the greatest of control and the most soulful, heartfelt of emotions in her voice. She performs songs by Rodgers & Hammerstein, Don McLean, Marvin Hamlisch, Melissa Manchester, and Neil Sedaka as if each one had been written precisely →

Dog Days of Summer

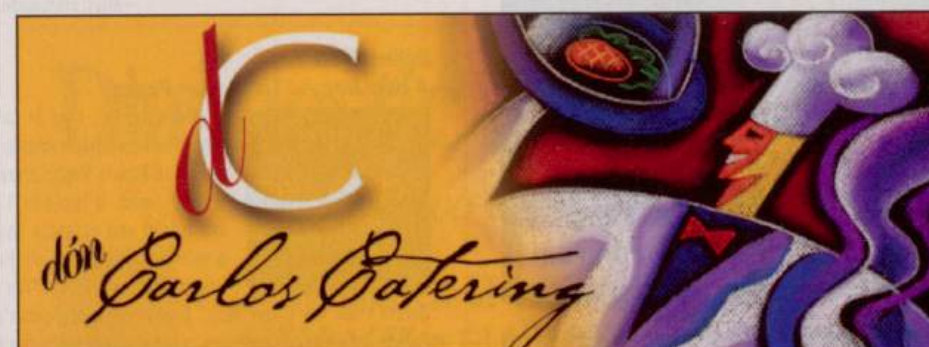
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GrooveOut

continued from previous page

things are dark/ruinous and/or non-mainstream aspects of sexuality, like transgenderism, child molestation, sexual assault, bisexuality, and institutionalized gender oppression. People can and should react however is honest for them."

That's not to say that the outlook of Xiu Xiu is inherently negative. The stories might center on somewhat negative events or themes, but Stewart in particular has motivated himself in the direction of more positive goals. In addition to doing educational outreach in high schools regarding queer issues, he has also done social work in the AIDS field, including volunteering work with terminally ill patients—of which he notes he saw equally as many IV drug users as queers. Indeed, even in Xiu Xiu's seemingly dismal message, there is a brighter overall goal.

"Maybe not hope so much," he says. "But hopefully some personal understanding of why these things happen and maybe a stronger grip over them. I have a hard time coming to terms with the *why* that we focus on sometimes."

That *why* might never be answered, as it perhaps shouldn't be. But it nevertheless will continue to manifest itself in Xiu Xiu's continuing upward swing.

"The concept of writing specifically about what is happening around and to us will remain constant and, for us, that is what really defines what we are trying to do," Stewart says. "Musically, on the next record—we are in the middle of working on it—is (so far) much quieter and experimental than the last one, but it



will maintain a pop style of singing—pop in so far as melodic singing with words you can mostly hear. I don't think, though, that it is too healthy for us to really try and figure out where we are going. We get neurotic about what we are doing enough as it is, and I think just doing it and trying to be as open as possible is as best as we can do."

Lance Scott Walker writes regularly on music for OutSmart.

TALK ABOUT SEX
Quips openly queer Xiu Xiu leader singer Jamie Stewart, "I wish I could say my sexuality comes before my art, but it has been awhile—so, by default... art."

GrooveOut Shorts

continued from previous page

for her. Combine the gay-friendly singer's incredible voice with that of openly gay Johnny Mathis's incredible voice on the Oscar-nominated "The Last Time I Felt Like This" from the movie *Same Time Next Year*, and what you have is one of the most romantic songs of our era. From Legacy (www.legacyrecordings.com).

—Marc Hernandez

Celine Dion A New Day... Live in Las Vegas



A New Day... Live in Las Vegas brings all the passion of Celine Dion's Vegas show to your home. It features 13 live tracks and contains two previously unreleased studio tracks: "You and I" and "Ain't Gonna Look the Other Way." Dion's show at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas has been sold out every night since its debut on March 25, 2003. From Sony Music (www.sonymusic.com). For more info: www.celine.com. —Suzie Lynde

Jeanine Paris by Night



While some have tried to pigeonhole Jeanine as a "goth rocker," she actually defies categorization, for, while her songs tend to explore the murkier areas of life, she blends the jangling guitars of folk, the pulsing drums of rock, and an overall sound that sweeps up into climactic peaks before pulling back to a taught calmness. One listen to "Remember This Smile," with its Latin-tinged drum patterns, or the Courtney Love flavor of "Your Element," illustrates that Jeanine follows her muse in whatever direction it takes her. From 7records (www.7records.com). —SL

The Concretes The Concretes



Another fine release from Astralwerks and another pleasant surprise on their ever-varying roster. The Concretes are a group of ladies and gentlemen from Sweden, but their sound is more of a nod to Phil Spector's wall of sound than it is to fellow Swedes ABBA. Light, retrofitted pop songs with an orchestra's worth of folks making it happen. From Astralwerks (www.astralwerks.com). —LSW

Honeyroot Sound Echo Location



Heaven 17 frontman Glen Gregory and ABC journeyman keyboardist Keith Lowndes (Magazine, Pil, Siouxsie and the Banshees) have collaborated on scores for movies and film projects of late, but this is their first actual album together. These are *super* downtempo chill tracks—almost ambient, but their natural songwriting tendency still shows through, and though this is largely mood music, the songs themselves have to be applauded for at least a mild sense of purpose. From New World (www.newworldmusic.com). —LSW

Angie Stone Stone Love



If not for the appearance of Snoop Dogg and Philadelphia hip-hop duo Floetry, you could almost be lead to believe that this record was recorded and released in the late '70s. It is a markedly soul-drenched collection of songs, highlighted by "U-haul" and "I wanna thank ya," of which she performs two versions—one with Snoop

and one without. She does fine on her own, though—as she says herself: No love is stronger than Stone Love. From J Records (www.jrecords.com). —LSW

Lisala Get It



This is an impressive debut release by Lisala, an accomplished vocalist with a distinctive approach to soul and R&B. *Get It* is an undeniably soulful album with a combination of influences and arresting beats. She is involved in all aspects of her music from performing to writing, arranging, and producing. The talented singer/songwriter gives listeners a mix of electronic grooves, up-tempo vocals, and an insight into the future of rhythm and blues. From Anonka Records. More info: www.lisala.com. —AR

Angela McCluskey The Things We Do



The Things We Do marries Angela McCluskey's melancholic Billie Holiday to her brash Janis Joplin. It's a swinging and swaying rock-soul album, kissed by McCluskey's edginess. Subtle and bittersweet, McCluskey's voice sweeps like the strings on "It's Been Done," the album's optimistic opener; you empathize with "Evaporator" as she steals your senses via sprawling verse-chorus; "Medication" soars like Top 40 radio; "This Night" meanders into a smoky jazz club circa 1939. From Manhattan Records (www.manhattanrecords.com). Info: www.angelaclluskey.com. —SL

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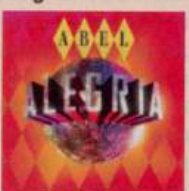
soundscapes overlap on distant horizons, but then compress so tightly, so intensely—so incredibly sexy—it makes you sweat. Incredibly, it's been eight years since Sweetback released their self-titled album. In that time, popular music has shifted gears and spun off in other directions, but not Sweetback. The fundamental open house policy at the heart of the band remains: deep pub and deep romance. The three-man core of Sweetback have cut their teeth working with Sade. From Epic Records (www.epicrecords.com). —TC

Cherie Cherie



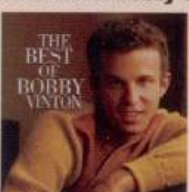
Cherie's up-tempo breakthrough single "I'm Ready" features the familiar guitar lick from Foreigner's "Urgent" and was showcased as the main title for the Disney film *Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen*. The 19-year-old singer's single was also selected for *Women & Songs*, the biggest female singer/songwriter CD compilation ever assembled (includes Christina Aguilera, Alicia Keys, Sarah McLachlan, and Faith Hill). Cherie's new self-titled album is available from Lava Records (www.lavarecords.com). —SL

Abel Alegria



This 22-track, double CD is 140 minutes of classic clang-and-bang Abel that literally grabs you by your eardrums and forces you to succumb to the hard beats. Divided into two sets, "Peek Hour" and "After Hour," the party CD features dance-floor-bouncing remixes of #1 hits "Don't You Want My Love" and "That Sound." The vigor continues with Night-crawlers "Push the Feeling On" and JJ Flores and Steve Smooth featuring Alex Peace's "Discoteca." Then there's the seductive chant of Ophra Haza's remixed "Love Song" by DJ Paulo. And how could an Abel party be complete without the cha cha? Throw your hands up in the air and get down to the fierce Latin beats of Rosabel featuring Jeanie Tracy's "Cha Cha Heels." From Tommy Boy Records (www.tommyboy.com). —TC

Bobby Vinton The Best of Bobby Vinton



Take a step back in time with this collection of familiar oldies. Bobby Vinton became an overnight sensation topping the charts with many romantic hits like "Roses Are Red" and "Blue Velvet." Vinton succeeded as a vocalist during the rock-'n'-roll era and the British invasion of the U.S. charts.

