

AND LESBIAN NEWS FOR NEW ORLEANS AND THE GULF SOUTH

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# IMPACT

VOLUME 19 ▼ NUMBER 21 ▼ OCTOBER 14-27, 1994





# Why Gay History Month?

## WHY WE NEED A LESBIAN AND GAY HISTORY MONTH

BY KEVIN JENNINGS

**T**his October is recognized as the first-ever Lesbian and Gay History Month. As a member of the event's national coordinating council, I have been repeatedly been asked two questions about this celebration: Why do we need a Lesbian and Gay History Month? And why in October?

The second question is easy to answer. Unlike June (which is Gay Pride Month), in October, virtually all schools are in session, thus increasing the event's potential impact. Many schools already celebrate National Coming Out Day (October 11), and scheduling our celebration for October builds on that tradition.

The first question is the more philosophical one. I believe that knowing our history is a vital part of our liberation. As the black nationalist Marcus Garvey once said, "A people without history is like a tree without roots." When we grow up being taught a history from which we are absent, it is that much more difficult for us to develop a sense of pride in our heritage.

My own experience taught me how important it is to know one's history. I was born in 1963 in rural North Carolina, and realized in grade school that I was gay. I felt absolutely alone. Not once in high school did I ever learn a single thing about homosexuality or gay people. I couldn't imagine a happy life as a gay man. Eventually, at age seventeen I tried to kill myself, like one out of every three gay teens; I saw nothing in my past, my present, or (it seemed) my future suggesting that things would ever get any better.

I survived this suicide attempt, thanks to the alert actions of a friend, and eventually developed a sense of pride in myself as a gay man. Still I had little sense of myself as part of an historical tradition. I eventually came to know more gay and lesbian history, including the contributions of gays in ancient Greece, the Roman Empire, and China, the 19th century gay liberation movements in Germany and England, and the fact that that important Americans such as Alexander Hamilton and Eleanor Roosevelt loved members of their own gender. As heartening as all this was, I still didn't see myself reflected in this history, which seemed very remote from my own childhood in North Carolina.

In 1993 I was asked to edit the first-ever high school gay and lesbian history text. As I was doing research, I learned of *One*, magazine, America's first gay magazine, which began publication in 1953. I decided to read some, and came across this letter to the editor in *One*'s

October 1954 issue:

"I will always remain willing to support, in my small way, any effort to reduce intolerance toward a minority group in the United States. Intolerance is basically as un-American as Communism. I realize the road ahead of us is long and difficult, but that part of the road already traveled has been pretty tough, too."

These prophetic lines were striking enough, but it was its signature that stopped me dead in my tracks. In bold print letters, it read Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

I grew up five miles from Winston-Salem.

Two emotions came to me. One was elation. Finally, I had found my past. For the first time, I looked into a historical document and saw someone like me.

A second emotion quickly followed. I was angry. How was it that no one had taught me this history? I thought back over my sixteen years of education in public schools and then Harvard, when I was never taught anything about gay history, and I was filled with rage. Denying me that history had nearly cost me my life, for gay invisibility had helped create the feelings of isolation that made me kill myself.

Maybe if I had known that there were people like me in Winston-Salem before I was born, I might not have spent so many years hating myself. Maybe if someone had taught me this history, I would have made it through school more easily. Maybe if someone had taught this history to my straight classmates, they wouldn't have called me "faggot". Maybe if someone had thought this history was important, my childhood could have been a bit better.

I believe we need a Lesbian and Gay History Month because there are still too many youth who grow up as ignorant as I was. How many students learn that many native American tribes honored individuals who loved members of their own genders? How many know that "gays in the military" is not a new issue, but actually began in



A Gay Party in New York City, Nineteen-Forties./Photo by Lon of New York.

1778, when George Washington signed the first expulsion order for a gay soldier (Lt. Gotthold Enslin) at Valley Forge? How many know that the profession of social work was begun by a lesbian, Jane Addams? How many know that the 1963 March on Washington, where Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous "I Have A Dream" speech, was organized by an openly gay AfricanAmerican man, Bayard Rustin? These are but a few facts that show that, indeed, gays and lesbians have been a part of the America right from the start.

Lesbian and Gay History Month is a project that will only grow if our community supports it. Black History Month, after all began as "Negro History" in 1924, and only attained its present status because African-Americans demanded that their children be taught about their history. We must do the same. Here are some ideas for things you can do to help Lesbian and Gay History Month:

- ✓ Ask your local school what they are doing to recognize this event
- ✓ Ask your local library or bookstore to do a display of their materials on lesbian and gay history
- ✓ Have your organization become an endorser for Lesbian and Gay History Month
- ✓ Ask your local elected officials to issue a proclamation declaring October Lesbian and Gay History Month
- ✓ Buy a book on lesbian or gay history

so that publishers will publish more of them.

I would like to see a day in the not-so-distant future when every child will grow up knowing of our community's contributions to our nation's development. Children who learn this lesson will learn another important one: Gays and lesbians are people, too. When they learn this, homophobia itself will be on its way to becoming history. That would be the best lesson of all. Δ

*The author is the Executive Director of GLSTN (The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Teachers Network) and a History Teacher at Concord Academy. This essay is adapted from the introduction to his book, Becoming Visible: A Reader in Gay/ and Lesbian History for High School and College Students.*

## ABOUT THE COVER

The picture by Steven Forster is of the cast of the current production of "Forever Plaid," directed by Carl Walker. The Plaids are, clockwise from upper right: Kilty Reidy, Randy Juneau, Steve Benton, and Tony Pickell. The show is reviewed by Ed Real on Page 22.



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All announcements, photographs, press releases, requests for advertising information, or written submissions of any kind should be sent to our mailing address:

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The office address is 511 Marigny Street;  
Office hours are 9 until 5 (CST) Mondays-Fridays.  
Telephone: (504) 944-6722; 1-800-484-8513 X1812

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National News Coverage: The Associated Press  
Production Director Emeritus: Philip D. Marino

Accounting: Sharon Robinson

Design Consultants: Wenger Ink, Inc.

Sample copies or back issues are \$2 postpaid.

Subscriptions are \$50 per year, postpaid  
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## Community Resources

Because of space limitations, we can publish only the essential addresses and telephone numbers.

### Political & Activist Organizations

- LAGPAC (Louisiana Gay Political Action Caucus)  
PO Box 53075, New Orleans LA 70153
- LEGAL (Louisiana Electorate of Gays and Lesbians)  
PO Box 70344, New Orleans LA 70172; 949-9124
- P-FLAG (Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays)  
meetings on second Thursday at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church; 581-2749 or 895-3936
- Alliance of Pride; POB 72055, New Orleans LA 70172
- The Forum For Equality; PO Box 850096, New Orleans LA 70185-0096
- Stonewall '94 Committee  
meetings on 2nd & 4th Tuesday monthly at the Community Center; 947-1568
- Lesbian Avengers of New Orleans  
meetings on Wednesdays at Community Center; PO 791375, New Orleans LA 70179-1375, Voice Mail: 365-3069
- Log Cabin Republicans, Louisiana Log Cabin, 504/593-1083,  
meeting info & voice mail

### Community Centers

- The Lesbian & Gay Community Center of New Orleans  
816 North Rampart Street, 522-1103
- GL Friendly Community Center, 308 Caillavet Street, Biloxi MS 39530; 601/435-2398

### Archives

- The Amistad Research Center,  
Tulane University, 6823 St. Charles Avenue, 865-5535; a repository for material on civil rights, race relations, ethnic minorities, the gay rights movement, and queer issues

### Religious Organizations

- Vieux Carre Metropolitan Community Church  
1128 St. Roch Avenue, 945-5390; services Sundays 11 a.m.
- Dignity New Orleans; 2048 Camp Street, 522-6059
- Joie de Vivre Metropolitan Community Church  
330 East Chimes, 504-383-0450; services Sundays 11 a.m.
- Dignity Baton Rouge  
PO Box 4181, Baton Rouge 70821; (504) 343-5172
- Integrity, 3rd Tuesday monthly at Trinity Episcopal Church, 1329 Jackson; 944-5346
- Jewish Gay & Lesbian Alliance; Amos Lassen, 525-8286
- Grace Fellowship in Christ Jesus; 3151 Dauphine Street; 944-9836 or 949-2325
- 1st Unitarian Church of New Orleans Gay & Lesbian Task Force  
5212 S. Claiborne Ave., services Sunday at 10:30 a.m. 865-7005 (men) or 822-3278 (women)
- St. Ambrose Ecumenical Catholic Church, 500 Dufossat Street, 895-4742. Masses Saturday at 4:30 PM & Sunday at 10:30 AM
- Associated Catholic Charities; 1000 Howard Ave. Ste 1200, NOLA 70113.

### Health/AIDS Organizations

- NO/AIDS Task Force, 945-4000 (administrative); 944-2437/944-AIDS (hotline); 1-800-992-4379 (statewide hotline); 944-2492 (TTD for hearing impaired).
- ACT UP/New Orleans  
meetings Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at 1407 Decatur; 944-4546 or 522-5105
- Buzzy's Boys & Girls/The William J. Fanning Foundation, 943-8929
- PWA Coalition, 945-4000
- United Services for AIDS, 522-5239
- RAIN (Regional AIDS Interfaith Network), 523-3755
- AIDSLaw, 944-5035
- Darrell Hamby Memorial Food Bank, 944-3663
- The Lambda Center, 2106 Decatur, 947-0548 (AA & Al-Anon)
- Charity Hospital/C-100 Clinic, 568-5304
- Veterans Administration Medical Center, 589-5920
- Project Lazarus, 949-3609
- Belle Reve, 945-9455
- North Lake AIDS Network (NoLAN), PO 2397, Slidell 70459; (504) 641-6750
- Food For Friends, 944-6028

### Social or Special Interest

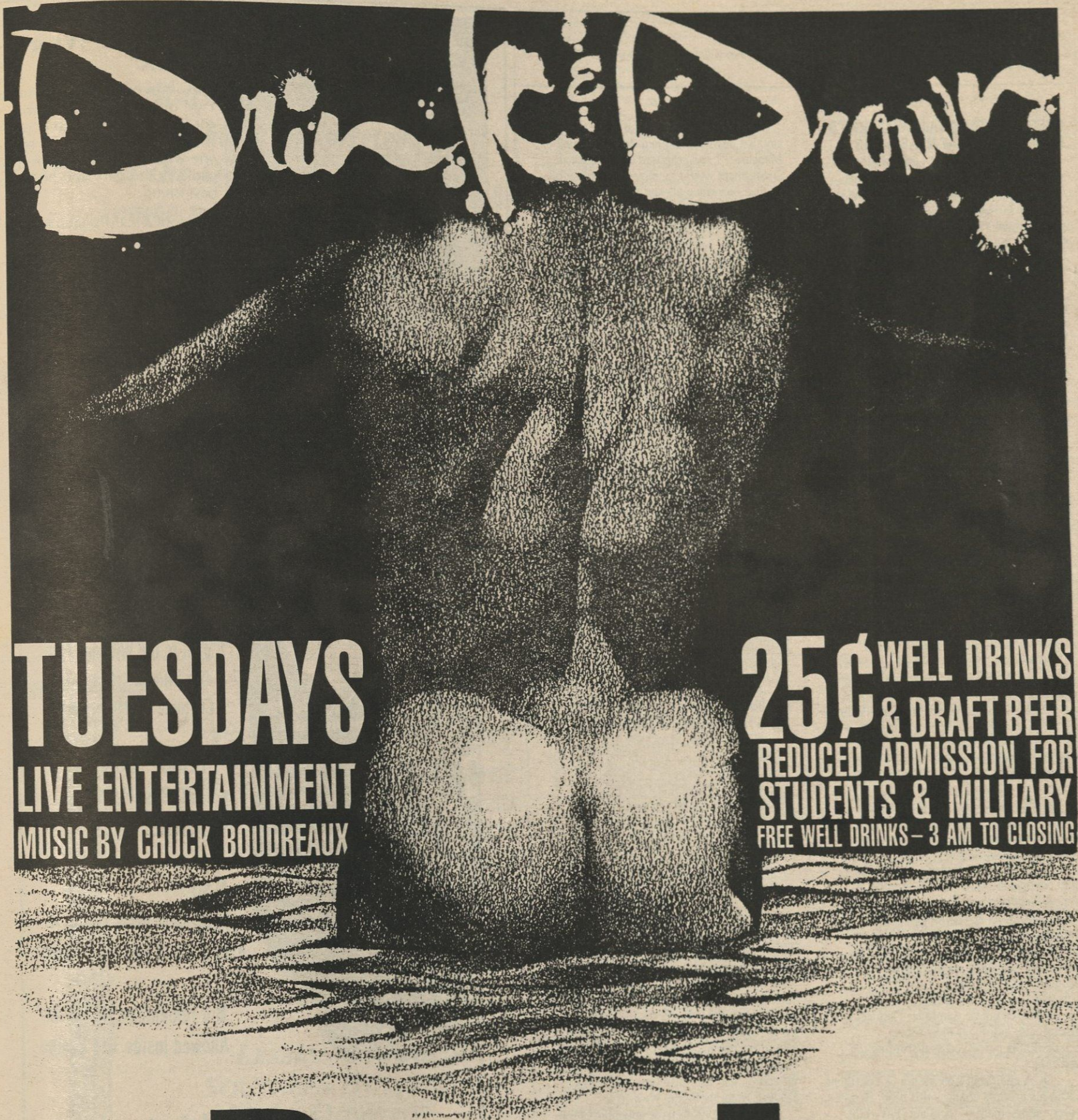
- Men of Color, POBox 57694, NO 70157-7694; 482-5341
- Womyn of Color, 488-5708; 891-0673
- The Divorce Center, support for gay spouses (3rd Tuesday monthly), 488-9924
- New Orleans Women's Music Collective, 522-1318
- New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus, 245-8884
- Frontrunners Running Club, George, 947-1081
- UNO Gay/Lesbian Alliance, UNO Student Affairs, NOLA, 70148, 286-6349
- National Leather Association/New Orleans, PO Box 50133, NO 70150
- Knights d'Orleans, POBox 50812, NO 70150
- Lords of Leather, PO Box 72105, NO 70172
- Gay Bowling League, Mid-City Lanes, 482-3133
- Original Cocktail Bunch Bowling League, 861-0233
- Volleyball New Orleans, 833-3747; 945-4364; 482-3133
- Tri Delta Chi, cross-dressers, TS, TG support group, 943-6612
- Zeitgeist Theatre Experiments, "alternative cinema," 524-0064

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## THE NEWS

### OREGON VOTES AGAIN ON CITIZEN'S ALLIANCE ANTIGAY MEASURE 13

SALEM, Ore. (AP)—Phil Matthews says he was fired from his job at a pest control business after his bosses found out he was a homosexual. "I heard the company owner in the next room screaming, 'I don't care how good of a salesman he is. We don't hire those kind,'" the 28-year-old Salem man says.