The CD includes 14 beautiful ballads recorded by one of America's most beloved entertainers. From Legacy (www.legacyrecordings.com). More info: www.bobbyvinton.com. —AR

Kansas

Kansas & Song for America



A progressive rock band, Kansas enjoyed multi-platinum fame. Their lengthy and complex compositions, unusual lyrical themes, and use of a violin as a lead and solo instrument gave the band a unique sound all its own. The music of Kansas was a fusion of early '70s-style British progressive rock with the soul and instrumentation of the American heartland. The expanded editions of the first two albums by Kansas are the self-titled *Kansas* including a live version of "Bringing It Back," recorded live at the Agora Ballroom in Cleveland, and *Song for America* including a single edit of "Song for America" and a live version of "Down the Road" also recorded at the Agora Ballroom. They helped define the sound of classic rock. From Legacy (www.legacyrecordings.com). More info: www.kansasband.com. —AR

Deep Forest

The Essence of the Forest



In the early '90s, classically-trained musician Michel Sanchez approached his friend, house music producer Eric Mouquet, with the idea of transforming traditional sounds from the pygmy cultures of Zaire and the Central African Republic into something with broader appeal. Thus their debut *Deep Forest*. For their 1995 follow-up *Bohème*, they turned their attention to Eastern Europe, adding fiddles and accordion to the mix. When they received their second nod for Best World Music Album at the Grammy Awards, they walked away winners. 1998's *Comparsa* focused on Latin and Caribbean grooves. *Music Detected*, released in 2002, downplayed samples in favor of live instrumentation, particularly drums. Having already combed every corner of the planet Earth to concoct the universal grooves preserved here, one can only imagine where Deep Forest's travel will take them—and us—next. From Epic/Legacy (www.epicrecords.com, www.legacyrecordings.com). —SL

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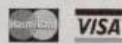
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BRIDGE BUILDING

Sally reaches across the cultural divide over gay marriage

So, tell me about life in Oregon. "Auragawn" is how the thirty-something woman from Virginia pronounces my home state.

I should be tolerant—I'm the only woman at this writing conference in Dayton, Ohio, who isn't wearing high heels, and nobody's bad-vibing me. During our networking session, we're supposed to meet each other, aided by nametags dangling from everyone's necks. Despite permission to chest-gaze, I do my best to make eye contact.

Ms. Virginia and I exchange business cards. She balances on four-inch stilettos, flicks back her professionally streaked hair, and says she's married to an army man and writes about military life for a mainstream newspaper, apparently having no shame about any of this.

Her lack of coyness encourages me. "My wife and I are plaintiffs in a lawsuit challenging marriage discrimination against same-sex couples." It's a fun fact to toss around at an event where I'm already weird

Ms. Virginia balances on four-inch stilettos, flicks back her professionally streaked hair, and says she's married to an army man and writes about military life for a mainstream newspaper, apparently having no shame about any of this.

for wearing sneakers. We're getting impatient, I say, for our 16-year relationship to be legally recognized: "I want the law to stop discriminating against us."

The marriage topic establishes a connection. People who don't get the gay

thing can still understand wanting to be married.

Virginia Woman has been following gay marriage in the news. "I wish I could support you." She daubs at an eyelash that has sprung free of the Maybelline.

Turns out Military Wife has gay neighbors. A couple of good-looking guys live next door—friendly, lovely garden, bring nice wine to her dinner parties. Then there's the wild guy in the shabby apartment who entertains a steady stream of male houseguests.

What she imagines goes on in there is so far out of her realm of acceptable behavior (but not her curiosity) that she'd vote against legalized marriage for same-sex couples rather than "endorse a promiscuous lifestyle"—as if nobody but

homos has multiple partners.

Dayton, Ohio, reminds me that beyond the pale of my comfy L-word world are lots of folks who aren't tuned into the marriage-equality zeitgeist. Scads of Americans still don't have any gay people in their lives. Or they don't know they do. Or they know the two queer households in their neighborhood and base their political decision-making on their limited exposure. The land of stereotypes and fear is their comfort zone.

Between us is a chasm, an enormous cultural divide. Somebody's got to build a bridge.

Throughout the three-day conference, the Virginian and I snag moments to chat. In the corridor after a workshop session she takes hold of my arm. "You've got me in such a tizzy! I can't get this marriage thing off my mind."

I want to understand her thinking, to get a handle on how a fair-minded person like her can support discrimination. We talk over lunch, in line at the book signing, during a lull in the keynote address. She tells me what it's like being married to a military man, the commitment it takes, the struggles. I get it. She works hard for her marriage to succeed. It's precious to her. She feels protective.

I tell her I admire her and respect her marriage. I share more about mine, hoping she'll return the goodwill.

When the conference ends and we say our goodbyes, she is coming around. "I'm going to keep thinking about what you've said."

I will keep in mind that good people—reasonable people—can oppose so-called gay marriage (it's just plain marriage, folks) and still be worth talking to. Their reasoning won't hold up when they really examine it, because discrimination is wrong. Let's hope most folks want to do the right thing.

Equality doesn't mean we can't be different, I remind myself. That's what it means to honor diversity. We don't have to be alike to defend each other's civil liberties. And I don't have to cram my feet into pointy-toed pumps to support someone else's right to do it.

Sally Sheklow and her wife are one of nine plaintiff couples represented by the ACLU in an antidiscrimination lawsuit against the state of Oregon.

MORE ON MARRIAGE

Turn to page 32 for additional coverage on same-gender marriage.



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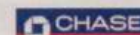
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HOME AWAY FROM HOME

The president and his right flank may recoil at the very idea of same-gender coupling, but more and more corporations realize there is gold in them there queers (money: the great American equalizer). One of these firms, Cendant Corporation, is targeting GLBT travelers as a market for its Holiday Network, an array of private vacation rental properties in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Through advertising and promotions, Holiday Network is seeking to acquaint consumers in our community with thousands of choices, which range from condos to multi-bedroom homes.

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More info: www.holidaynetwork.com/gaytravel, 1-866-844-2017.

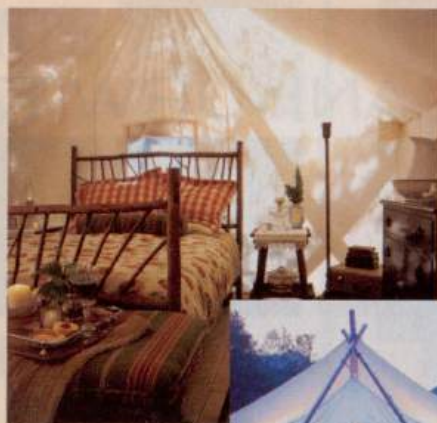
COOL IT

For all but the hardest of Texans, summer's charms have, by August, evaporated in the punishing heat. Beat the late-season swelter by planning a trip to one of these cooler-clime (and gay-friendly) destinations:

- Up in Canada, two of the luxe Clayoquot Wilderness Resort & Spa properties offer their first Gay & Lesbian Weekends, September 24-27.

Both located on Vancouver Island, the Quait Bay floating lodge and the Wilderness Outpost at Bedwell River are far from rustic. Think *Out of Africa* (without the angst) in the spectacular British Columbia woods.

The Clayoquot weekends are not a cheap date either, starting at \$3,565 CAD (double occupancy). But the package does include all five-course meals, a range of posh daytime activities (horseback riding, kayaking, whale watching, more), evening cocktail parties, and massage, in addition to accommodations. You might think about the trip as part of a Canadian wedding: Get hitched in Ontario, then zip



JOHN GRANICH/CLAYOQUOT



Heat relief: In late summer, cool temperatures beckon at gay-friendly spots in Canada and Nevada. Above: Scenes from the posh Outpost at Bedwell River on Vancouver Island include a typical guest tent and the bistro dining tent. Right: The new Stillwater Spa at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe Resort, Spa and Casino, which is beckoning GLBT tourists with special rates.



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- Out in Nevada, the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe Resort, Spa and Casino appeals to couples, including the gay-and-lesbian variety, with a getaway package that includes a room, two-for-one discounts at the Sierra Café, two treatments at the new Stillwater Spa, and \$10 free slot play in the casino. Ka-ching. Prices for the special are \$189 per night September 12 through October 16 and \$115 October 17 through December 17.

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Calendar of Events

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AUGUST

Daily (Mon.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic is offering HIV testing free to the public, 9 am-1 pm. There is no need to establish eligibility ("gold-card"), no donation will be asked of the person seeking testing, and the test is free. Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas, 713/873-4157 or 713/873-4026.

Daily (Mon.-Sat.)

HIV Testing. The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing at these locations. **Monday:** Bricks, 617 Fairview, 4-8 pm; O, 710 Pacific, 9 pm-1 am. **Tuesday:** The 611, 611 Hyde Park, 4-8 pm; Club Houston, 2205 Fannin, 8 pm-midnight. **Wednesday:** Mary's, 1100 Westheimer, 4-8 pm; Ripcord, 715 Fairview, 9 pm-1 am; E's, 2517 Ralph, 10 pm-1 am; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am. **Thursday:** All-Star News, 3415 Katy Frwy, 4-8 pm; BRB, 2400 Brazos, 8 pm-midnight; Cousins, 817 Fairview, 8 pm-midnight. **Friday:** E's, 2517 Ralph, 10 pm-1 am; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am; The Meatrack, 2915 San Jacinto, 10 pm-2 am; Rich's, 2401 San Jacinto, 10 pm-1 am. The clinic offers classes for those newly diagnosed with HIV or Hepatitis C. For more info: 713/830-3000.

6 (Fri.)

Pegasus Productions of Houston, a nonprofit community fundraising organization, is having its Second Birthday Party & Show benefiting the Montrose Clinic-HIV/Hepatitis C Testing & Counseling Programs. Festivities will be held at E's beginning at 8 pm. There will be a

fundraising show in honor of the titleholders and a very special presentation. There will be some great entertainment, delicious food, basket raffles, and fun. More info: www.pegasusproductions.org or pegasusproductions@houston.rr.com.

20 & 21 (Fri. & Sat.)

Comedy Sportz. Houston's longest-running improv show, will present two "Back-to-School Blues Buster" matches. A fun, interactive, competitive improv show for audiences of all ages. Comedy Sportz pits two teams of improvisers in a battle for laughs and points based on audience suggestions. No match is ever the same. 8 pm at the Comedy Sportz Arena, 901 Town & Country Blvd. Tickets are \$12. More info: 713/868-1444 or www.comedysportzhouston.com.

21 (Sat.)

Back-to-School Beach Party. Join HGLP (Houston Gay & Lesbian Parents) for a day at the beach in Galveston. Things to bring: blanket, towels, chairs, sandals or old sneakers, hats, beach toys, games, sunblock, whatever you want to eat and drink (be sure to bring lots of water). If you have a volleyball net, feel free to bring it. HGLP has one 9x9 cabana-they could use one more. As a backup, those with beach umbrellas are encouraged to bring them along. A boom box or two would be fine. Oh, and don't forget to bring the kids! 1-5 p.m. at Galveston Pocket Park No. 3. This is a Galveston County park. There is a small pavilion that includes restrooms, showers, and a concession window. Alcohol permitted; glass containers are banned. \$5 per car to park; no charge

to enter the beach. Park number: 409/737-1206. Take I-45 South to Galveston; exit 61st St.; follow 61st till it dead-ends into Seawall Blvd.; turn right on Seawall, which becomes FM 3005; follow the shoreline about 11 miles to the park. It will be on your left at FM 3005 and 11-Mile Road. After you walk across the boardwalk and are on the beach, turn right, and look for the blue cabana from which the rainbow flag will be flying. Info: Chuck at 713/667-9325. For general info: 713/284-4939 or www.hglp.org.

21 & 22 (Sat. & Sun.)

Ann Arbor 42nd Film Festival Tour. This is the oldest independent and experimental film festival in North America. The 42nd Tour presents 22 award-winning titles by filmmakers and artists from around the world. Its mission is to provide a worldwide public forum for moving image exhibitions, to promote the moving image as art and to offer educational outreach. Sat. at 8 pm, Sun. at 3 pm, at Aurora Picture Show, 800 Aurora St. More info: 713/868-2101 or www.aurorapictureshow.org.

25 (Wed.)

Maestro Collection. For over 20 years, the Houston Symphony's Maestro Collection has assembled Houston's most fashionable audiences to witness the latest in haute couture and fashion-forward design. The 2004 Maestro Collection Luncheon will take place at 11 am in the Westin Galleria Ballroom, 5060 West Alabama. Proceeds from the event benefit the Houston Symphony's education and outreach programs. Tables begin at \$1,500; individual tickets start

INFO NEEDED FOR YOUR EVENT LISTING: a few lines of info about your event; date/time; cost; location/address; organization name; AND two phone numbers—one for OutSmart to reach you for questions and one for OutSmart readers to get more info on your event. **Mail info to:** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston 77006. **Fax info to:** 713/522-3275. **E-mail info to:** calendar@outsmartmagazine.com. **NO LISTINGS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—WED., AUG. 11.**

at \$150. The 2004 show will feature the "Signature of Evening Collection" with Angel Sanchez. More info: Dara Daniel at 713/334-5619.

25 (Wed.)

Family Dinner @ Cafe Express. Join HGLP parents and kids every 4th Wednesday for a family dinner at Cafe Express River Oaks, 1422 West Gray, 6:30 pm. There are no agendas, tasks, or committee meetings. These are informal evenings for newcomers and longtime members to gather with their families and meet, socialize, and share stories. Info: Joe Milano at 713/528-2085 or e-mail joe@milanofamily.com. For general info: 713/284-4939 or www.hglp.org.

27-29 (Fri.-Sun.)

Paula Poundstone is one of the most popular stand-up comedians in the country today. Her ability to create humor on the spot with offbeat interpretations of everyday life has raised stand-up to an art form. 8 pm at The Improv Comedy Theater, 7620 Katy Fwy, I-10 at Silber. More info: 713/333-8800 or www.improv.com.

28 (Sat.)

Houston Civic Symphony Auditions. Orchestra positions currently open are percussion, harp, trombone, horn, and all string positions. Even if a position is currently filled, musicians are invited to audition for the substitute list. The Houston Civic Symphony has been performing fine classical concerts every season free of charge. Rehearsals on Tuesday evenings from 7:30-10 pm with a dress rehearsal held the Tuesday preceding a concert. Auditions will be held at Houston Community College Northwest, Town and Country Square, 1010 W. Sam Houston Pkwy N. Theater One. More info: 281/586-2100 or www.civicsymphony.org.

29 (Sun.)

HGLP Newsletter Mailout & Luncheon. The monthly newsletter mailout will be held from 2-3 pm at Pappas Bar-B-Que located at 1217 Pierce at San Jacinto. Adults and kids alike have fun socializing while collating, folding, stuffing, stamping, and labeling. Cake will be served to celebrate the August birthdays and anniversaries. More info: Janet or Chris at 281/681-0697 or e-mail hglpinc@yahoo.com. For general info: 713/284-4939 or www.hglp.org.

PLANNING AHEAD

SEPTEMBER

September 4

Heart returns to the stage. With the release of their first new studio album in over a decade, *Jupiter's Darling*, Heart will embark on a 48-city U.S. tour. The rock band features the talents of sisters Ann and Nancy Wilson. Arena Theater, 7326 Southwest Fwy. More info: 713/988-1020.

September 6

Labor Day Pool Party. Family activity scheduled by the Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents (HGLP). More info: 713/284-4939 or www.hglp.org.

September 10

Ethel is a 21st-century realization of the classical string quartet model fusing classical music with today's pop culture. The performance should prove to be an innovative, improvisational rock concert. 8 pm at Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 501 Texas. Info: 713/237-1439 or www.spahouston.org or www.ethelcentral.com.

PERFORMING ARTS

♦ **Balm in Gilead.** Hailed as the introduction to Experimental Theatre form, Lanford Wilson's *Balm in Gilead* serves as a beacon to those interested in the gritty side of performance. When it opened in 1965 at Café La Mama Experimental Theatre Club in New York City, fire marshals were called out to control the overflowing crowds of those trying to get a glimpse of this interactive, hyper-realistic piece of theater. *Balm in Gilead* is the opening of The Back Porch Players' 2004-2005 season. With their foundation and mission firmly rooted in the concept of community theater, The Back Porch Players always open their shows on—you guessed it—the executive producer's back porch. Like the famed Steppenwolf Theatre Company of Chicago—which burst onto the theater scene in the '80s with a revival of *Balm in Gilead*—The Back Porch Players' upcoming performance promises to secure a place in the Houston theater arena. Playing to sold-out crowds now for the past two years, The Back Porch Players are fired up to bring this classic to life. 8 pm, Aug. 1, 6, 7, and 8 (the Aug. 7 showing will be at 10:30 pm instead of 8). Barnevelder Theater, 2201 Preston (two blocks east of highway 59 and Minute Maid Park). Info: backporchplayers@aol.com or www.thebackporchplayers.org.