Matthews is worried that the same fate could befall more gay men and lesbians if voters approve Measure 13, the Oregon Citizens Alliance's latest attempt to enact an anti-gay-rights policy in Oregon.

On the other side of the issue, Amy Feinberg, a teacher's aide at a Christian school in Junction City, says a "yes" vote on Measure 13 will ensure that schools won't "promote" homosexuality by teaching or counseling children that it is normal behavior. "The homosexuals want to be able to come into our schools and foist their propaganda there," Feinberg says. "I believe homosexuality is immoral, unhealthy behavior, and I don't want our children being taught about it in schools."

So, for the second time in as many years, Oregon finds itself in the midst of a heated debate about the role of gay men and lesbians in society. After voters defeated the OCA's Measure 9 in the 1992 general election, the group came back with a differently worded proposal for this year's ballot. It does many of the same things as the original:

- ✓ Overturns existing anti-discrimination laws for gays and lesbians in Portland, Corvallis, Ashland and Eugene and bars state and local governments from enacting specific protections for homosexuals in the future.

- ✓ Places restrictions on how public schools and universities teach about homosexuality and on library books and materials on the subject.

- ✓ Forbids governments from offering gay couples the same health benefits as married couples.

- ✓ Prohibits governments from establishing affirmative action or hiring quotas based on homosexuality and bars them from spending public money on programs that promote or "express approval" of homosexuality.

- ✓ Makes public employees subject to disciplinary actions if their sexual orientation is perceived as disrupting the workplace.

OCA chairman Lon Mabon is confident about his group's chances this time. He cites voter endorsement of local anti-gay-rights measures in twenty-four cities and counties, despite a 1993 state law that keeps them from being enforced. Mabon says government has no business granting specific protections or minority status to homosexuals. At the same time, he denies his group is promoting discrimination. "I think a vast majority of Oregonians, including business owners, are pretty tolerant people. As long as someone keeps their sexual practices to themselves, I don't think their job is in jeopardy," Mabon says.

Gay rights activists and other opponents say that despite the toned-down wording of Measure 13, the proposed constitutional amendment would legalize discrimination against homosexuals and hurt the state's reputation and business climate. "I'm confident that people will again see through Lon Mabon's smoke screen and will again reject discrimination just as they did in 1992," says Julie Davis, head of the No on 13 Campaign.

Voters also will be asked to decide on Measure 7, which forbids public agencies from discriminating against someone based on race, color, religion, gender, age or national origin. The chief sponsor of Measure 7 is Katherine Draham, a retired Wilsonville businesswoman who spent more than \$100,000 of her own money to round up the petition signatures to put the measure on the ballot.

Draham sees the measure as an expansion of the failed Equal Rights Amendment forbidding discrimination based on gender as well as the five other categories. "It ought to pass itself, it seems to me," Draham says. "It's hard to understand how anyone can oppose a civil rights issue like this."

There's been no organized opposition to the measure. The Oregon Women's Rights Coalition and others say it is vaguely written and could, conceivably, undercut the rights of groups such as homosexuals and disabled who are not specifically listed in the plan. Δ

### MARINE ACCUSED OF LESBIANISM GETS HONORABLE DISCHARGE

NEW RIVER MARINE AIR STATION, N.C. (AP)—A Marine accused of being a lesbian says she's relieved to have received an honorable discharge even though records show she was involved in homosexual acts. "It was like a great weight had been lifted from my shoulders," said Lance Cpl. Elena G. Martinez after her attorneys reached a deal with the Marine Corps.

The 21-year-old disbursing clerk is married but separated from her husband, and has denied being a lesbian. However, her military separation form will say that she was discharged for homosexual conduct, said Warrant Officer Norm North, a spokesman for the air station here. Brig. Gen. Fred McCorkle on October 6 signed papers giving Lance Cpl. Elena G. Martinez the honorable discharge, said North. McCorkle is the commanding general of Cherry Point air station and Marine Corps Air Bases, Eastern Area, including New River.

Martinez was to have appeared before an administrative discharge board October 5 to defend herself against accusations of homosexual conduct. "She agreed to waive the administrative discharge board in exchange for an honorable discharge," said Martinez's lead defense attorney, Mark Stevens. He added that Martinez was tired of the accusations.

Her lawyers had accused the Marine Corps of conducting a witch hunt that violated the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" policy on gays in the

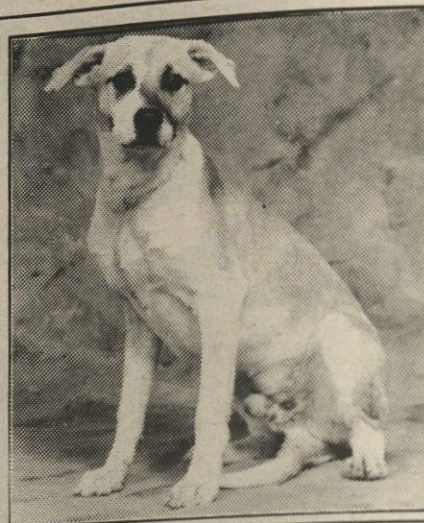


PHOTO BY CARLTON MICKLE

### LA/SPCA IMPACT PET OF THE WEEK "MAX"

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military. The lawyers had claimed a senior enlisted Marine held a closed-door meeting with Martinez's co-workers and sought damaging information about her.

The allegations against Martinez stemmed from rumors that in 1991 she had kissed a woman in a stopped car and in the lobby of a Jacksonville theater. Her accusers also claimed she had danced suggestively with females in a Jacksonville nightclub. Stevens said the agreement was reached on October 4, the evening after the case was presented to Col. Louis A. Rehberger III, commanding officer of New River, during a meeting that lasted about an hour.

The Corps had wanted to give Martinez a general discharge under honorable conditions, which is less prestigious than an honorable discharge and would prevent her from getting GI Bill educational benefits. She had been a Marine for almost three years and received above-average ratings. North said Martinez's attorneys had requested the honorable discharge agreement. She now plans to return to her native Dallas, Texas, and go to school. Δ

### "FRONT RUNNER" LED TO FOUNDING OF NUMEROUS GROUPS

NEW YORK (AP)—Patricia Nell Warren's *The Front Runner* not only helped thousands of young gays come to terms with their sexuality, it also launched an athletic movement. Since the late 1970s, some 75 Front Runners groups of lesbian and gay amateur runners have sprung up around the country.

Warren had nothing to do with the founding of the groups and avoided them for years, out of shyness and a reluctance to be labeled, said Tyler St. Mark, her business partner. But she had an emotional meeting with them at the Gay Games in New York in June, just after the sequel *Harlan's Race* was published.

"She just simply walked over very casually, and it wasn't until she raised her arms (for a photographic pose) that people noticed her" said St. Mark, who was present at the event in Central Park. "It was a ripple effect. It was like a wave." And, ultimately, it was a great round of applause—just like that for her character, Harlan Brown, in his first meeting with the Front Runners, which occurs at the climax of *Harlan's Race*. If the second novel leads to the founding of any group, it might be the Gay Panthers. Several characters in the book, despondent over the assassination of Harlan's lover Billy Sive, flirt with forming a mythical terrorist group modeled on the Black Panthers.

Warren says the idea was not hers: "Before I ever wrote this book, I heard 'Gay Panthers' talked about and theorized about," she said. But no such group exists, and Warren noted, "I point out in the book that, of all the major movements, the gay movement alone has not had its share of violent activists." She said she doesn't know why. Δ

### OFFICER SAYS NAVY TRYING TO GET RID OF HIM BY NOT PROMOTING HIM

NORFOLK (AP)—Lt. j.g. Richard D. Selland was passed over for promotion the first week of October in what the gay officer calls the first step in a new attempt by the Navy to get rid of him. A Navy board in July recommended the supply officer at the Norfolk Naval Base be honorably discharged for violating the military's "don't

ask, don't tell" policy on homosexuality. The recommendation is under review by Navy Secretary John Dalton. Selland has promised to fight the discharge in federal court.

But now Selland said the Navy has found another route that he believes will ultimately lead to his discharge. Under Navy regulations, if an officer is passed over for promotion by two consecutive promotions boards, the officer is discharged. A promotions board last week didn't promote Selland; his next board will be in a year. "It shows their determination to kick him out of any door," said Hank Hockeimer, Selland's lawyer.

Selland argued that the Navy should have delayed his promotion board while awaiting the Navy secretary's decision so that he could be evaluated strictly on his job performance.

But a Navy spokesman said delays aren't permitted. Like every officer, Selland was evaluated for promotion based on a regular schedule, said Lt. Dave Waterman of the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

Selland's most recent fitness report, which Waterman said would have been reviewed by the promotion board, praised his work as deputy director of a submarine squadron's small purchase division. But the report recommended Selland not be promoted because his "military performance has not met the same high standard that his professional performance has. His continued acknowledgment, in public media, that he is a homosexual is an open violation of Department of Defense policy on homosexual conduct."

"Clearly, it wasn't anything to do with my performance," Selland said. His superiors are "continuing to give me more challenging jobs to do," he said, including responsibility for 81 other employees and 200,000 supply requisitions per year.

Selland was stationed aboard the submarine *Hammerhead* in Norfolk when he disclosed his sexual orientation to his commanding officer in January 1993, the day after President Clinton's inauguration. Selland has said he came forward on the advice of a chaplain and in the belief that the new president would reverse the military's policy banning service by gays. Δ

### HUNTSVILLE ALABAMA MCC DRAWS FEW BLESSINGS FROM NEIGHBORS

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP)—The new church behind the public library would be a model of Bible Belt conservatism if appearances counted for anything. The gray trim blends into the dark brick exterior, and a plain cross hangs on a clean, white wall just inside the door. The only thing missing is a steeple. Homosexual men and lesbians dominate the congregation that gathers in the nondescript building. Because of that, many local churchgoers are hoping the church will disappear just as quietly as it was built.

"It's created quite a furor among the Christian community," said Lee Hudson, a Baptist minister and outspoken opponent.

The Metropolitan Community Church of Huntsville is small, with an average Sunday attendance of about thirty. No one paid any attention during its first seven years as members met in a rustic lodge and a downtown office building. But the church

*News continued on Page 8*



## MORE NEWS

has been subjected to scattered protests since it opened its \$140,000 worship center about two months ago.

The minister of a nearby congregation erected a sign stating "Homosexuality is a sin," and several neighbors scrawled derisive messages on posters. A small group of antagonists confronted several members recently following a Holy Union ceremony, in which a same-sex couple was blessed by the church. "They came over here and were saying things like, 'We'd better go ahead and sell because our property values are going to drop,'" said church member Mancil Self, 37.

An official of the Los Angeles-based Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches said the reception given the Huntsville congregation has been worse than most, but not as bad as some.

Residents of Matthews, N.C., filed suit last year in a bid to keep a Metropolitan church from moving into a building in their area. The thirty-five-member congregation is now working to comply with zoning codes while meeting at a Unitarian-Universalist church.

"By and large our churches are serving the spiritual needs of people in their community and do so without interference," said the Rev. Jay Neely of Atlanta, district coordinator of the denomination. "We are a Christian church serving Christian men and women."

Pastor Daniel Whitworth, who put up the anti-gay sign outside his Fanning Heights Church of Christ, said the Metropolitan church is guilty of blasphemy for teaching homosexuality is not a sin. "I am firmly convinced that the Bible teaches that homosexuality is wrong. If it's not, then God owes the people of Sodom and Gomorrah an apology," Whitworth said.

It is that kind of talk that drives some homosexuals into Metropolitan congregations and away from mainline denominations. Self, taking a break from mowing the grass at his church's new building on a sunny afternoon, said he attended both Baptist and Methodist churches as a child. "I took as much of that damnation and 'You're going to burn' as I could, and I left," said Self. "I just feel like Jesus came and died on the cross for me. His teaching didn't condemn anyone."

The Rev. Marge Ragona, pastor of the Metropolitan church in Birmingham, has been keeping up with the trials of the Huntsville group from afar. Her congregation has faced little opposition during its thirteen years in existence. "We have been extremely lucky. We have been very small, we've never tried to build a building," she said.

The Huntsville church had few problems until members decided to put their faith into action by launching a building program. For years, Self said, members met in a mountain lodge. More recently they gathered weekly in a downtown building where several rooms had been converted into a church.

Self said the church was forced to make a decision on its future after getting into a lease dispute with its downtown landlord.

"They made us say 'OK, what are we going to do?' They forced us to make a decision, and we did that," he said.

Now that the new building is finished, things are looking up despite the protests. Several Huntsville-area congregations have expressed support for the Metropolitan church's right to exist, despite continued opposition from pastors of other churches. One local company even donated a flag bearing a cross and a colorful rainbow, a symbol many gays have adopted as their own. "It's made us feel really good," said Self.

### FORMER DIRECTOR OF AIDS ORGANIZATION GETTING HELP FROM FRIENDS

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP)—Jack Ryan spent eight years working with people who suffer from AIDS. Now those he helped are getting a chance to show their gratitude. Ryan, 66, is suffering from colon cancer. After emergency surgery two weeks ago, his doctor released him with the warning that he should eat well and not be alone for long.

"The alternatives seemed to be home health care or a nursing home, which I couldn't afford," Ryan said.

Instead, Ryan went to Carnahan House, a 22-unit apartment building that provides housing for AIDS patients. Ryan, who retired last year as director of the local AIDS Task Force, helped found the house.

Carnahan House, which opened in 1989, isn't a hospice or a group home. It is a large, 19th-century house divided into 22 efficiency apartments, each with its own kitchen. Residents can gather in common areas, but they aren't required to come together for meals or other activities.

When Ryan called Jack Timmany, director of Carnahan House, to ask if he could stay for a few days, Timmany quickly agreed. Ryan was set up in one of the house's "courtesy suites," usually used by the families of residents who visit from out of town. The suite was empty, but with Ryan originally scheduled to have surgery later this month, the staff figured there was ample time to get it ready for him. But when it became evident Ryan had a life-threatening intestinal blockage that would have to be removed immediately, Timmany and the house's residents had to act fast. "In two hours, they had the place ready for me," Ryan said. "They painted, moved in furniture and decorated the place."

Many of the residents knew Ryan from when he was a counselor with the task force, and they wanted to do what they could to help, Timmany said. One resident loaned a clock from his own apartment, another a toaster, a third a framed poster. After a week of recuperation, Ryan said he is ready to return to his own apartment. But he said he will return to Carnahan House after another surgery later this month. Δ

### JUDGE IN REAL-LIFE 'PHILADELPHIA' CASE REFUSES TO MOVE THE TRIAL

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The judge in a lawsuit with parallels to the movie

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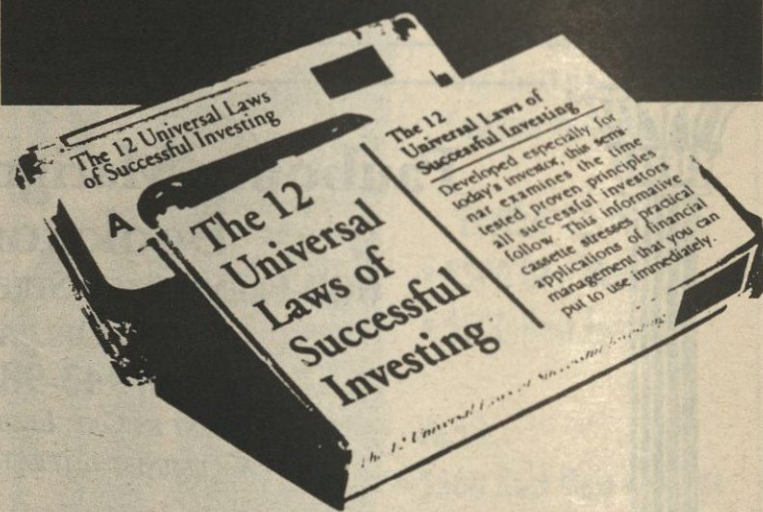
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Philadelphia refused to move the trial outside the city Monday, discounting fears that the jurors might be tempted to compare real life with Hollywood.

The discrimination case was brought by a lawyer, identified in court papers as John Doe Esq., who claims he was fired illegally after his firm learned he was infected with the AIDS virus. Jury selection began October 3.

U.S. District Judge Robert Gawthrop III rejected a request by Kohn, Nast & Graf to move the trial to Harrisburg. The firm had argued jurors that there would be less likely to compare the case with the film, about a lawyer successfully suing his law firm for firing him because he had AIDS.

Nevertheless, the questionnaire given to prospective jurors asks if they have seen the movie and if it will affect their ability to decide the case. Kohn, Nast, a firm prominent in antitrust and class-action product liability litigation, contends it fired the plaintiff because he didn't measure up to its standards, not because he had tested positive for the AIDS virus.

The lawsuit was filed under the federal Americans With Disabilities Act. Δ

### CRIME & ABORTION ARE ISSUES IN NY ATTORNEYGENERAL'S RACE, HOMOSEXUALITY ISN'T

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—The candidates for New York attorney general are talking about crime, abortion rights and the role of the state's top lawyer. They aren't talking about sexual orientation. Dennis Vacco, the Republican nominee, faces Democratic primary winner Karen Burstein in the

general election on Nov. 8. The winner gets a four-year term as the attorney responsible for defending New York state, a staff of 465 attorneys and a \$110,000 salary.

The race is potentially history-making. If Burstein wins, she would become not only the first woman elected independently to statewide office in New York, but also the first openly homosexual person to prevail in a statewide election. Burstein defeated incumbent G. Oliver Koppell and two other candidates in the primary and polls show her leading Vacco.

Both Burstein and Vacco have avoided discussing sexual orientation on the campaign trail. Neither talks about it unless asked directly. Vacco, a former local prosecutor and U.S. attorney for western New York, has said repeatedly he doesn't think it should be an issue. "What I think is going to matter to voters is not that she has chosen [sic] a lesbian lifestyle [sic]," he said at a recent news conference.

Burstein, a former Brooklyn Family Court judge, also said she doesn't expect her homosexuality to cause much fallout at the ballot box. "I think that people are sophisticated in the state of New York," she said. "There will be individuals who will not vote for me because of my sexual orientation but most of those individuals won't vote for me because I am a woman or Jewish."

A New York Newsday/Channel 7 Eyewitness Newsday Poll taken last month seemed to support her remarks. While 19 percent of New Yorkers said Burstein's homosexuality would make them less likely to vote for her, 75 percent said it didn't make any difference. Lee Miringoff, director

of the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion, said Vacco has been wise not to make anything of the sexual orientation issue. "When you attack someone on those grounds, the value voters pick out is intolerance," he said.

The two candidates have plenty of other differences to discuss. The 42-year-old Vacco is a conservative who opposes abortion and supports the death penalty. He established a reputation for pursuing drug dealers during his tenure as a U.S. attorney from 1988 to 1993. He has attacked Burstein as "out of touch" with New Yorkers for opposing several anti-crime bills when she was a state senator in the 1970s. Burstein has said the votes were just "three out of 3,000."

At 52, Burstein is a liberal from Manhattan who emphasizes her lengthy record as a consumer and civil rights advocate as good preparation for the attorney general's role. She supports abortion rights and opposes the death penalty. Since the primary, Burstein has repeatedly criticized Vacco for defying a judge's order to prosecute five anti-abortion rights protesters during the so-called "Spring of Life" demonstrations in Buffalo in 1992. Vacco decided only three of the protesters should be charged and the judge removed him from the case. Burstein has used the incident to accuse Vacco of not being trustworthy when it comes to protecting abortion rights.

Burstein said Vacco hammers on the law-and-order theme "because he doesn't know about anything else." The role of the attorney general, according to Burstein, is not just to prevent violence on the street but

also to stop injustice in areas ranging from the environment and civil rights to housing contracts. Δ

### IOWA WOMAN SAYS ESCORT SERVICE IS MINISTRY, NOT PROSTITUTION

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa (AP)—A woman charged with prostitution is promising a court fight on constitutional grounds. Katy Miller, 43, of Cedar Rapids says her escort service business is a ministry not a front for prostitution. She says she cannot commit prostitution when she is in her spiritual nature. Police disagree.

Miller was arrested last week in an undercover sting operation. Police on Friday said undercover officers called Miller's Stars Escort Service newspaper ad on the evening of October 6 and arranged to meet her at a Cedar Rapids motel. She told officers on the phone she charged \$80 dollars for ministry services, police said. Once at the motel, officials said, Miller began reading Bible verses to the officer posing as a customer. The readings then led to the bed, police said. Miller was charged with prostitution.

It was the second time in two weeks that police have arrested her for prostitution, Miller said in a phone interview October 7. Miller said she had worked as a prostitute for a number of years in the Cedar Rapids area. But three months ago, she said, she stopped. Miller said in recent weeks she has begun her ministry. Making references to the Bible, Miller said her body is a church and she is using her God-given talents when she engages in sex.

News Continued on Page 10

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"In some cases, sex causes a rebirth or a sanctification to occur," Miller said. "It's helping other people. I know this is what God wants me to do." Hallelujah and amen, sister! Δ

#### TACOMA, WASH. QUEERS FAKE HATE CRIME

A gay couple in Tacoma, Washington, who claimed to be the targets of a hate crime in July were charged with first-degree theft and malicious mischief as they tried to flee the city in mid-September, Tacoma police said.

Eric Sturgis, Lee Brovold and their lesbian roommate, Michelle Murray, told police they returned from Gay Pride events in Vancouver, British Columbia to find their house vandalized. Antigay slogans were painted on walls, and damage was estimated at \$80,000. Police considered the incident a hate crime, and gays and other minorities throughout the state were traumatized by the vicious nature of the apparent act. Alternative newspapers as far away as Washington, D.C., picked up the story.

Tacoma residents rallied in support of the putative victims, holding fundraisers, donating household items and conducting rallies to denounce bigotry. But the community is now expressing shock and betrayal at reports of this alleged fraud.

Sturgis, Brovold and Murray pleaded innocent to the charges at their arraignment on September 12. The three could not be reached for comment.

Recently, police said, they received a tip that Sturgis and Brovold were preparing to flee to Omaha, Nebraska. The two men were arrested when they went to a friend's house to get their pet dog; their car was packed with personal belongings. Murray was arrested at a Tacoma apartment, where she moved after the damage was done to the house.

Detectives began to suspect the trio shortly after the vandalism was reported, police spokesman Jim Mattheis said. "There wasn't enough evidence to pin it down at the time. The phone calls (from witnesses) dramatically increased until we felt we had the evidence we needed to issue an arrest warrant." Police have identified at least one witness who said he saw the house vandalized before Sturgis, Brovold, and Murray left for Vancouver, police said.

Cops also discovered a storage locker belonging to Sturgis and Brovold, filled with some of the personal property that the couple had reported stolen, Mattheis said. The locker also included items donated from concerned community members. During the arraignment, all three suspects pleaded innocent to the charges of first-degree theft and malicious mischief. If convicted, they could face two to six months in jail. Prosecutors could seek a longer sentence due to extenuating circumstances, but Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney Vila Amos said there is no precedent to seek an exceptional sentence in this kind of case. No similar incident has occurred in the state.

Sturgis and Brovold are being held on \$15,000 bail each. Amos urged Superior Court Judge Gary Steiner to keep the men in custody because she believes they could try to flee. Murray requested Steiner to reduce her bail from \$2,500 to \$100, which he refused.

Prosecutors said they have insurance

records that indicate all three housemates bought insurance policies on July 22, several days before the vandalism was reported. Sturgis and Brovold allegedly filed a claim for \$34,000, and Murray allegedly filed a claim for \$20,000, prosecutors said.

The community has reacted with mixed emotions since the arrests. Many residents have expressed relief that a hate crime did not occur, but they also feel that the good will of the community has been imposed upon and violated.

The Rev. Jan Skaggs, pastor of the New Heart Metropolitan Community Church in Tacoma, said gays and lesbians are both angry and relieved. "People here were afraid," Skaggs said. "After the vandalism, some people went deep into the closet while others became very angry. It was frightening.... In that sense, this is good news, because it means there's no organized group targeting us." (Tom Flint, *Seattle Gay News*) Δ

#### INCARNATE WORD NUNS' ART SHOW SHUT DOWN FOR SEXY CONTENT

An exhibit by Donell Hill, a Houston artist, at a San Antonio art gallery run by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word was shut down last month by members of the order because of its erotic content; the nuns claimed they had received about a hundred irate calls criticizing the work, while the San Antonio Archdiocese reported at least as many complaints. What a religious order is doing running an art gallery anyway is problematic—assuredly, they don't need the tax write-off. Ms. Hill's works included a painting of an angel having intercourse on an altar (what kind of intercourse is unspecified since angels are, after all, male—at least the Biblical ones) and sculptures of female genitalia in floral forms (rather than the opposite as in Georgia O'Keeffe's paintings). Sister Alice Holden, the gallery's director, said she prayed mightily (for aesthetic guidance? for publicity? to escape the archiepiscopal wrath?) before the show went up and decided there was no harm in exhibiting Hill's art because "sexuality is a tremendous gift from God." Δ

#### SAAB TARGETS QUEERS IN ITS ADVERTISING

According to Stuart Elliott's Advertising column in the *New York Times*, the decision by Saab Cars USA, the American importers of the Swedish-built automobiles, in deciding to run print ads in the queer slicks *Out* and *Genre*, "is considered a breakthrough for efforts to persuade mainstream advertisers to set aside longstanding concerns that the social stigma against homosexuality, still widespread, requires them to shun that market." John Kramer, the vice president for sales and marketing of Saab Cars in Norcross, Georgia, said, "Frankly, I think it's a market all of us have looked at. Some people have avoided it for obvious reasons. But as a demographic group, I don't think it's different from any other market out there.... If the fit's right, if the target's right, if the disposition is there, we ought to be talking to that audience." Mr. Elliott notes that although automobile advertising is second only to retailing in spending volume, the auto industry "has traditionally held very conservative attitudes about advertising," shunning even *Playboy*. (Other advertisers mentioned as "missing from media for homosexuals" are packaged



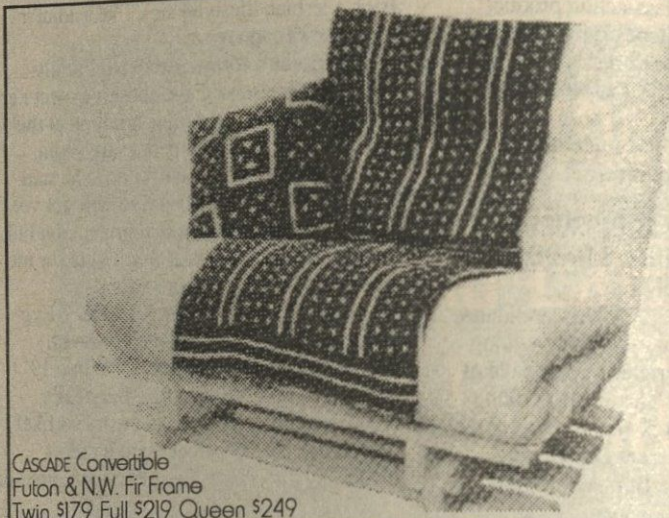
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food, over-the-counter drugs, cosmetics, and financial services.) Mr. Elliott also mentions the Dial-A-Mattress Corporation in Long Island City as another business planning an ad campaign pitched to queers.

Watts Wacker, a managing partner at Yankelovich Partners, a research company in Norwalk, Connecticut, said that advertisers like Saab Cars, in becoming the first companies in their categories to address queers as a market "makes a lot of sense," even with the most recent reports that queer disposal is hardly as vast a proposition as was hoped. Δ

## GAY BROTHELS MADE LEGAL IN NEVADA

LAS VEGAS—"Go west, young man, go west!" was the advice given to young men of the last century for using the best of themselves to find wealth, happiness and fulfillment. And for young men of this century—gay, bi or just hard-working and imaginative heterosexuals—the West is once again open for exploration, this time in gay-friendly Nevada where it is now legal to establish homosexual brothels in eleven of the state's counties. (Nothing new, of course: one remembers reading of the houses filled with "peg boys" in San Francisco during the days of the Gold Rush and a bit afterward.)