♦ **I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!** Back by popular demand, it's the show for anyone who's ever felt awkward on a date or in a relationship, and →

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TAMALIA 9

Tamarie Cooper returns with the wildly popular Tamalalia series, Houston's very own original summer musical and cult phenomenon, loved by critics and audiences alike. Be afraid. Be very afraid. This year, it's all about fear—Tamarie's fears—and it's up to her to confront them all, from her childhood fear that she would be humiliated in gym class to her current source of dread, learning how to drive. Along the way she explores the scary stuff that plagues us all: dentists, disease, and, of course, carbs. In true Tamalalia style, the show will offer original songs, witty comic sketches, intricate dance routines, colorful sets, and crazy costumes. Now in its ninth year, with an onstage band and a cast of 20, the eagerly anticipated series is said to be based on Tamarie's real-life preoccupations and misadventures. *Tamalalia 9* is presented by Infernal Bridegroom Productions.

What: *Tamalalia 9*

When: Through August 28, 8 p.m., Thursdays (\$12), Fridays (\$15), Saturdays (\$17), with a late show on Saturdays at 10:30 p.m. (\$5.99)

Where: The Axiom, 2524 McKinney

Tickets/info: 713/522-8443, www.infernalbridegroom.com



Be afraid, very afraid (l-r): AJ Ware (clown), Kyle Sturdivant, Tamarie Cooper, Cary Winscott

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would rather laugh. It's a musical about Everyman and Everywoman and everything that can go wrong when they try to get together. The longest-running revue in off-Broadway history, it has been nominated for awards and exposes everything you've secretly thought about dating, mating, and romance but were afraid to admit. Through Sept. 12, Fri. & Sat. 8 pm, Sun. 3 pm. Tickets \$25. Stages, 3201 Allen Pkwy. Info: 713/527-0123 or www.stagestheatre.com.

◆ **Life Beyond the Loop.** Precious Trees, Houston's most guarded planned community, is under attack, by indecency. When an adult business opens nearby, a popular televangelist declares war, transmogrifying the peaceful neighborhood into a war-torn First Amendment battleground. Three actors portray an endless list of characters—including George and Barbara Bush—each with distinction and clarity. \$18. Through August 28 at at Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt. Thursday and Friday at 8:30 pm, Saturday at 8 and 10:30 pm. For reservations: 713/522-7722.

◆ **The Truth.** Kicking off his tour in Virginia, multi-platinum recording artist Usher will embark on the U.S. leg of his tour presented by MTV entitled "The Truth." The R&B superstar plans to bring his elaborate song-and-dance show to fans across the country. Joining Usher on tour will be Kanye West. Aug. 13 at Toyota Center; 1510 Polk St. More info: 713/758-7715 or www.houstontoyotacenter.com.

◆ **The Wrong Side of the Law** is a comic "mellor-drammer" in three acts. Cheer the manly hero, console the downtrodden heroine, boo and hiss the dastardly villain as you pelt him with popcorn. \$10 (students/seniors \$9, matinees all seats \$8). Through Aug. 28 at Theatre Suburbia, 1410 W. 43rd St., 713/682-3525, www.theatresuburbia.com.

RADIO

◆ **After Hours.** Saturdays, midnight to 3 am. Featuring the QM2 (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM. 713/526-5738.

◆ **QueerVoices.** Mondays, 8-10 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM. 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

◆ **2004 Houston Area Exhibition** presents 14 artists selected from a pool of 375 working in a 100-

mile radius of the city of Houston. Some artists are at the beginning of their careers while others are better established. The works stand as a compelling cross-section to the vibrant creative life of the area. On view through August 29 at Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston, 120 Fine Arts Bldg. More info: www.blaffergallery.org or 713/743-9528.

◆ **Art for the Heart** is an exhibit featuring artwork expressing various artists, views of love, family, friendship, and relationships. Women in the Visual and Literary Arts (WVILA) presents a collection of 36 pieces by 24 artists in a wide range of media, including oil and acrylic on canvas, photographic prints, and bronze sculpture. Heritage Hall at the JPMorgan Chase Building, 707 Travis (between Rusk and Capitol), 8 am-5 pm, Mon.-Fri., through Aug. 27. The exhibit is open to the public and admission is free.

◆ **Earthworks: Land Art.** In the 1960s a number of individuals created some of the most radical gestures in 20th-century art, leaving their mark on the cultural and geographical landscape with "earthworks," those site-specific mounds, cuts, holes, and jetties in landscapes far from the world of museums and galleries. The artists of this movement left testimony of their efforts in the form of works on paper, photographs, and small-scale sculptures. Through August 21 at The Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. Info: www.menil.org or 713/525-9400.

◆ **How Latitudes Become Forms: Art in a Global Age.** An in-depth examination of how global change impacts art. Artists from Brazil, China, Japan, India, South Africa, Turkey, and the U.S. who work in media ranging from drawings and architectural structures to documentary films are featured in the exhibition. Through Sept. 26 at the Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd. Info: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

◆ **Machu Picchu: Unveiling the Mysteries of the Incas.** What was Machu Picchu? For years, archaeologists believed it to be the birthplace of the Inca culture. More recent discoveries suggest it was a 15th-century resort getaway built for Pachacuti, the first ruler of the Inca Empire. Artifacts, photographs, and computer displays reveal the mystery of the Incas. \$9.50 for adults, \$7 for children/seniors. Through September 6 at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, 1 Hermann Circle Dr. Info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

◆ **The Shape of Space by Alyson Shotz.** Though the Rice U gallery is closed for the summer, Brooklyn-based artist Alyson Shotz's window installation can be viewed through the gallery's front glass wall. An eye-catching "curtain" suspended from the gallery's ceiling, the installation consists of thousands of different sized ovals hand cut from Fresnel magnifying plastic. Reflection is an ongoing subject of Shotz's work, often using mirrors to explore how we perceive nature. Free. Through August 29 at Rice University, Sewall Hall, ground floor. Access thru Campus Entrance 1 at Main St. and Sunset Blvd. Free parking at Entrance 10 off Greenbriar. Info: 713/348-6069 or www.ricegallery.org.

◆ **Yale Street Arts & Flower Market** is a Heights market created for local artists to display and sell their original works of art. Fresh-cut flowers are also available. Entertainment is provided by local musicians and is a highlight throughout the day. The market is free & open to the public from 9 am-5 pm and continues the first Saturday of each month, coinciding with the Heights 1st Saturday events. The market is located behind Kaplan's Ben-Hur at 210 West 21st Street just off Yale. Free parking is available in the Kaplan's parking lot. Info or booth rental: Mitch Cohen at 713/802-1213 or visit www.YaleStreetMarket.com.

CALENDAR DEADLINE
for OutSmart's September issue:
Wednesday, August 11, 5 p.m.

Time Out with OUTSMART

SPECIAL PROMOTIONS AND ADVERTISING

OUTSMART ON PARADE

Celebrating GLBT pride as well as the 10th anniversary of OUTSMART, magazine staff, family, and friends sailed along the June 26 Pride parade route, tossing beads to the crowd. Once again, Russell & Smith Ford provided the official OUTSMART parade vehicle.



Waiting for the parade to start, OUTSMART staff, family, and friends took a break from final prep: (front row, l-r) Tad Dvorak, Daniel Malachowski, Damian Yalch, Thomas Chelena, Jack Richardson III, Greg Jeu, Jim Hurst, Tim Brookover, Albert Mata; (second row, l-r) Tom Fricke, Lorraine Schroeder, Teresa Anderson, Sandra Rodriguez, and Dolores Varela.

DEREK DEAL

The Hotel Derek, in the high-style Uptown Houston district, is now a chic spot to pick up OUTSMART every month. The smart hotel (www.hotelderek.com) began offering the magazine in July.



David Gugino, Hotel Derek director of catering, pauses with a copy of OutSmart, now available at the hotel.

GAYEST & GREATEST 2004

Join the OUTSMART staff at one of six parties this month and complete your official ballot for the annual Gayest & Greatest readers' choice survey:

- August 7 Undercurrent, Galveston
- August 13 Hollywood Book & Café
- August 11 JR's Bar & Grill
- August 11 Chances
- August 16 Meteor
- August 17 Hollywood Restaurant (In conjunction with GLBT Night, presented by Rainbow Pages, and benefiting AVES and GLOBO)

You can also complete the ballot in the magazine (page 49-52) and drop it in one of the Gayest & Greatest ballot boxes at hot spots around town or mail it to the OUTSMART office. Or you can vote online for your favorite people and places at www.outsmartmagazine.com.



A Victorian stay winner Izadora Martinez.

< OUTSMART account executive Tony Yarbrough (l) chats with an Empower visitor.

EMPOWERED UP

Izadora Martinez, who is a member of the P.R.I.D.E. Team at JPMorgan Chase, won the OUTSMART drawing at Empower for a two-night stay in Galveston at the Victorian Condo-Hotel & Conference Center (www.galveston.com/victorian). OUTSMART awarded prizes throughout the September 19-20 business and community expo at the George R. Brown Convention Center presented by the Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce. ■

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Karen Kleypas (pictured) has opened **Garden Mystiques**, a new outdoor-decor shop in Montrose. The yard and six full rooms offer more than 700 different items, including wind chimes, feeders, pot feet, fountains, twirlers, sun catchers, stepping stones, art stakes, tree faces, gazing balls, hand-crafted metal silhouettes, statuary, wrought iron, and more.