According to New Dimensions, a firm touting business opportunities for young (presumably hunky) young entrepreneurs, Bill AB466, passed last year by the Nevada legislature, now makes gay prostitution legal, or at least within the confines of licensed brothels.

Where are the best places to hang out your shingle (or whatever it is one hangs out in front of "one of those places")? Well, New Dimensions recommends: Storey County, five minutes from Reno and a hour away from Lake Tahoe; Lyon County, seven minutes from Carson City; Elko County with its lush mountain locale; or Nye County, just sixty minutes from Las Vegas with a winery and golf course nearby. All have easy access to airports, for that john who needs to come and go in a hurry.

Prostitution is already a multimillion dollar business in Nevada, but New Dimensions speculates that the specialized demands of a gay brothel would allow for a higher profit margin. You can, of course, buy an existing brothel—with an established clientele. Or go into business for yourself. New Dimensions recommends, however, that you do not go it alone, best to start with two or three enterprising partners. Previous business experience is also recommended; this is, after all, work, not play.

But you've got to have a license (learner's permits are not acceptable) to go into the oldest profession. Call the county clerk for information: Storey County, 702/8470969; Lyon County 702/463-3341; Elko County, 702/7534600 and Nye County, 702/4828127.

An anti-Gay initiative in Nevada died a humiliating death last year when promoters failed to find enough homophobic people to sign their petitions. Indeed, according to New Dimensions, the anti-Gay petition was "a miserable flop" which only made already-progressive Nevadans even more Gay friendly; we wish could say that tolerance and the Pioneer Spirit go hand in hand, but there are the grim examples of Idaho, Utah,

Colorado, Montana, and Oregon rising spectrally out of the miasma of recent history. The Governor of Nevada and the mayor of Las Vegas emphasized their support of Gay rights by holding news conferences in Gay lounges.

So if you have the drive, the energy and—hopefully—the necessary equipment, a new career awaits. A new meaning for the hoary old Winchellism, "getting Renovated," perhaps. (Merwyn Grote, *Lesbian & Gay News-Telegraph*) Δ

## CODFISH STATE COURT TO DECIDE WHETHER CONDOM ADS CAN RIDE SUBWAY

BOSTON (AP)—An attorney for the subway system argued October 7 that children would be harmed by advertisements picturing a packaged condom and slogans including "Tell him you don't know how it will ever fit." "What are we talking about? A penis, ejaculation, flattery, sexual pleasure," James G. Reardon, attorney for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, said in an emotional appeal before the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. "I say to you sirs with deepest respect that is wrong," Reardon continued emotionally.

But the AIDS Action Committee argued the slogans in its planned subway station campaign are too vague to harm children. "To use the phrase 'You've got to be putting me on,' does not suggest the correct appendage," said Reed Witherby, attorney for the AIDS committee. And if they are mature enough to understand the sexual reference, then "this is the target audience" the ads are meant to reach, Witherby said.

The committee also argued the subway cars were a public forum, and the MBTA is curbing AIDS Action's right to free speech. Witherby said the MBTA is singling out the AIDS committee's posters because the transportation agency disagrees with its message. The MBTA has already allowed sexually explicit movie posters, Witherby said. Another ad for a print shop uses sexual innuendo in a harmless way when it said: "Night Time is the Best Time for Reproducing," Witherby said.

One member of the three-justice panel said he had read two newspaper advice columns the previous day that included letters about two sexually active girls, ages 11 and 12. "The age of knowledge is significantly below what it was when I was somewhat younger than I am today," said Judge Norman Stahl. The judges took the case under advisement.

This was the second time oral arguments were made. In April, attorneys debated before a panel that included Stephen Breyer, the newest member of the U.S. Supreme Court. But after his nomination to the nation's highest court, Breyer said he would not rule on any pending cases. Δ

## CT DIOCESE ACKNOWLEDGES SECRET ARCHIVES OF SEX ABUSE COMPLAINTS

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (AP)—The Bridgeport Roman Catholic Diocese keeps records of sexual abuse complaints against priests in secret archives, court testimony has revealed. The disclosure came during questioning in Superior Court on October 6 by attorney T. Paul Tremont, who represents more than a dozen people who claim they were sexually abused by a priest in the



1960s and 1970s. The plaintiffs are seeking more than \$40 million in damages. The records of sexual abuse are kept at the Catholic Center, the diocese said.

The diocese has tried to prevent its personnel files from being turned over to Tremont, saying they are open only to the bishop. The Rev. Raymond Pcolka, 53, is accused in lawsuits of sexually assaulting 15 boys and girls while he was an assistant pastor at parishes in Bridgeport and Stratford. Pcolka was sent to the Institute of Living in Hartford in 1983 after a woman complained to the diocese that the priest had repeatedly sexually assaulted her when she was a child between 1972 and 1976. Monsignor Laurence Bronkiewicz testified.

Previously, the diocese had said that Pcolka was sent to be evaluated in 1989 after a complaint was made against him, and again in 1993 after the lawsuits were filed. Diocesan spokesmen had denied having received earlier complaints made against the priest. Bronkiewicz said he could find no written records of the 1983 evaluation even though he acknowledged that such records must be made according to church law. The diocese has said the 1989 evaluation showed there was no basis for believing Pcolka had any disorder. The results of the 1993 evaluation have not been released.

Pcolka said it's possible the documents are locked in secret archives containing information from investigations into questionable conduct by priests. He said information about priests' sexual assaults against children would be kept in this archive, but added he does not recall if he looked there regarding the charges against Pcolka. Superior Court Judge Bruce Levin ended the hearing Thursday with one diocese witness yet to testify. The trial has been tentatively scheduled to continue Oct. 18.

Pcolka was relieved of his duties after he walked away from a sex offender treatment center. Tremont, who has been trying to locate the priest for more than a year, asked Bronkiewicz if he knows where Pcolka could be found. But the monsignor was cut off in mid-sentence by Pcolka's lawyer and the judge allowed the answer to be put off. Δ

#### RV PARK OWNER VOWS TO TURN PROPERTY INTO TOPLESS BAR, NUDE AREA

LYONS, Colo. (AP)—If Boulder County won't let him run a recreational vehicle park on his property, Bob Scott says he'll turn his family-style restaurant into a topless bar and the campground into a nude sunbathing spot. Scott and his wife, Hazel Willy, say that's not a choice they want; they'd rather continue operating their restaurant, community swimming pool and RV park. "We have our life savings tied up in this place," said Scott. "We do not want a topless bar. But I will. I don't make idle threats."

The battle between Boulder County and Scott—which now involves the Colorado Springs company that owns the property—began about three years ago when Scott and Willy began managing The Countryside Inn, a restaurant 1 1/2 miles west of Lyons. To make a little extra money, they turned nearby tennis courts into an RV parking area.

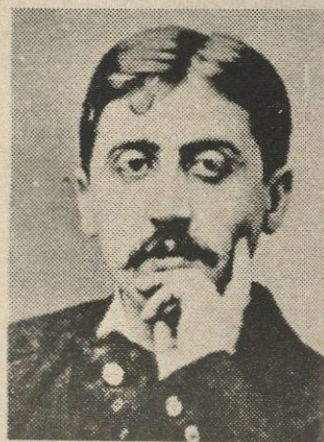
Scott claims he should be allowed to do that because the person who owned the

property in 1970 ran a campground, and it has been a campground ever since. But Graham Billingsley, Boulder County land use director, says the property wasn't used as a campground at least from December 1988 through 1990.

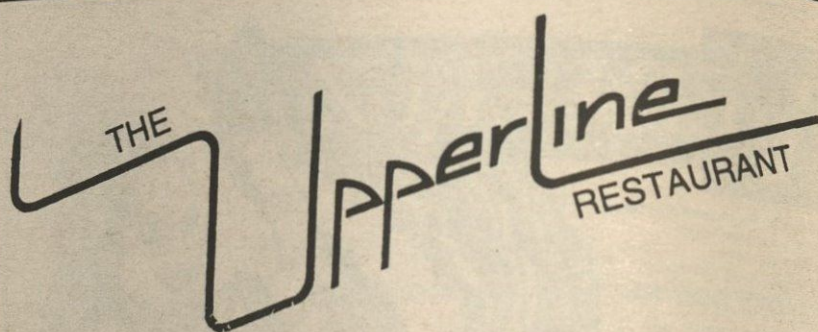
Because the land's use hasn't been consistent, and because it is an area zoned for business—which doesn't allow campgrounds—Scott is violating county regulations, Billingsley says. The county has filed a complaint in Boulder District Court against Craddock Development, which owns the property and leases it to Scott and Willy. A court date has not been set.

Scott says the town of Lyons could solve the problem by annexing his property and he has given the town a deadline of Oct. 17 to do so. If Lyons doesn't meet Scott's deadline, he says he'll close for two weeks, install a 65-foot-long bar, two stages and paint the front of the building "19 different colors of neon," then reopen as a topless bar.

Seventeen years ago, the business was known as the Charwood Restaurant and Lounge, a topless bar. While the bar was controversial, it also was the only time the property ever turned a profit, Scott said. While there are no laws against topless bars, Boulder County Sheriff George Epp said there may be some question about nude sunbathing by the outdoor pool. Δ



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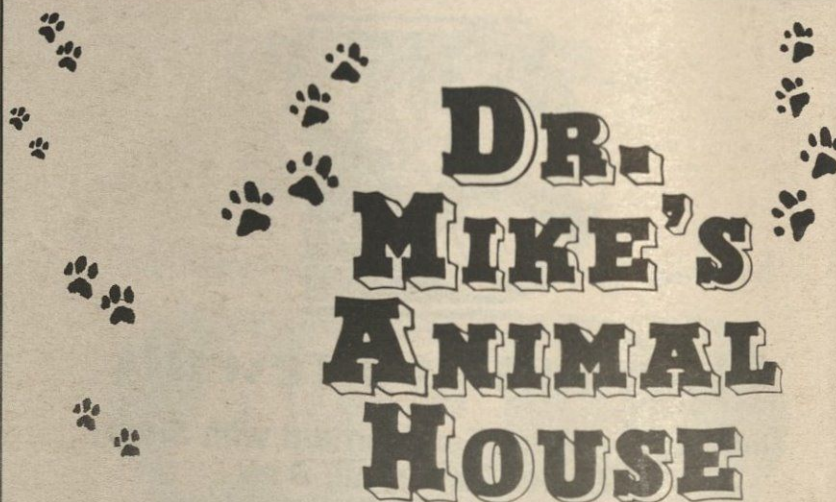
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- PLANTATION BREAKFAST** – This takes a platter to hold three crisp waffles, each topped with Scrambled Eggs. One with bacon, one with sausage, and one with ham. Talk About Good! 7.95

- THE HIDDEN FISH** – A sauteed redfish filet is wrapped in a fluffy three-egg omelette and topped with Creole Sauce and Cheddar Cheese. A side of grits or potatoes as well as toast or biscuit. 7.95

- EGGS ANDREW JACKSON** – Poached Eggs on Holland Rusks and sausage patties topped with Creole Sauce and Cheddar Cheese. Served with grits or potato, toast or biscuit. 6.95

**Waffles**

- Plain 2.95 Banana 3.75 Banana Nut 4.50  
 Peach 3.95 Apples 3.95  
 Peanut Butter, Banana Nut Supreme 4.95

- THE TROPICAL DELIGHT** – Three crisp waffles topped with a melange of tropical fresh fruit, coconut, almonds, and whipped cream. We serve this with a dare. 5.95

- Coffee 1.00 Tea 1.25 Milk 1.50 Chocolate Milk 1.50  
 Espresso 1.75 Cappuccino 2.25 Flavored Coffees 1.25  
 Sodas 1.25 Perrier 1.50

**LUNCH OFFERINGS**

All Lunch Orders include Soup du Jour or Salad Sebastian—Enjoy!

- LUNCHEON JAMBALAYA** – This classic rice dish is a little different at lunchtime – presented with Smoked Sausage, creole seasonings, herbs and whipped eggs. You'll like this clever interpretation for noonday. 6.95

- ROAST LOIN OF PORK** – served with Praline Sweet Potato Casserole and fresh vegetables. 8.95

- BREAST OF CHICKEN** – Boneless and skinless breasts of chicken served many ways – choose the one that strikes your fancy.

- GRILLED** – Grilled in a black skillet with garlic, basil, and lemon.  
 Served with Potatoes Michelle and fresh vegetables. 7.95

- AMANDINE** – Sauteed and topped with toasted almonds,  
 and served with Potatoes Michelle and fresh vegetables. 7.95

- CREOLE** – Sauteed then simmered in our rich Creole Sauce  
 and served over fluffy rice with fresh vegetables. 7.95

- SOUTHERN PECAN** – Sauteed with Honey, our sassy B-B-Q Sauce and shallots,  
 served with Potatoes Michelle and our fresh vegetables 8.95

- RED BEANS AND RICE** with Smoked Sausage. 5.95

- FISH OF THE DAY** – Lemon Garlic style with capers,  
 served with Potatoes Michelle and fresh vegetables. 9.95

- FISH CREOLE** – The Fish of the day simmered in our rich Creole Sauce,  
 and served over fluffy rice with our fresh vegetables. 9.95

- SHRIMP CREOLE** – Plump shrimp simmered in our Creole Sauce  
 and served over rice with fresh vegetables. 9.95

**Pasta Sebastian**

- Fettuccine Noodles tossed in our delicious Cream Sauce  
 (Heavy Cream, Garlic, Parmesan Cheese, and Butter) – Delicious! 7.95  
 Tossed with Julienne of Chicken 9.95  
 Tossed with Shrimp 10.95  
 Tossed with Artichoke Hearts and Pimento 8.95

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# CLAIMING OUR PAST

## GENDER AND LIBERATION

BY ROBERTS BATSON

**T**he three issues of *Sunflower*, published by the Gay Liberation Front in early 1971, track the short but intense progress of New Orleans' first gay rights activist organization. The first issue was almost entirely given to police problems, the second issue reports the conflict between heterosexual women and lesbians in the feminist movement, and the third (and final) issue reflects a growing preoccupation with issues of gender: defining differences between lesbians and gay men and recognizing the shared commonalities.

The second issue carries a rambling and disjointed short article by a woman identified only as Cherie, on the problems that lesbians faced in the feminist movement. With obvious great pain, she recounted the difficulties she experienced in getting straight women to accept her and accord her an equal place at the table. Describing herself as "confused" and "disgusted," she said, "I become terribly discouraged when even my own feminine allies shy away from the reality that I and Lesbianism exist." The attacks she endured are not specified in her article, but the pain, she said, was intense: "I stand trial before a jury of my sisters." Her plea for acceptance concluded, "Unless we can unite as one unprejudiced whole we shall never conquer our sought after heights. I am a Lesbian, but please remember I am a sincere oppressed human being, too."

The same issue of *Sunflower* also carried a more optimistic view in a separate piece called *Lesbianism — No Threat to Women's Lib*: "The time when you could call a woman a Lesbian and expect her to drop dead is over," said Kate Millet at a recent gathering of Women's Liberation activists. About thirty-five Feminists and Lesbians met to come to terms once and for all with the issue of homosexuality and Women's Liberation."

"Kate Millet, author of the popular Feminist book *Sexual Politics*, read from a statement written by six women, Lesbians and Feminists: 'We take this occasion to express our solidarity with the struggle of homosexuals to attain their liberation in a sexist society... Women's Liberation and Homosexual Liberation are both struggling toward a common goal, a society free from defining and categorizing people by virtue of gender and/or sexual preference!'"

The conflict between lesbians and heterosexual feminists raged on through much of the 1970s and was a hugely divisive issue throughout the country. Some straight women felt that lesbians were an

embarrassment and advocated a "purging" of them from the feminist movement. In time, some lesbians left the women's organizations in disgust. One New Orleans lesbian, a founder of the local National Organization for Women chapter, expressed at that time that she was tired of fighting for issues like abortion and child custody, when heterosexual women wouldn't even recognize the sexual orientation issues important to her.

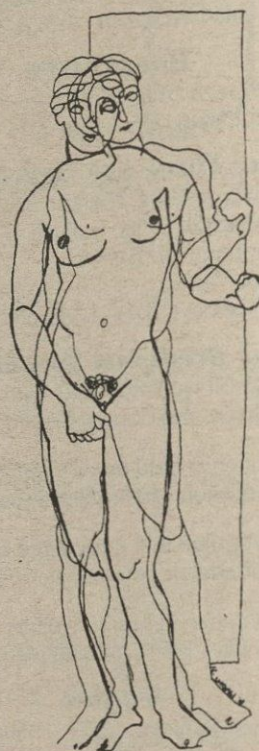
Lynn Miller, Co-director of the Gay Liberation Front, argued passionately on behalf of homosexual expression in a *Sunflower* article entitled "Lesbian Love": "Lesbianism is more than just an alternative to oppressive, exploitative heterosexual sex. It is for us Gay women a definite preference—more desirable, equal, beautiful and sensuous than hetero-sex. Who, after all, knows and understands the female body, its needs and desires better than a woman? The empathy is mutual and total... We Gay women who accept and love our Gayness make no excuses for our feelings. We love ourselves and our sisters."

**A**t the same time, lesbians were struggling to define themselves with—and, to—gay men. In the final issue of *Sunflower*, a page 2 statement included this:

"We, the women and men of G.L.F. reject all forms of sexism—both in heterosexual and homosexual life—and find that male chauvinism in either men or women as objectionable and damaging as it is in heterosexual society. (Male chauvinism is the belief in the birth right priority of males in all aspects of life usually resting upon his assumption of the inherent inferiority of the female.)"

"Homosexuals, and, in particular, homosexual men who think that Gay Liberation is nothing more than the freedom to trick are grossly mistaken about the aims of Gay Liberation. Before men and women can be liberated in any way they must cease to treat other men and women as sexual objects. Such a sexist attitude demeans and degrades another person's humanity."

One of the earliest problems facing the gay movement was the concern that lesbians received less recognition and possessed less power than gay men—both within the gay community and from the wider world. Sometimes it required a major effort to get the press to even recognize that homosexuals came in both male and female varieties. This deficiency is illustrated in a New Orleans States-Item account of one of the earliest Gay Liberation Front demonstrations. The writer, in describing the demonstrators, seemed surprised that there were females present, and with a note of astonishment breathlessly informed the public, "Several women were in the group."



This line drawing by Phyllis Parun illustrated the "Androgyny" article in the *Sunflower* referred to in this column.

As though this was some sort of major news.

In that last *Sunflower* issue the G.L.F. Co-directors, Lynn Miller and Phil Schmidt seemed compelled to write side-by-side commentaries to emphasize the aspects that men and women shared in common. They were written under the joint title "Androgynous."

Said Schmidt: "to be androgynous means to be whole, to be complete. If you think you're a man and you're some sort of half cut off from the other half, how can you live your life in peace? To find peace within yourself is to find that you're whole, you're complete..."

Wrote Miller: "Somewhere in our past—because of biological differences—we were divided up: men were given 'masculine' images to maintain, women were given 'feminine' images... Only when we rid ourselves of all confining labels, roles, and images and just simply learn to be will we become free... We will learn to love others. We will be brothers and sisters in the finest sense of the word."

**A**nother prickly issue that these pioneering activists had to deal with was the presence of transsexuals. An account of the first G.L.F. meeting includes this: "The only negative voice in the otherwise optimistic meeting came from someone who called (him-her) self a 'transsexual.' She told the group that if they 'wanted freedom to be themselves when they wanted to be themselves' they were

not going to get it. "Not in this town," she said... "I'm transsexual, by the way. Not a homosexual." "Oh, shit," a voice in the crowd said."

This issue continues to be a prickly one in the lesbian and gay community today. It was blamed for destroying a group called the Lesbian Agenda a few years ago. Both sides of this issue were recently expressed in *Impact*—first in an "Lesbian Voices" column by Marilyn McConnell and in a reply in the subsequent issue.

(Incidentally, the 1970 transsexual who distressed that G.L.F. meeting is also credited with one of the most perceptive observations recorded from that whole era, saying, "Only when you've got something to offer society in return will you get what you want." The wisdom of that thought resonates down through time and still today demands a thoughtful consideration.

**T**he final issue of *Sunflower* (April, 1971) reported that G.L.F. meetings would no longer be held at the Sphinx Coffee House on Sundays. "New Orleans Gay Liberation Front now has a structure of two core groups which meet separately every Friday night at 7:30. Women interested in G.L.F. call Lynn at 486-4483. Men call Chuck at 895-8483."

The division of the organization by gender was explained: "A truly strong liberation movement can be built only on the basis of mutual friendship and respect."

"In order to achieve this closeness we see separate consciousness raising sessions by the men and by the women as essential. This is not an attempt to be mutually exclusive but a chance to work out problems that are unique to each. When friendship and self-reliance are achieved among each group then integrated meetings will take place in order to share what we have learned. Then we can all move forward in a Positive and active way."

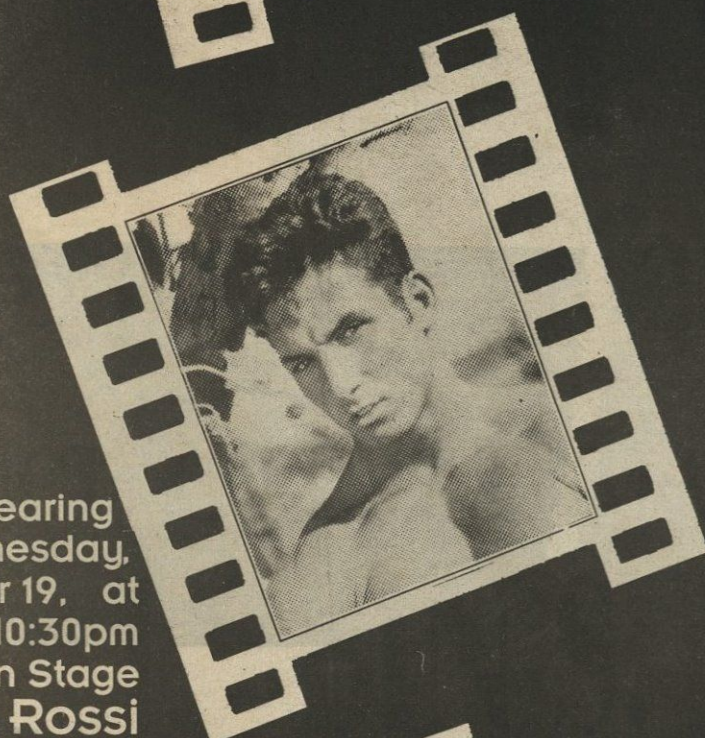
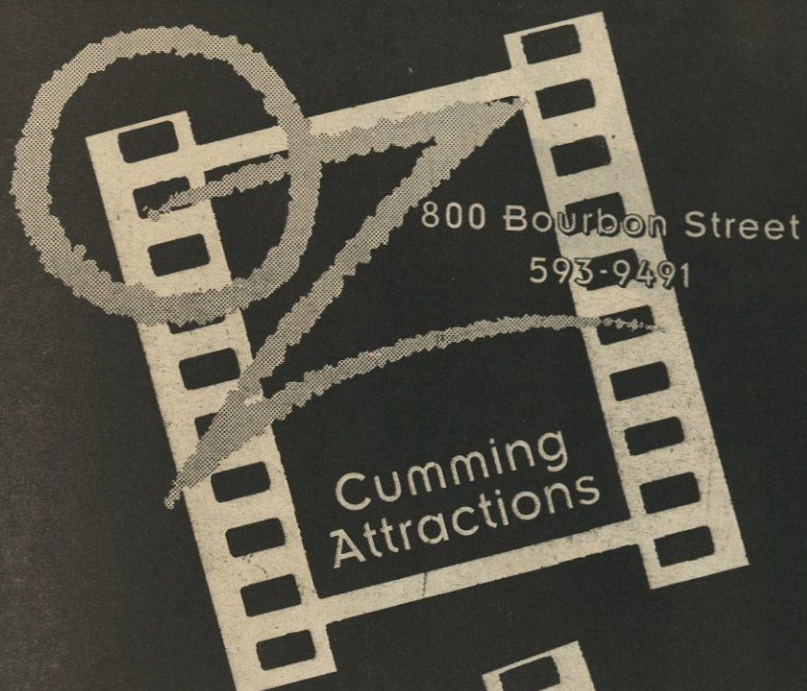
"We see these rap sessions and their achieved goals of love, strength and unity as the only viable way to create a truly effective and cohesive movement. Otherwise we cannot even begin to provide alternatives to the dehumanizing bar and tricking scene which has for so long been a part of the Gay culture; or to help change a society that has been and still is hostile to minority groups."

That was the final issue of *Sunflower*. It was also the last printed account of the New Orleans Gay Liberation Front, before it disappeared. Δ

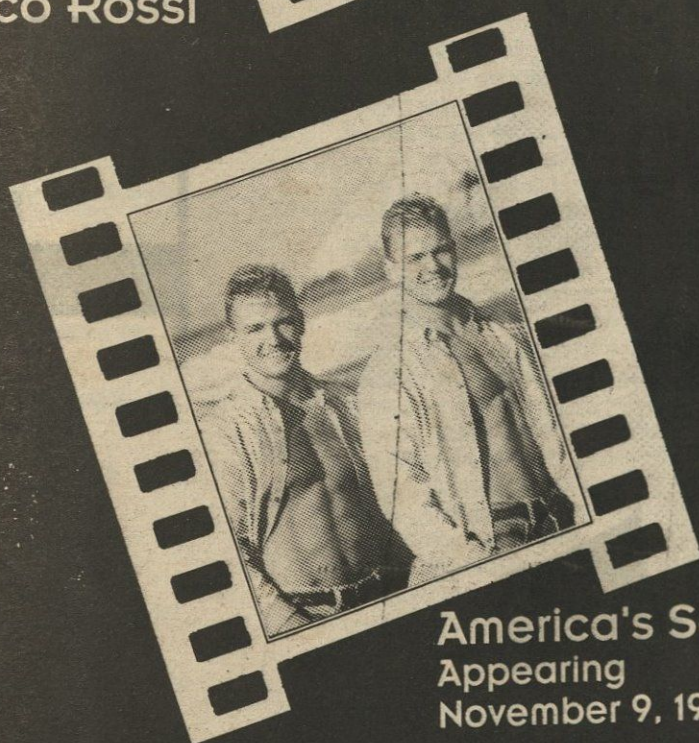
*This is Part 11 of Claiming Our Past, a series of essays on New Orleans' lesbian and gay history. While not an exhaustive account, the series chronicles and comments upon the significant social, cultural, and political developments. This is a first effort at printing a chronological overview of the subject and the author thanks all of those who have contributed to the effort with information and eye-witness accounts.*



# Halloween Week

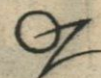


Appearing  
Wednesday,  
October 19, at  
10:30pm  
Live on Stage  
**Marco Rossi**