Garden Mystiques is located at 807 West Gray. The phone number is 713/942-0010. The website is www.gardenmystiques.com.

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For more information, contact Grey at 713/296-9245 or Mattison@earthlink.net.

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The LaDay Group phone number is 713/528-1703. The website is www.theladaygroup.com.



Shawn Smith (above, l) has joined the personal training staff of **Muscle Mechanics**. He joins identical twin brother **Scott Smith**, who has been a Muscle Mechanics trainer since 1993.

Muscle Mechanics is located at 617 Richmond Ave. The phone number is 713/523-5330, and the website is www.musclemechanics.com.

Karen Derr & Associates Realty will move into a new office in the Heights early in August. The larger office (1545 Heights Blvd.) was constructed to look like a Victorian home and has a wrap-around porch and cedar shake cupola. Designed to fit into its turn-of-the-century neighborhood, the building includes up-to-date features such as a workout room for agents, a builder selection center, and wireless Internet access.

Allegro Builders, which specializes in period-reproduction residences, constructed the office.

With their new office open, co-owners **Karen Derr** (pictured) and **Robert Derr** will soon announce plans for their firm's 10th-anniversary celebrations.

The phone number is 713/862-1600. The website is www.KarenDerr.com.

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2 Alexandra Sullivan of Diagnostic Eye Center Bellaire.

3 Anderson Garrett (l-r), Stacey Roberts, and Chris Valentine of Yellow Cab.

4 Kyle Jean (l) and Mark Gragg of Labrador Mechanical.

5 Linda (l) and Will Boze of Planet Ford.

6 Kathleen Connaughton of Hollywood Frame Gallery.

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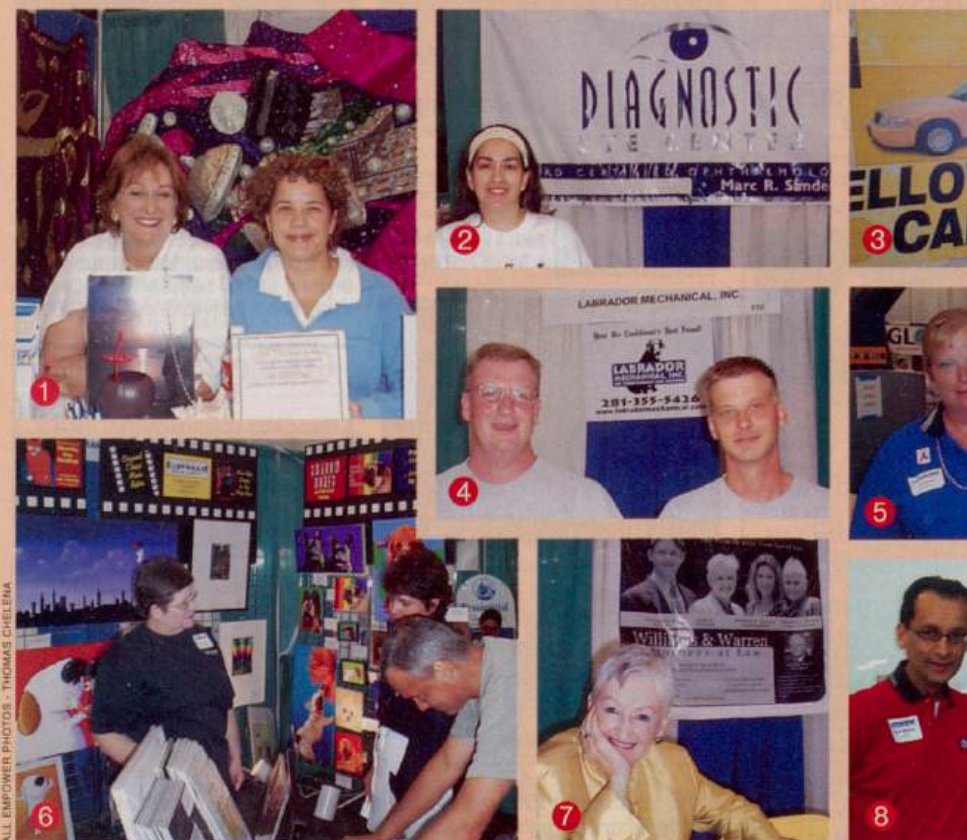
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BOCADOS

On Wednesday nights, women pack this Mexican restaurant for dancing and socializing. Sunday brunch starts at 11 a.m. and lasts till 3 in the afternoon. 1312 West Alabama • 713/523-5230

BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM

The BRB, Houston's leading country-western bar, is located in Midtown, just outside Montrose. Expect to see some fast and fancy two-stepping. Great benefit shows often take place on Sunday night. 2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192

BRIAR PATCH

One of the oldest gay nightspots in Houston, the venerable piano bar recently moved to a Montrose location. Popular entertainer Jerry Atwood performs every Saturday night. 2312 Crocker • 713/665-9678 • www.HoustonGayBars.com

BRICKS II

This neighborhood joint boasts a jukebox with country music, pool tables, cold draft, and the occasional cowboy hat. Regu-lars rule at this low-key spot. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102

CABO MONTROSE

This restaurant near the Westheimer-Montrose epicenter now has a weekly GLBT Night on Tuesdays directed at diners in the community, featuring drink specials. 1111 Westheimer • 713/942-2226

CHANCES/THE NEW BARN/G-SPOT

This three-in-one women's bar provides a place to two-step, rock, or chat. Check out the 9 p.m.-1 a.m. open mic night on Thursdays. Women-fronted bands perform every Saturday night. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • www.chancesbar.com

CLUB BIG YO

With the motto "This is an all girls production; our male friends are welcome," this Southwest club offers special evenings including Thursday talent night. Dancers strut on Sunday. 6305 Skyline • 713/953-0268, 281/322-0394 • www.clubbigyo.com

CLUB KALIPSO

This Spring Branch club offers hot Latin music, including cumbia, merengue, ranchera, and salsa as well as Latin and English pop. Male dancers work their stuff every Sunday night. 6806 Long Point #F • 713/688-6562

CLUB INERGY

A nightlife institution for 12 years, this Southwest club offers an eclectic mix of Latin rhythms, mainstream dance, and hip hop. Sunday is the special show night. 5750 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7310 • www.clubinergy.com

CLUB RAINBOW

Welcoming a mixed lesbian crowd, this bar is located on the Westheimer curve in Montrose. The Glow Girl dancers perform on Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights. 1417-B Westheimer • 713/522-5166

COUSIN'S

Drag fans pack this club in the heart of Montrose for its campy shows on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. 817 Fairview • 713/528-9204

DECADES

Celebrating its fourth year in business, this casual neighborhood bar packs lots of local color. Decades regularly hosts pool tournaments and benefit events. 1205 Richmond • 713/521-2224

BEHIND THE BAR

WHO: Gary Najpaver
WHERE: Ripcord
(715 Fairview,
713/521-2792)

WHAT'S UP: Order from Najpaver on Sunday, when Firedancers Houston—a recent addition to the local roster of active, charitable leather groups—hosts a grill-your-own steak night. Eight bucks gets you meat, baked potato, and salad. Proceeds benefit The Assistance Fund.

EJ's

Located on the western front of Montrose, EJ's retains the charm of a local colorful hangout. Nightly shows, including community benefits, pack the stage. The upstairs martini bar offers a quiet retreat. 2517 Ralph • 713/527-9071

GUAVA LAMP

Every Thursday is Cabaret Night at this stylish Shepherd Plaza video club. Karaoke fans tune up for the Wednesday and Sunday night contest. 2159 Portsmouth • 713/524-3359 • www.guavalamp.com

JR's/S ANTA FE

This Montrose standard offers features from pool tables, table dancers, to karaoke. Look for Carol Gilford and George Konar, named best bartenders in the 2002 Gayest & Greatest OutSmart reader poll. 808 Pacific • 713/521-2519

KEYS WEST

Selected best piano bar in the Gayest & Greatest poll, this nightspot features regular performers and guest entertainers. The two-level deck provides a knockout skyline view. 817 West Dallas • 713/571-7870 • www.keyswest.com

MANGO VIDEO LOUNGE

Located next to Club Inergy, this Wednesday-Saturday spot has a 15-ft. video screen, dance floor, & pool tables. DJ Kenny Jammz hosts karaoke night on Wednesday. 5742 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7472

MARY'S

One of the oldest clubs in Houston, Mary's shuttered briefly last January but reopened once purchased by Michael's Outpost owner Michael Galtz. Inside and outside bars stay busy at this legendary nightspot. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669

MELA'S

The crowd at this neighborhood spot drops by for the Tejano and country-western music, the women, and the pool tables. Owner Mela Contreras was a Pride parade grand marshal in 2002. 302 Tuam • 713/523-0747