**America's Sexiest Twins**  
Appearing  
November 9, 1994

**Wednesday**  
October 26



**Employee  
Fright Night  
Drag Skits**

**Thursday**  
October 27

**Calendar  
Boy  
Horror  
Show**

**Friday**  
October 28

**DEAD  
STAR  
Night**

**\$250  
PRIZE**

**Saturday**  
October 29

**TREATS  
&  
TRICKS**

WITCHES WITH STICKS

*"I'll get you my pretty,  
and your little dog too!"*

**Sunday**  
October 30

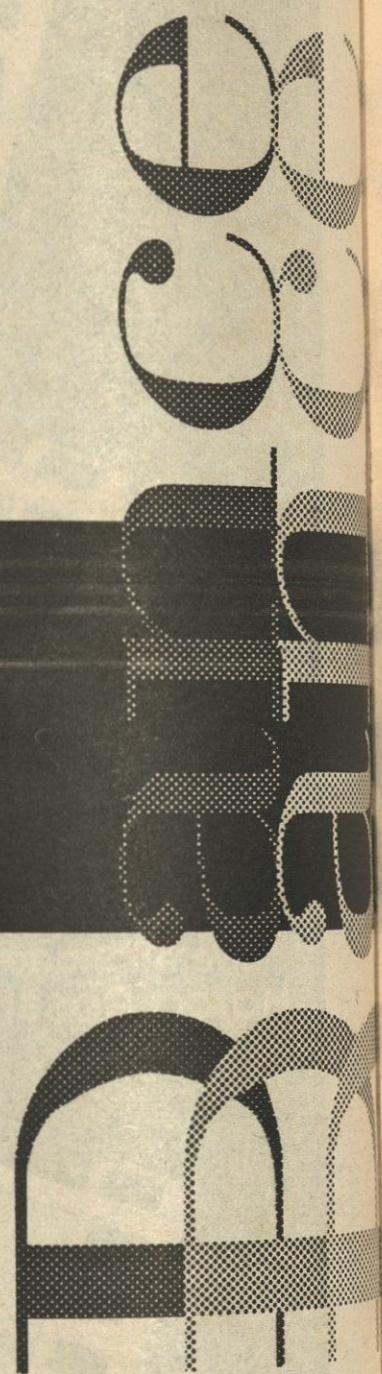
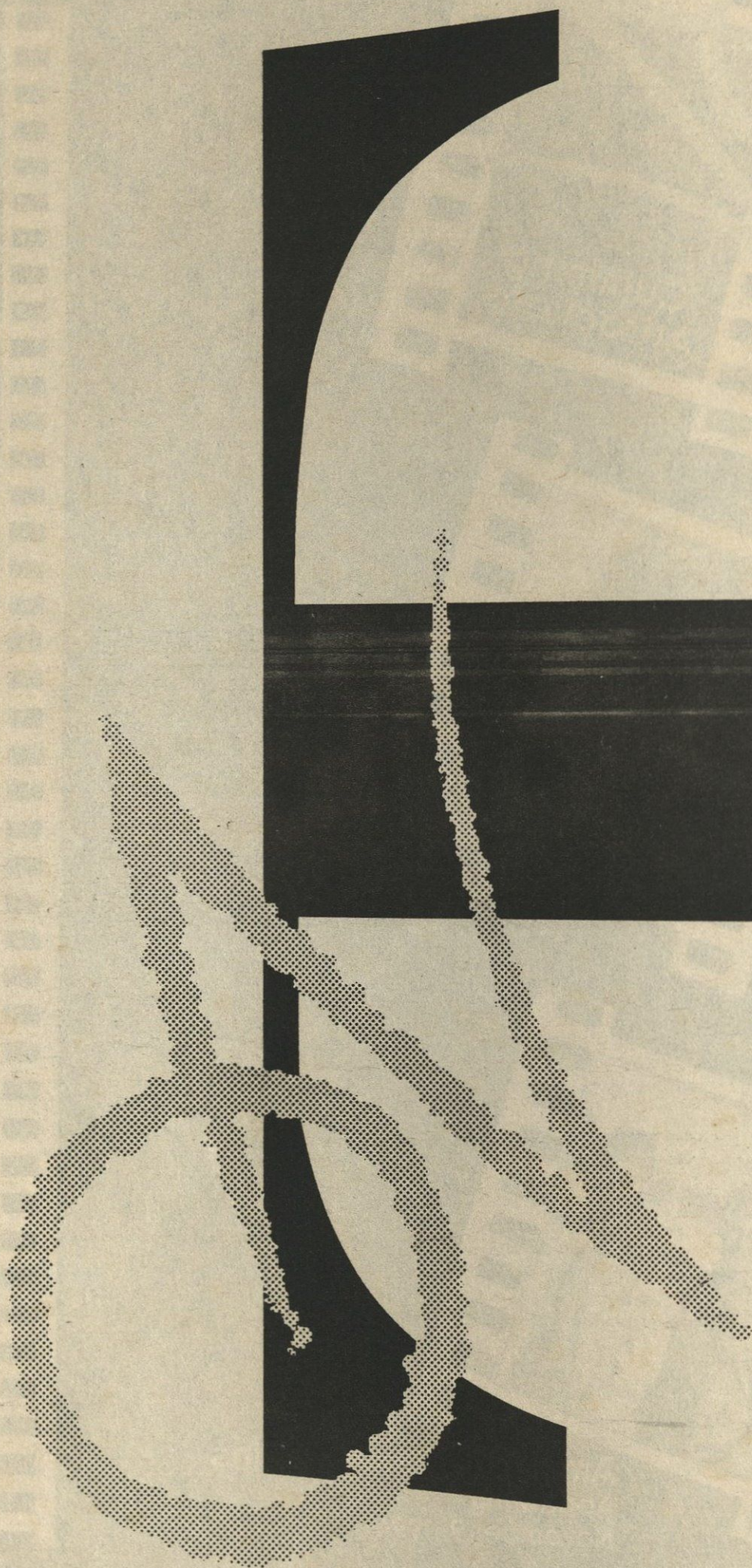
**TEA  
DANCE**

Costume Party

**\$250  
PRIZE**



# Sunday October 16, 1994 New Generation





## AREA BAR GUIDE

**Angles**  
2301 N Causeway, Metairie. 834-7979.

**Another Corner/Boots**  
2601 Royal Street. 945-7006

**Big Daddy's**  
2513 Royal Street. 948-6288

**The Bourbon Pub/Parade**  
801 Bourbon Street. 529-2107

**Bus Stop**  
542 N. Rampart 522-3372

**Cafe Lafitte in Exile/The Corral**  
901 Bourbon Street. 522-8397

**Charlene's/Over C's**  
940 Elysian Fields. 945-9328

**Crash & Burn**  
1924 4th Street, Harvey, 367-1803

**The Country Club**  
634 Louisa Street. 945-0742

**A Different Corner**  
708 Franklin Avenue, 948-2300

**Footloose**  
700 North Rampart Street. 524-7654

**The 4 Seasons**  
3229 N Causeway Metairie. 832-0659

**The Friendly Bar,**  
2301 Chartres Street. 943-8929

**The Full Moon**  
424 Destrehan Ave, Harvey, 341-4396

**The Golden Lantern**  
1239 Royal Street. 529-2860

**Good Friends Bar/Queens Head Pub**  
740 Dauphine Street. 566-7199

**Heartbreak Bar & Cafe**  
625 St. Philip Street. 568-1631

**Just Us**  
Morris Road, Hammond, 542-6550

**KIXX**  
112 N. Hollywood, Houma. 504/876-9587

**MRB & Mr. B's On The Patio**  
515 St. Philip. 586-0644

**The Other Side**  
3126 4th Street, Harvey, West Bank.

**Oz**  
800 Bourbon Street. 593-9491

**The Phoenix/Men's Room**  
941 Elysian Fields Avenue. 945-9264

**Pino's**  
2820 Lime Street, Metairie. 455-4562

**The Rawhide**  
740 Burgundy Street. 525-8106

**The Roundup**  
819 St. Louis Street. 561-8340

**Rubyfruit Jungle**  
640 Frenchmen St, 947-4000

**Sterling Club**  
700 Burgundy Street. 522-1962

**TT's**  
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**Wolfendale's**  
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**X-IS**  
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# IMPACT

Special  
Gay History  
Month  
Clip-N-Save  
Fun Page  
Below!

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING PULL-OUT



Since it's Gay History Month, we figured there wasn't much that gets more historical than that the above "snap" (as in turtles), not Ginger); we know this much, it's **old** since *Impact* hasn't done its own photo processing since...well, since hot type was still 'hot'. So it's at least eleven or twelve years old. We don't know *who* the one on the right is, but it looks as though she just got back from a big-time zebra kill in Kenya or Harvey and took that Mannlicher (pronounced Man'Licker, it's a gun, angels) really seriously. The one on the left is known and loved by millions as Lucille; she also (suspiciously) doesn't seem to ever get older—either she's got a picture stashed in a closet somewhere that's been taking the heat for her, or...she's been seeing the same specialists that Dick Clark has been going to for the last fifty years. Notice, *everyone else* among us watches those jowls and fatty aprons sag as gravity *inevitably* wins that war we've been fighting with it since—well—since the *teensiest* beginnings of middle-age, watches nervously as the skin around the eyes gets more finely-grained and a little looser (although those pockets are *great* for extra eye-shadow), listens with alarm as two-packs-a-day and a little dabbling in cheap hootch gives one a whisky-voice in range somewhere between Zarah Leander and Ezio Pinza (and of course if you remember who they are, *well*, that dates you right there)...but none of this seems to have happened to Lucille. And don't tell us it's because she's behaved herself either. She seems to have more lives than a...cat. So, for a respite from all these gloomy fake-philosophical cogitations—we offer, a *droite*, an equally historical likeness of Smurfette chosen from among the embarrassment of riches in Smurf's modeling portfolio, which *happens* to repose at the moment in the *Impact* Morgue. All we can say is that Smurfette must have been listening to a lot of Tom Petty from the looks of that 'do'; and get a load of that *snazzy modern plumbing*—behind the bar, not Smurfs, though it, too, is famed and its praises sung by legions of admirers. Anyway, that's enough Gay History for one issue./Both photographs reproduced through the kind courtesy of Jules Cahn.





# PUBLIC EYE

**A**lthough we have been complaining all year long about the dearth of good films this year, we had overlooked *Four Weddings and a Funeral* which we assumed, from the title, would probably be more heterosexual pap, the kind of stuff H' wood keeps putting out to keep **middle class morons** thinking that they have something special going on. Actually, it is a fine little film, and heterosexual as it may be, it does present the other side of the coin, in the persons of two gay men who are central to the group: Gareth, beautifully portrayed by Simon Callow, and Matthew, played by John Hannah. Gareth is the life of every party, and the arbiter of taste in the group. Quite often he is seen only in the back-ground, in one instance hilariously dancing to an old disco tune, while a serious conversation occupies the fore-ground. He **upstages anyone else unlucky enough** to be in a scene with him.

Undoubtedly this will be criticized by some activists who will complain that he and his lover are never seen kissing or having sex on screen. There are no drag sequences and no tear-jerker AIDS death scenes. (Oh, dear, what should we do? Let's write the producers and tell them that we'll **boycott the film because it is inaccurate.**) But Gareth is bluff and hearty, a delight at any party; Matthew, witty and literate, quotes one of W.H. Auden's best poems that begins "Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone". It makes one want to go back and re-read all of Auden; it makes one **proud to be queer.**

**S**ince then we perused *Prince Charming, the John F. Kennedy Story* by Wendy Leigh. Ms Leigh, as she is referred to on the cover, is a staff writer for the loathsome *People* magazine, so we did not expect much, nor did we get much. A great deal of what she tells us we already knew. True to her *People* background, she goes on at great length to tell us how straight he is. **We only know gossip and innuendo**, both of which indicate something to the contrary, but she does quote numerous sources who say that he is a mother's boy, however he is "**all boy**" or "**all man**". Seems like we've heard that oxymoron before.

One of his friends says that despite all of the phone calls from girls, **he seems to prefer the company of a bunch of sweaty men** at the gym. We know the feeling. Certainly his great build seems to indicate that he does indeed spend a lot of time at the gym.

Ms Leigh also indicates that he spent a lot of time smoking pot (the need for which, she says, he probably outgrew, to which we say "HA") and that he was often in the company of Don Johnson, best known as the long-time lover of Sal Mineo before he married Melanie Griffith, reputedly the

**premiere fag hag of the West Coast**, and a longtime favorite of macho man Mick Jagger, i.e., she knows when to keep quiet and fade into the back-ground.

We must remember that John was brought up partially by **that aging Greek billionaire**, and that all those old Greeks historically prefer a fresh young boy to an experienced woman (you know, they fight a little bit, scratch your back up a lot and in the heat of the moment, sometimes yell, f--- me, Daddy, as opposed to the average straight woman who **generally lies there like a corpse**). Young Kennedy is pictured with presumed transsexual/transvestite Daryl Hannah; she has shoulders that are almost as good as John-John's and she must wear a size 72 hat. She didn't even bother to change her first name.

**L**AND OF THE RICH AND CRAZY. At a recent Uptown gathering, we ran into Peggy Wilson, Council-person for all of the city of New Orleans. Apparently when she got dressed, she was anticipating Mardi Gras by many months. (And at least one person of advanced years that we know has pointed out her startling resemblance these days to **the villainous, whip-carrying Mrs. Pruneface** in the old Dick Tracy strip.) She was dressed, quite literally, like she was going to play *Let's Make a Deal*. We all know she is of an age at which it behooves one to dress conservatively and with decorum; Peggy was dressed like a bad acid trip, complete with what appeared to be a feather boa.

Old friends were remembering the time when she threw a party at her home during the Mardi Gras season and the *specialité de la maison* was **her husband's pea soup**, which was served in Styrofoam cups. Naturally all Uptowners of note hate Styrofoam, and this is one of the times that every-one uptown likes to recall and re-hash, along with other staples such as when that crazy kid from downtown shot the president. ("Remember that! Ed said he was **gonna shoot that communist Kennedy** and damned if this kid from downtown didn't beat him to it. Didn't know that anyone that far downtown [i.e., Alvar Street] had that much sense.")

**H**OPE FOR HUMANITY GLIMMERS IN THE DISTANCE: Hetero-sexuals Get A Clue (well, kind of). The **hetero press** is once again claiming a victory of numbers in a recent poll that asserts that only some 2% of the population is homosexual, as opposed to the popularly held notion of a clean 10%. Some of us tell our families and no one else; some of us tell our friends and not our work associates, and some of us tell the whole world. But many of us **do not feel comfortable telling some skank off the**

street who we sleep with and what we do in bed. We know that we don't.

But that doesn't mean we aren't here.

Two percent of the population are in **gay bars from coast to coast** on Saturday night.

In any case, a new film coming out whose name we missed as it was discussed on Siskel and Ebert, has a scene in which two principals are discussing *Top Gun*, and one of them alleges that it is really a love story between Tom Cruise's character (Maverick) and Val Kilmer's character (Iceman). Old Siskel and Ebert laugh this up a whole lot. **A pack of morons.** Of course they've got the hots for each other—the boys in *Top Gun*, not Siskel and Ebert, both of whom are partial to the female variety of brown sugar. One only has to watch them posing around the locker room.

Apparently neither Siskel nor Ebert grew up in Pensacola, or they would have seen these hot pilots chasing the teenage boys around on the beach.

If heterosexuality is *so* great, why do they have to keep selling it so hard?

A bientot,  
Marcel

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## THE LEATHER LINE

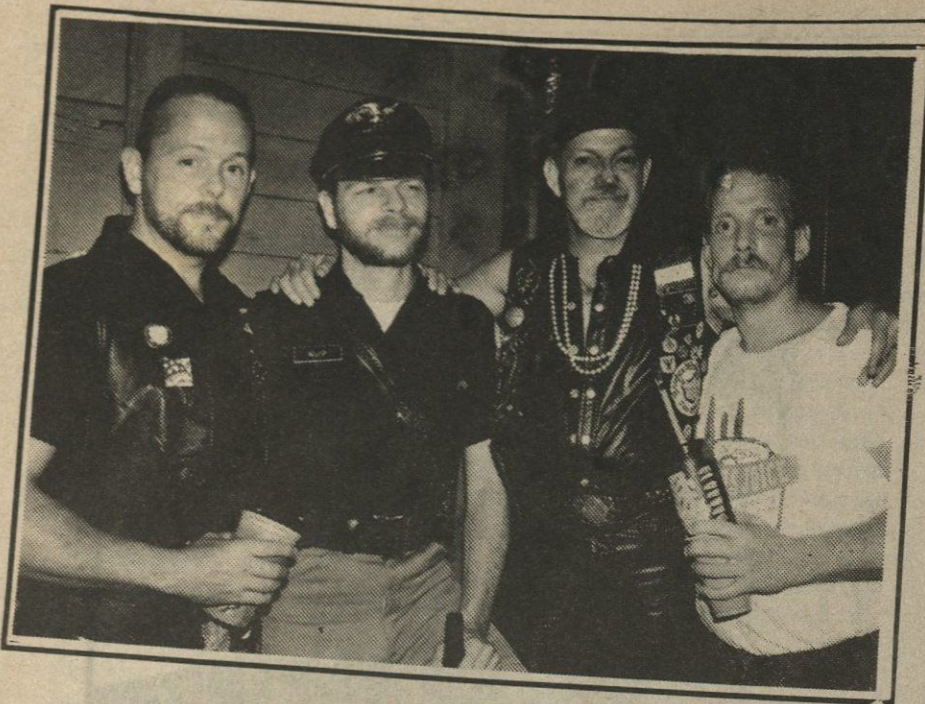


CALL NOW!  
TALK LIVE, LOCAL  
AND NATIONWIDE.

**1-800  
HOT-LEATHER**

Must be 18 or older





Scary Stuff, H  
And Halloween  
isn't even here yet!

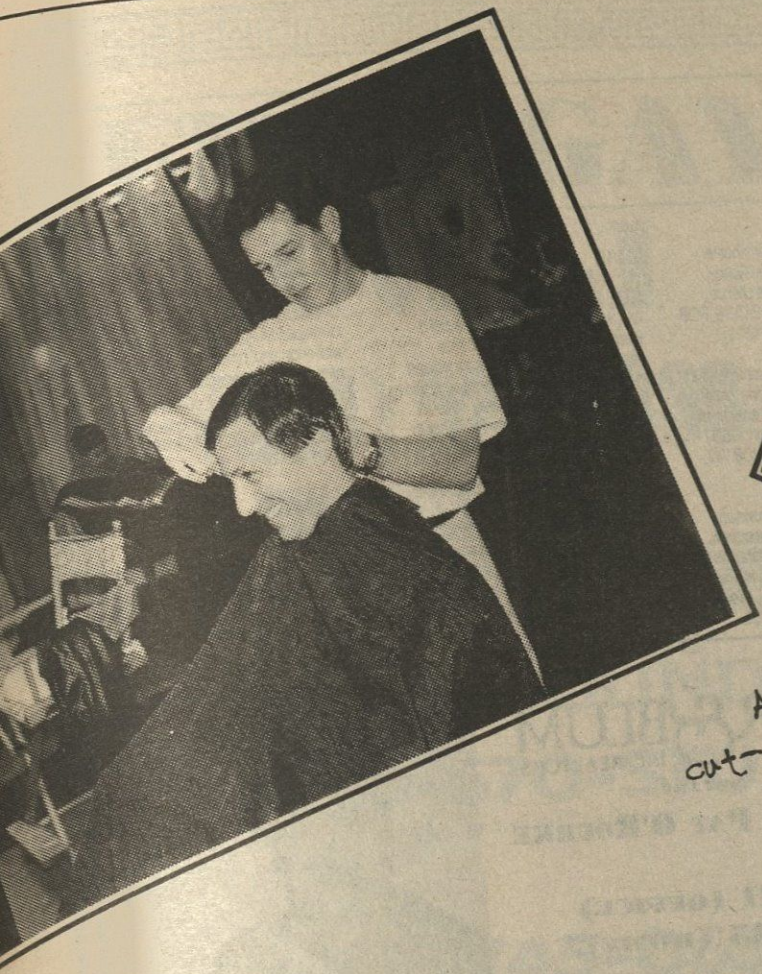


At left, happy Phoenix patrons.  
When's the last time you saw  
that much facial hair all at one time?

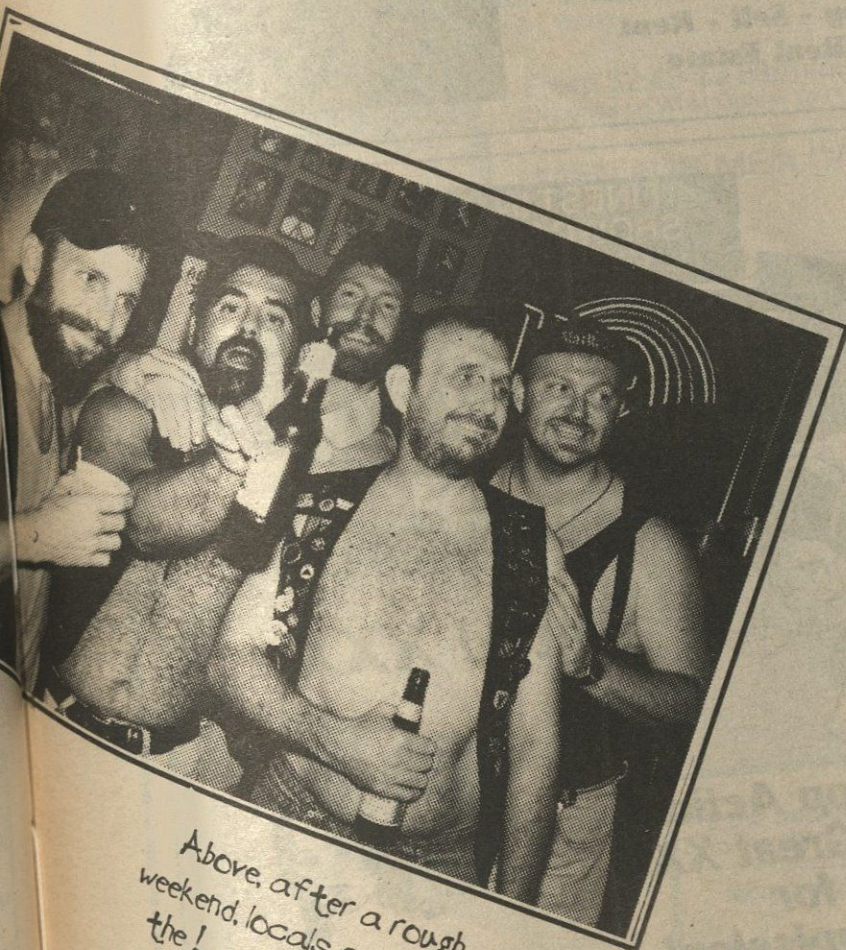


Below, Matt Gunther gives the crowd  
at the Parade more than an eyeful





Above, Busta's  
cut-a-thon benefit.



Above, after a rough  
weekend, locals gather at  
the Lantern to unwind.



At right, we threw in a  
couple of shots from  
Art for Art's Sake.



# CLASSIFIEDS & PERSONALS

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### 1024 Gallier Street.

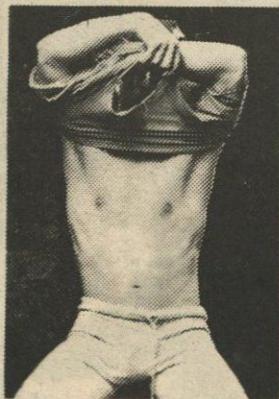
Nice 2 bedroom single family home, large yard, wood floors, ceiling fans, great kitchen, appliances included. \$350. Kyle 361-7215

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SBM, 21, looking for a Sbf 21-26 that has the same interests; I am incarcerated for a short while. I am interested in music, sports, and like to read. Enjoy dancing and movies. I plan to finish college and become an engineer. Please write for friendship, companionship, and possibly more. Write to: DM, PO Box 56114, New Orleans LA 70156. (10/14)

GWM, 21, brown hair, deep brown eyes, 5'9", 160 lbs., I am a young Sylvester Stallone lookalike with body to match. I'm down and need someone special to cheer me up. I enjoy writing, loving, and being with people. Make a lonely guy's heart fill with love. Write me—who knows what may happen? T.S. Esteppe, #115905, KSP POB 128, Eddyville KY 42038-0128. (10/14)

GWM, 36, 5'11", 175 lbs., brown hair and eyes. I'm a sincere, good looking, well hung guy in search of a sincere, long-lasting relationship; presently incarcerated but looking forward to release in the near future. Give this very romantic guy a chance for a lifetime mate. Race and age unimportant, all letters answered. Gary Helton #83505, Kentucky State Penitentiary, Box 128 6-B-12, Eddyville KY 42038-0128. (10/14)

Very Lonely Prisoner, GWM, 25, 5'10", blond, blue eyes, 145 lbs., going up for

parole in 1995 and looking for a home placement to get out of prison. Good-looking, good build, give me a chance. Terry Baxter, #78237, EKCC 2-CL16, POB 636 West Liberty KY 41472. (10/28)

WM, 20, in search of bottoms for longterm relationships and more. I'm caring, sharing, serious-minded. Any age. I will answer all. I'm stud material! Jerome Nelson, DCN #392680, Florida State Prison, POB 747, Starke FL 32091. (10/28)

Sexy WM, 5'11", 170 lbs., 23, brownish blond, sea-green eyes, athletic, romantic, seeking companionship. Incarcerated for a short time. In need of a better life. Howard B. Gray, 691605 28-41, NE R.C.I. West Unit, PO Box 333, Raiford FL 32083.

(11/11)

GLM, 22, brown hair and eyes, 5'8", 158 lbs., semi-muscular, Portuguese and Puerto Rican, well gifted in the toy department, seeks serious-minded and mature GM for friendship or relationship or, if possible, a lifemate. Please no head games, life's hard enough. I will answer and all letters on same day. Let's get to know one another. Albert A. Farrar, #24359, Ely State Prison, POB 1989, Ely NV 89301. (10/28)

GWM, 30, going up for parole next year. Needs place to live to be released. I'm positive you will like me. I can be top or bottom! Write soon! Donald Iles #102121, POB 636 Dorm 8, EKCC, West Liberty KY

41472 (10/28)

GWM, 34, seeking mature man to correspond with. 6'4", 235 lbs., well built, well-endowed, brown hair and blue eyes, presently incarcerated in a maximum security institution and open to meeting longterm friends. Please write: Daryl "Hutch" Stoltz #41032, POB 1989, Ely NV 89301. (10/28)

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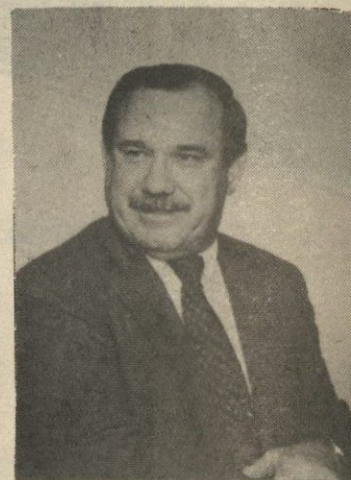
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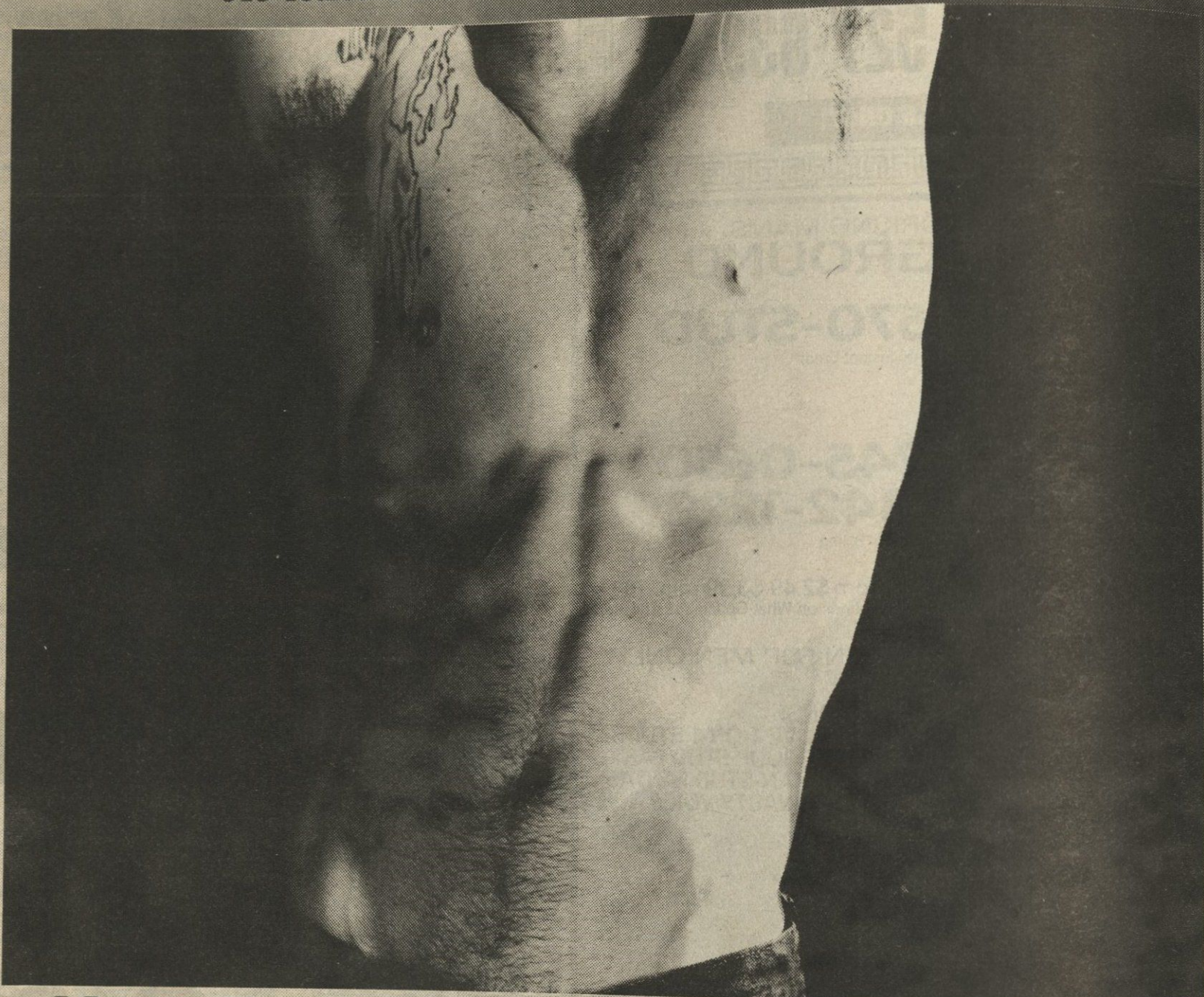
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# LESBIAN VOICES

## WHAT TO DO?

BY MARILYN MCCONNELL

I'm always stunned when a I hear a lesbian say "There's nothing to do in this town." Then I remember that until my partner and I established a network of wonderful friends, we, too, sat at home many a night. We were not always sure if spaces were friendly or safe for us. If one is closeted, newly-out, recently moved to town or simply shy, it can sometimes be difficult to make new lesbian friends. I have a few suggestions that may be helpful:

**WOMEN'S SPORTS: Tennis:** The Bayou Women's Tennis Tournament is October 21 through 23. The registration fee of \$ 40.00 includes a draw party Friday night, a banquet Saturday night, a chance to win a trophy in your division and an especially designed 100% cotton, Bayou Women's Tennis Tournament Tee Shirt. There is a novice category for beginners and the other levels depend upon your ratings, or area of expertise. If you don't wish to play, please

come support the participants. The tournament will be held on the City Park Courts by the Club House. There is no charge for spectators. Contact Sharon Gouse 482-4807 for details.