METEOR

The chic atmosphere at this Montrose video bar includes overstuffed couches, marble-topped bars, and stylish glassware. Attractive men and women gather here any night of the week for drinks and conversation. 2306 Genesee • 713/521-0123 • www.meteorhouston.com

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

Minutes from Montrose, this relaxed neighborhood bar hosts frequent pool and dart tournaments. On Wednesday, stop by for Rick's chili con queso and chips. 1419 Richmond • 713/520-8446

MO MONG

Every Wednesday night, the guys and gals show up at this Vietnamese restaurant in droves to enjoy the martini specials. 1201 Westheimer #B • 713/524-5664

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Great-looking male dancers bump and grind every night at this leather/denim spot. The two-tier back patio bar provides a perch for viewing the Pacific Street scenery. 805 Pacific • 713/529-7488

O

Two outdoor balconies allow patrons to watch the passing parade on Pacific. A sleek interior and multiple plasma screens distinguish this spot, which stays open after hours on weekends. 710 Pacific • 713/523-0213

PEARL

Promoter Eduardo Elizondo hosts a Thursday gay night at this swanky new club in the downtown club district. Hop on the Metro train and head north. 310 Main • 713/528-5736 • www.pearl-houston.com

PRIVÉ

The patio at this second-floor spot overlooks the lively Westheimer/Montrose intersection. The mixed crowd includes smartly dressed gays as well as non-gays. 910 Westheimer • 713/522-2542

RAINBOW ROOM

Every Thursday, Heather Moon hosts Karaoke Night at this north Houston club. DJ Kenny supplies music on Friday & Saturday. Drop by Sunday for horseshoes and other games. 527 Barren Springs off Ella Boulevard • 281/872-0215 • www.GayNorthHouston.com

RIPCORD

OutSmart readers named this spot the best place to show off your leather in the Gayest & Greatest poll. Inside the bar, the Black Hawk Leather Shop sells treasures for the leather/levi/uniform crowd. 715 Fairview • 713/521-2792 • www.ripcordjournal.com

611 CLUB

On Friday and Saturday nights, this neighborhood spot offers great buffet dinners. Features include a beautiful garden-style patio. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070

SOUTH BEACH

This potent EAW Avalon Series Sound System keeps the shirtless boys dancing the night away. In the Gayest & Greatest poll, OutSmart readers named this spot the best club after 2 a.m. 810 Pacific • 713/529-5086 (7623) • www.SouthBeachTheNightclub.com

TOYZ

Thursday night means the long-running Papi Chulo amateur strip show, emceed by Monique Johnson with DJ Alex T providing house, hip hop, and Latin music. Cookie La Cook hosts her show on Fridays. 5322 Glenmont • 713/668-4892

UNION BAR & LOUNGE

This swank new club in Montrose has Girlie Action on Thursdays hosted by DJ Gracie Chavez and featuring guest female DJs ("Bring your girlfriends out, ladies," the website beckons). 202 Tuam • 713/529-5296 • www.unionbarandlounge.com

VIVIANA'S

This club near downtown appeals to fans of Latino music and drag alike. 5219 Washington • 713/862-0203

XCAPE

Lyrical Andrews hosts Luscious Ladies Nite on Wednesdays, featuring female go-go dancers and no cover for gals. On Fridays and Saturdays, there is no cover all night. 8101 Airport Blvd. • 713/454-0775

NOTE: The owner of Rich's Houston recently closed the gay nightspot and re-opened the establishment as Club TBA, a nongay-oriented music club.

Conroe

RANCH HILL SALOON

Located 30 miles north of Houston, this spot features daily drink specials, live entertainment, and karaoke night on Wednesday. 2111 Airport Rd. • 936/441-6426

Galveston

GARZA'S KON TIKI

Located downtown, the Kon Tiki is steps from the Strand. This spot was named favorite island club and best place to see male dancers in the Gayest & Greatest poll. 315 Tremont • 409/765-5805 • www.thekontiki.com

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

A real neighborhood bar, this island institution attracts a colorful crowd of regulars and travelers. The verdant, redone private patio at the club, located only two blocks from the Gulf, now includes a swimming pool. 2501 Ave Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092

THIRD COAST

This new club has opened in the former Jimmy's on the Beach location. The wall of windows still offers a great view of the Gulf. 904 Avenue M • 409/765-8911

UNDERCURRENT

Keith Curry and Marvin Grenier, long-time Blvd Saloon bartenders, have assumed ownership of the Gulf-view bar and rechristened it. The second-floor deck still has a great view of the water. 3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/750-8571

Beaumont

THE COPA

The hangout for Lamar University students, this two-story dance club has pool tables, a spacious stage, and a staircase that would make Norma Desmond green with envy. 304 Orleans • 409/832-4206

CHRIS' CROCKETT STREET PUB

This club (formerly just Crockett Stree Pub) has new owners, Chris and Sybil, and a slightly new name. Free pool and Mon Watch on Saturday night are just some of the features here. 497 Crockett • 409/835-4243 • www.GayBeaumont.com

HOOLIGAN'S

Though primarily a women's bar, this just-opened club is open to all. Features include karaoke night on Wed. & frequent live music, especially on Fridays & Saturdays. 6025 Martin Luther King • 409/832-0808

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SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

Well, our good friend Mercury does go retrograde this month on August 9. So please get all of your new projects started before August 5, or you will have to wait until September 6 before you can start anything new. Be sure to take care of any old projects during this time. Since Mercury will be retrograde in Virgo, this is a prime time for reorganizing things at home and at the work place. • The first week of the month is a tense time. People are short-tempered, and by the end of the week most of us will want to escape from routines. We are back to normal by the second week, even with Mercury retrograde. Wednesday the 18th is a rather tense day. Keep your schedule light. Plans will change suddenly. The fourth week is better, except for Thursday and Friday. Keep your plans light. You will not want to be enduring routines. • The Sun enters Virgo on the 22nd. Mercury is first in Virgo but backs into Leo on the 24th. Venus starts the month in Gemini but slips into Cancer on the 7th. Mars is in Leo as the month begins but enters Virgo on the 9th. The rest of the outer planets remain in the sign they're in.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). As the month begins, life is a bit easier. You have certainly been in a funk about your security and your home. You are still concerned, but you are not so obsessed with it. You are in an organizing mood by mid-month and want everything in its place. Relationships are more playful because you are not so serious. Your artistic and creative skills are strong this month. Make sure you take time to play.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). You are focused on the family, home, and creating a place of emotional security. And you are a bit more pushy about your agenda than your normal self. This could be a good month for home improvement or repair. You will be more sensitive than usual on the 5th. Keep your schedule light for that day. Relationships are not settled, but you are not sure what you want and therefore can't give a clear message to any partner, potential or otherwise. You are more relaxed by the latter part of the month.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). You will want to get as much done as possible by the 5th before your ruling planet Mercury goes retrograde. This retrograde period will recall your early childhood and the events that shape you now. Expect to hear from people from that time in your life. You are more talkative this month, and you really want people to listen to you. Keep a close eye on your money. You will feel a pinch around the end of the month, but it is only temporary. As long as relationships give you freedom, you will be around. Lock you in and you are gone.



VIRO (August 23–September 22). Mercury, your ruling planet, will be retrograding in your sign this month. That means that you will be tripping over your tongue. As always, this is a time to finish up tasks from the past and not take on new agenda items. Relationships can be very testy this month, particularly if you are feeling restricted or repressed by your partner. You certainly won't be shy about saying how you feel. Work may be an escape for you. Just avoid new enterprises until next month.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). Financial matters are keeping your claws to the grindstone. You are making a list, checking it twice, and getting those chores checked off. You are not as happy-go-lucky as people expect you to be. Your BS quotient is just very, very low. Make sure you have some time for play as you are reworking those routines in your life. Also stay on top of your health. Exercise is recommended. You are highly susceptible to any passing illnesses. You may want to avoid crowds.

LEO (July 23–August 22). This is your solar return time, you lucky Leos—the time of the year when you are officially supposed to concentrate on yourself. This yearly cycle is a time to review what you did and what you want to accomplish for the next year. Some of you have really been doing some soul searching to figure out just what you want to do, especially concerning relationships. You are confused, not sure what you want, or at the very least uninterested in coupling. Take care of money matters this month. You will be glad you did.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). Social groups and business organizations highlight your life this month. You can really do well this month, in business or personal relationships, if you invest some time in associations. And if you can visit some groups that you were once a member of, it would even be better. You spent most of last month concentrating on career, and now it is time to take your momentum to a more social arena. You are not really interested in a romantic encounter at the moment. You still need more time to yourself. But that is all about to change at the end of September.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). This is your month to take the lead and step into the spotlight. And you are really up for the task at hand. Be sure to grease the path. You are moving quickly and can easily step on the toes of someone not quick enough to get them out of your way. In business, this is an excellent month to contact old clients. Support from home and family may be waning, so look outside of familiar places for that. Keep your eyes open. Relationship potentials are all around.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). There is a mix of energies for you this month. First, it is a time to visit places you have been before and get away from the humdrum of work. All work and no play make Jane a dull girl. You will be overdue for excitement by mid-month. Make sure you have trips planned. There will be plenty of time for work, duty, etc. by the end of the month. Even relationships can feel restrictive. Keep an open mind and an open door.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). The relationship theme continues to be a prominent one in your life. You are interested in finding someone to settle down with. And you are ready to ask the hard questions. You don't like to waste your time with things anyway—this is no exception. Some of your dates may think you are interviewing them for a job. Don't worry. You are. You are looking at intimacy this month. Your sex drive is strong, but you want to feel connected to your partner. That has to be there, or the sex drive won't be.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Relationships and establishing your own identity are the two things you are going to be focusing on this month. Even though they may sound like opposites, they are not. Essentially, you are trying to give of yourself in a relationship and establish boundaries at the same time. You don't want to feel unappreciated or taken advantage of. You are a very sensitive person, and you need a lot of love and attention. This may show up as arguments or confrontations. But you will have to have both or have none at all.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). There certainly seems to be a lot of drama at work this month. Even you won't be able to assuage the savage egos and keep everybody's needs met. You will find that you are expressing more than frustration. This would be a good time to remember your boundaries. Relationships are also taxing this month. Old problems return. You can deal with them for good this month. The 18th is a volatile day. Keep your eyes open.

A professional astrologer for 20 years, Lilly Roddy counsels individuals and teaches classes. Her website is www.lillyroddy.com.

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OUT IN HOUSTON

1 The *Lawrence v. Texas* trio of **John Lawrence** (l-r), attorney **Mitchell Katine**, and **Tyron Garner** received the Dassa Porper Liberties in Justice Award at the May 8 American Civil Liberties gala.

2 **Shari Goldesberry** (r), Log Cabin Republicans-Houston president, spoke at the June 2 Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus meeting at the Houston GLBT Community Center. **Ken Jones** (l) is caucus president.

3 **Curtis Sparrer** (c), president of National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association-Houston, welcomed parents **Chris** (l) and **Jayne Sparrer** at the April 7 meeting at Cabo Montrose.

4 After the April 27 "Save Our Constitution" Human Rights Campaign town hall meeting, panelists **Mark Wood** (r), Stonewall Democrats Houston president, HRC national field director **Seth Kilbourne** (c), and Log Cabin Republicans political director **Chris Barron** continued the same-sex marriage discussion at Stages Repertory Theatre.

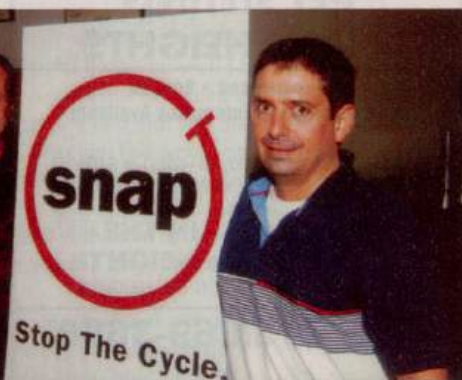
5 Spay-Neuter Assistance Program executive director and CEO **Sean Hawkins** (r) unveiled the organization's new logo at the May 18 SNAP Social. Joining him at St. Arnold's Brewing Co. were **Holly O'Dell** (l), former SNAP president and board chair, and **Lou Congello**, president of Stan & Lou Advertising, which designed the logo.

6 At the April 16 Spring Fling benefit dinner for the PFLAG/H.A.T.C.H. Youth Scholarship Foundation, event speaker **Jason Brollier** (l) posed with his mother **Terri Redford** at the Warwick.

7 Montrose Clinic board chair **MariAnne Huerter** (r) and **Anne Couch** attended the May 30 clinic fundraiser at Meteor.

8 Some of the crew that produces the once-monthly "Black on Black" segment of the weekly "After Hours" program recently posed in the KPFT studio: **Miriam Davis** (standing, l-r), **Andrea Shelton**, **Christopher Evans**, **Chris Arasin**, and **Dionne Redmond** (seated).

9 On April 22, **Anders Fogh Rasmussen** (r), prime minister of Denmark, presented Houston Public Library director **Barbara Gubbin** with two books by Hans Christian Andersen ("probably bisexual in orientation, if not necessarily so in action," states GLBTQ.com, the online encyclopedia). Next year is the bicentenary of the Danish writer's birth.



1-3, 5-7 DALTON DEHART; 4 YVONNE FEECE; 8 COURTESY DIONNE REDMOND; 9 GREATER HOUSTON CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

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with crawfish cakes, avocado,
and sweet red onions

SHRIMP AND PECAN DUMPLINGS
with walnut-ponzu vinaigrette

GINGERED BEEF POTSTICKERS
with Thai chili-pineapple sauce

CRISPY TUNA SPRING ROLLS
with basil, mint, and portabello mushrooms

DRINKS \$5

KETELONE MONDAY
Ketelone Martini Night
Ketelone Citroen Cosmopolitans

SKYY TUESDAY
Skyy Apple Martini Night
Skyy Vanilla Cocktails

BACARDI WEDNESDAY
Bacardi Flavor Mojito Night
Featuring Bacardi Light,
Bacardi Coco, Bacardi 'O'

BOMBAY/JACK DANIELS
THURSDAY
Bombay Sapphire Martinis
Jack Daniels Cocktails

RAIN/1800 FRIDAY
benjy's Rain Tinis -
Strawberry infused Rain Vodka Night
1800 Reposado Sipping Night

SVEDKA SATURDAY
Svedka Vodka Night

HAPPY HOUR Prices are for Lounge guests only
HAPPY HOUR Items will not be available for to go orders
All Menu items and prices are subject to change

DINNER.

(and best appetizers - houston business journal 2003/2004)

wine, dine, and lounge

SMALL PLATES

WARM PISTACHIO CRUSTED GOAT CHEESE CAKES
with lemon dressed mizuna and Southern "lavash" \$7.95

SESAME CRUSTED AGADASHI with shiitake
mushroom, baby bok choy, and orange-chili sauce \$6.95

GINGERED BEEF POTSTICKERS with
Thai chili-pineapple sauce \$7.95

WOOD OVEN ROASTED BRIE AND
PORTABELLO ENCHILADAS on pesto cream \$8.50

SEARED SASHIMI TUNA PIZZETTE with Roma
tomatoes and wasabi aioli \$12.50

FRIED CALAMARI with crispy lemon rings and
sambal cocktail sauce \$8.50

GULF COAST LUMP CRAB CAKES with
spicy remoulade \$9.95

SMOKED SALMON SHORTSTACK with crawfish
cakes, avocado, and sweet red onions \$8.95

PAN SEARED SHRIMP AND PECAN DUMPLINGS with
walnut ponzu vinaigrette \$8.95

CRISPY TUNA SPRING ROLLS with basil, mint,
and portabello mushrooms \$8.95

SALADS

PACIFIC RIM CAESAR SALAD with
cilantro-wasabi dressing \$6.50

FRESH SPINACH SALAD tossed with blue cheese,
grapefruit, endive, and maple-balsamic vinaigrette \$6.95

BABY ARUGULA with candied walnuts, manchego
cheese, and mango vinaigrette \$6.50

SUMMER GREENS tossed with jicama, apples,
tomatoes, and cilantro-lime dressing \$5.95

CHOPPED ASIAN SALAD with
honey-dijon chicken, crispy wontons,
toasted cashews, and soy-garlic dressing \$6.95/\$10.95

WOOD OVEN PIZZAS

"MARGHERITA" PIZZA with pesto, mozzarella,
Roma tomatoes, and fresh basil \$8.95

WHITE PIZZA four cheeses topped with lemon
dressed baby arugula \$9.50

THAI BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA with
toasted sesame crust and roasted peanut sauce \$9.50

LARGE PLATES

PENNE PASTA with
oven roasted vegetables and chipotle cream sauce
with grilled chicken \$11.95
\$15.95

"SURF AND TURF"
boisin beef and tiger shrimp tossed with rice
noodles, spinach, and Thai red curry sauce \$15.95

CRUNCHY CHICKEN
pecan and pistachio crusted melted onion and
marbled potato gratin and sweet corn reduction \$14.95

ACHIOTE MARINATED GRILLED SALMON
summer salad of orange segments, jicama, cilantro,
pickled red onion, and avocado coulis \$17.95

BALSAMIC GLAZED FRENCH CUT CHICKEN BREAST
sautéed wild mushrooms, minted English peas,
and blue cheese-lemon risotto \$15.95

SPICY ASIAN MARINATED CHICKEN STIR-FRY
lo mein noodles, cashews, and a
ginger-hoisin sauce \$13.95

THREE CHEESE RISOTTO TORTA
tomato and basil ragout and garlic creamed spinach \$12.95

PAN SEARED SEA SCALLOPS
Yukon gold potatoes, sautéed snap peas,
lemon-watercress salad, and ginger-corn puree \$18.95

GRILLED 8 OUNCE BEEF FILET roasted garlic mashed
potatoes, grilled asparagus, and port wine sauce \$26.95

OVEN ROASTED PORK TENDERLOIN
spring vegetable sauté and marbled potato gratin \$18.95

GRILLED PACIFIC RIM FLANK STEAK
wiltsed Asian greens, fried scallion rice,
and orange soy basil sauce \$19.95

WOOD FIRED SUNDRIED TOMATO PESTO SHRIMP
over portobellos, asparagus, and roasted
peppers with goat cheese cream \$19.95

CORN CRUSTED CHILEAN SEA BASS
chive mashed potatoes, sautéed spinach, and
shrimp-thyme beurre blanc \$21.95

SESAME CRUSTED AHI TUNA baby bok choy,
sticky rice, and three peppers-soy vinaigrette \$21.95

EXECUTIVE CHEF dylan murray

SOUS CHEFS edmund martinez, drew wilson

BEST LUNCH.

citysearch 2002/2003, 2003/2004

now open all day every day

APPETIZERS & SIDE SALADS

SPICY POTSTICKERS with gingered beef \$7.95

MIXED GREENS with cilantro-lime vinaigrette \$4.50

LUMP CRAB CAKES with Remoulade sauce \$9.95

CAESAR SALAD with cilantro dressing \$4.50

FRIED CALAMARI with sweet chili sauce \$8.50

SPINACH SALAD with blue cheese, grapefruit,
and maple-balsamic vinaigrette \$5.95

CRISPY TUNA SPRING ROLLS with basil \$5.50

SANDWICHES & WRAPS
served with fries and slaw

GRILLED ANGUS BURGER with Pepperjack
cheese, herbed aioli, and caramelized onions \$8.95

BASIL CRUSTED CHICKEN BREAST SANDWICH
with mozzarella and Roma tomatoes \$9.50

GRILLED VEGETABLE WRAP pesto marinated
vegetables, Feta, Provolone, Mozzarella and
Caesar greens \$9.50

STEAK WRAP with frizzled onions, avocado,
and honey-wasabi aioli \$10.50

GRILLED CHICKEN CAESAR CLUB WRAP with
bacon and avocado \$9.95

ENTRÉE SALADS

PACIFIC RIM CAESAR SALAD
with wasabi tempura Tiger shrimp
with grilled chicken
with crispy calamari \$11.95
\$9.95
\$10.95

PISTACHIO CRUSTED GOAT CHEESE AND
SUNDRIED TOMATO CAKES with lemon
dressed greens \$10.95

GINGERED BEEF SALAD with granny smith
apples, roasted corn, jicama, and
cilantro-lime vinaigrette \$10.95

SMOKED SALMON AND EGG SALAD SANDWICH
served open-faced with caper-watercress
cream cheese \$11.95

PAN SEARED SHRIMP AND PECAN DUMPLINGS
with arugula, green cabbage and ponzu dressing \$10.95

ASIAN SALAD with honey-dijon chicken, wonton crisps,
cashews, peanut sauce, and soy-garlic dressing \$9.95

PISTACHIO CRUSTED SALMON SALAD with citrus and
apple segments, jicama, and lemon oil vinaigrette \$10.95

CRAB CAKE AND GRILLED VEGETABLE SALAD with
baby greens and tomato-ginger vinaigrette \$13.50

PEPPER CRUSTED SUSHI GRADE TUNA
NICOISE SALAD with dijon vinaigrette \$12.95

WOOD-FIRED THIN CRUST PIZZAS

MARGHERITA: pesto, mozzarella, Romas, and basil \$8.95

TUNA PIZZETTE: 8" Pizza crust with seared
sushi grade tuna, Mizuna, slivered sweet
onions Roma tomatoes, and wasabi aioli \$12.50

WHITE PIZZA: with Asian greens \$8.95

THAI CHICKEN: roasted peanut sauce \$8.95

ENTRÉES

PENNE PASTA with oven roasted vegetables
and smoked peppercorn cream sauce
with grilled chicken \$9.95
ADD \$4.00

TIGER SHRIMP TACOS with pesto, grilled
vegetable salsa, Cornia cheese, white beans &
pumpkinseed rice \$10.95

SESAME CRUSTED AGADASHI with shiitake
mushrooms, baby bok choy, and orange-chili sauce \$9.95

SPICY ASIAN MARINATED CHICKEN STIR-FRY with
lo mein noodles, cashews, and ginger-hoisin sauce \$12.95

"SURF AND TURF" marinated beef and Tiger
shrimp tossed with rice noodles, spinach, and
Thai red curry sauce \$14.95

CRUNCHY CHICKEN nut crusted with marbled melted
onion potato gratin and roasted corn reduction \$14.95

CORN CRUSTED CHILEAN SEA BASS with chive
mashed potatoes and shrimp-thyme beurre blanc \$16.95

OVEN ROASTED PORK TENDERLOIN with summer
vegetable sauté and marbled potato gratin \$15.95

THREE CHEESE AND RISOTTO TORTA with tomato-basil
ragout, Parmesan crisps, and creamed spinach \$11.95

GRILLED 4 OZ. PETITE FILET with roasted garlic
mashed potatoes and port wine reduction \$16.95

ACHIOTE GRILLED SALMON over summer salad
of orange segments, jicama, cilantro,
and avocado coulis \$16.50

BEST BRUNCH.

citysearch 2003/2004

every saturday and sunday

STARTERS

PACIFIC RIM CAESAR SALAD
with cilantro dressing \$4.50

LUMP CRAB CAKES
with spicy remoulade \$9.95

CRISPY TUNA SPRING ROLLS \$8.95

FRIED CALAMARI
with chili dipping sauce \$8.95

benjy's BRUNCH SPECIALTIES

benjy's FAMOUS CRUNCHY FRENCH TOAST
with three fruit coulis and seasonal berries \$9.95

STUFFED CRUNCHY FRENCH TOAST
with chicken-apple sausage, scrambled eggs,
and roasted potatoes \$12.95

SMOKED SALMON ON SCALLION SCONE
with poached eggs, roasted potatoes, and
dilled hollandaise \$12.95

BLUE CORN PANCAKES WITH
ORANGE-ALMOND CHICKEN and honey butter \$13.95

TEMPURA SHRIMP with sautéed spinach,
fried eggs, and buttered grits \$14.95

CHILAQUILES scrambled eggs sautéed
with pico de gallo, salsa, tortilla chips,
sour cream, and bacon \$11.95

LUMP CRAB CAKES
WITH SCRAMBLED EGGS
with roasted potatoes and creamy hollandaise \$15.50

3 PEPPER GLAZED PORK TENDERLOIN
with goat cheese grits, fried egg, and
molasses-herb reduction \$15.95

GRILLED 4 oz FILET AND SCRAMBLED EGGS
with wild mushroom sauce and potato gratin \$16.95

ACHIOTE GRILLED SALMON
over summer salad of orange
segments, jicama, cilantro, and avocado coulis \$16.50

CRUNCHY CHICKEN
almond and pistachio crusted with melted
onion-potato gratin and roasted corn reduction \$14.95

SIDES

FRENCH TOAST \$4.75

CHICKEN APPLE SAUSAGE \$3.75

OMELETTES & SUCH

served with oven roasted potatoes or melted onion-potato gratin
egg whites \$1.00

EGG WHITE OMELETTE
with oven dried tomatoes, spinach,
and wild mushrooms \$10.95

MOZZARELLA, TOMATOES,
AND BASIL OMELETTE \$10.95

SMOKED SALMON OMELETTE
with herb cream cheese and fresh dill \$11.95

TEXAS OMELETTE
with fajita steak, roasted sweet peppers,
wild mushrooms, and asadero cheese \$11.95

SCRAMBLED EGG WRAP
filled with chicken sausage, spinach,
voodoo sauce, and Provolone cheese \$10.95

ENTRÉE SALADS AND SANDWICHES

PACIFIC RIM CAESAR SALAD
with grilled chicken \$9.95
with calamari \$10.95
with wasabi tempura shrimp \$11.95

CRAB CAKE AND GRILLED VEGETABLE SALAD
with baby greens and tomato-ginger vinaigrette \$13.50

SMOKED SALMON SANDWICH
served open faced with egg salad and
caper-watercress cream cheese \$11.95

ASIAN SALAD with
honey-dijon smoked chicken, wonton crisps,
toasted cashews, and soy-garlic dressing \$9.95

GRILLED ANGUS BURGER with Pepperjack cheese,
herbed aioli, and caramelized onions \$8.95

GRILLED CHICKEN CAESAR CLUB WRAP
with avocado and bacon \$9.95

* A nominal charge will be added for all to go items
* All menu items and prices are subject to change