**Running or Walking:** Every Saturday morning at 9 a.m. by the fountain in the front of Audubon Park (on St. Charles by the main gate), New Orleans' Front Runners meet. Front Runners is an international Lesbian and Gay running and walking group. Everyone runs or walks at their own pace once around the park (2 miles) then off to Joey K's on Magazine for breakfast. It's a great way to start your weekend. If you bike or rollerblade, you are also welcome. If you enjoy running in races, at 9 a.m. on October 15, The Women's Classic will start by Baptist Hospital and end in Audubon Park. You may register at Athlete's Foot Stores for \$14.00 or race day for \$16.00.

**Rugby:** The New Orleans Half-Moons, the Women's Rugby Football Club, are always happy to have new members and spectators to cheer them on. Call Beth at 488-0678 for practice times and game locations.



**SOLOC** (Southern Old Lesbians Organizing for Change) Members at the September meeting, held at a North Shore home./Photo by Marilyn McConnell

**Soccer:** Would you like to play team soccer or watch women's soccer? Come and

practice Tuesday and Friday nights. Practice is held in Audubon Park on the lighted field in back of Children's Hospital, next to the Tennis Courts. Games are played on Sunday at Lafreniere Park in Jefferson Parish. Take I-10 West to Veterans exit, left on Veterans then left at the light to the park. Game times



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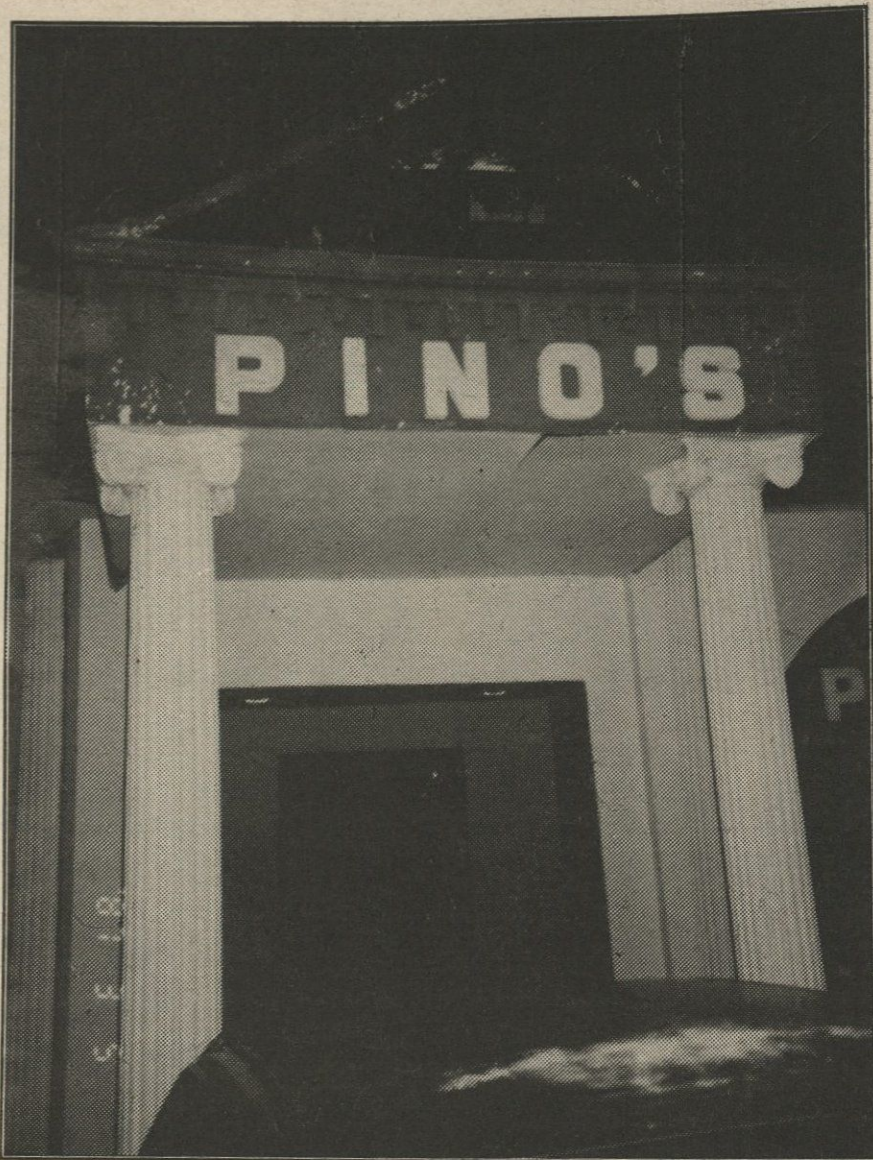
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**Debi...  
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PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHIP LANDRY





Pino's, a favorite Jefferson Parish lesbian bar closed in September. Many of us remember Miss Pino from the days of The Grog; her next, and largest bar was located on Elysian Fields where the American Aquatic Gardens is now; after several fires, Pino "retired" to St. Tammany Parish and briefly had a bar on the North Shore. The Jefferson Parish bar had previously been the Blue Odyssey—hey it's Gay History Month, after all, and you need to know these things. We wish both Miss Rosemary Pino and the legendary Margie Norman all the best in their future endeavors./Photo by Marilyn McConnell

vary so call Stephanie Smith at 482-0951 for times or more details.

**Entertainment:** Theater Marigny is staging *Summer at Bluefish Cove*, Jane Chambers' play whose main characters are lesbian, is directed by Sheran Schreiber. Beginning October 20 through November 12, shows are Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8:30PM. \$2.00 of the \$12.00 ticket price goes to Women With Vision, an organization supporting women with AIDS.

"Sisterbeat", the New Orleans' women's drumming group will play at Café Marigny, 913 Royal, Friday October 28, at 9 p.m. Admission is \$5.00.

At Charlene's, on Elysian Fields, Saturday, October 29, at 10 p.m., "Viva Las Vamps" starring Necha, Lady Magic and featuring their "Rocky Horror Picture Show". The cover is \$4.00.

Movies are shown every Sunday at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 816 North Rampart St. These movies, with lesbian and gay themes, are shown at 6 p.m.

and they are free. Coming October 16, *Farewell My Concubine* and on October 23, *The Crying Game*. Halloween Special on October 30 is *Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

**Socialization and Support Groups:** Youth Group, for socialization and support, young lesbians and gay men age fifteen to twenty-two, meets at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, Saturday 1-3 p.m., 816 North Rampart. Call Brad Robbert 947-3377 for information.

SOLOC, Southern Old Lesbians Organizing for Change, meets the third Sunday of each month. This organization of women from New Orleans' area, North Shore and the Mississippi Gulf Coast is comprised of women fifty years of age and over. After lunch at a restaurant chosen by the host member, the group adjourns to the home of that host for a meeting. The meeting for this month is Sunday, October 16 at 12 noon. If you would like to attend, please call Louise at 488-7517.

It's FLIGHT TIME at

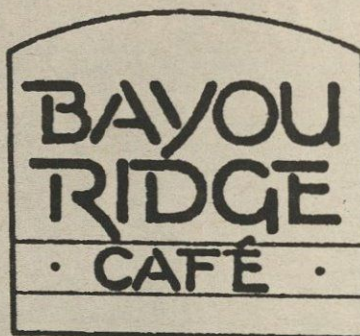
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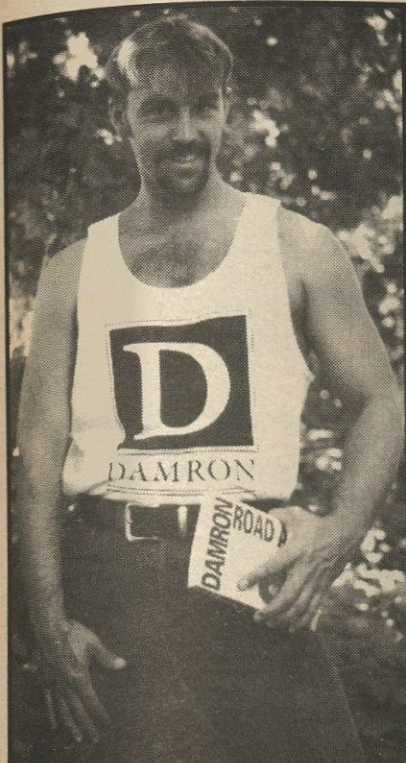
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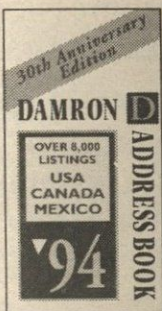




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Happy new Grandparents Lee Goldsby and Sheila King. Their new granddaughter's name is Sarah./Photo by Marilyn McConnell

For more information on the organization call Jeanne at Lavender Moon. Currently re-vamping their organization and planning coming events, Lavender Moon has had many popular activities from dances to pot-lucks. For information or to volunteer your time or ideas, call 364-5530

Lambda Center (corner Decatur and Frenchmen). Here you will find Twelve Step Recovery Meetings seven days a week. There are meetings for you if you have an alcohol problem, a desire to stop drinking, or if your friend or loved one has an alcohol problem. Remember, if you keep doing the same things, you can expect the same results.

Help yourself break that cycle. Call 947-0548 for meeting times.

**Volunteering:** One of the best ways I know to meet new friends is to Volunteer your time.

The Lesbian and Gay Community Center always appreciates volunteers. They need lesbians and gay men to answer the

phone and help with special projects. Call David Wagner at 522-6654 or 522-1103.

Joining political organizations and working in political campaigns can be an empowering force in one's life. It may be working to elect fair-minded judges, legislators who will work to change the laws that oppress us or electing council members whose council votes directly affects the quality of our lives. Working to end our oppression, we moved from complaining, blaming, criticizing, to action. Addressing envelopes, phone banking, putting up signs, handing out flyers, and similar tasks are so important to our freedom. Join LAGPAC and Forum for Equality. Call or write for information and applications. Forum for Equality PO Box 850096, New Orleans, La. 70185-0096. LAGPAC 566-0329.

**Don't Miss: TAKE BACK THE NIGHT MARCH, Thursday, October 20 at 7 p.m.** Meet in front of Loyola University on St. Charles Avenue. If you are concerned about not being safe from

battering or rape, show your support and please be there. It consists of a short march in the uptown area, followed by speakers, some of them rape survivors and their supporters. It is inspirational and empowering. Many Loyola students, male and female participate.

**NEW ORLEANS N.O.W.** At 5:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month, local National Organization for Women meeting is held at 643 Magazine. A NOW organizational meeting was announced at the Gloria Steinem lecture and about 25 people responded on Monday, October 3. I have been an active supporter of the national NOW for over 5 years. NOW is always a presence advocating for women and President Patricia Ireland is a well informed articulate spokesperson. I'm happy NOW is back in New Orleans. Δ

October 16: Pierre Puget, 1620; Arnold Bocklin, 1827; Oscar Wilde, 1854; J.B. Bury, 1861; Eugene O'Neill, 1888; Paul Strand, 1980; Robert Ardrey, 1908; Angela Lansbury, 1925; Gunter Grass, 1927; Bob Weir, 1944  
October 17: Giovanni Mario, 1810; Georg Buchner, 1913; Elinor Glyn, 1964; A.S. Neill, 1883; Karen Blixen, 1885; Nathanael West, 1904; Montgomery Clift, 1920; Beverly Garland, 1930  
October 18: Pope Pius II, 1405; Luca Giordano, 1632; Canaletto, 1697; Baldassare Galuppi, 1753; J.J. Regis de Cambaceres, 1753; Heinrich von Kleist, 1777; Thomas Love Peacock, 1785; Henri Bergson, 1859; Logan Piersall Smith, 1865; Mikhail Artzybasheff, 1878; Fannie Hurst, 1889; Friedrich Hollander, 1896; Lotte Lenya, 1898; Miriam Hopkins, 1902; Ben Bagley, 1933; Martina Navratilova, 1956; Tommy Hearn, 1958

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## LIFE UPON THE WICKED STAGE

A MANY-SPLENDORED THING

BY EDWARD REAL

Some may find it difficult to imagine a bright, funny musical for contemporary audiences based on the songs and styles of the "guy groups" of the 1950's. The premise of *Forever Plaid*, which opened last weekend at the new Canal Place Cabaret, is that a nerdy quartet of amateur singers—killed in a collision with a busload of schoolgirls on their way to see the Beatles on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, returns through a time warp to give the concert they never gave in life.

I admit I was initially doubtful about such a concept, especially since it seemed somewhat inaccurate historically: performers like the four Plaids were done in not by the Beatles but by Elvis. But whatever misgivings about *Forever Plaid* I may have harbored were immediately dissolved opening night. I should have trusted the nearly infallible instincts of producer/director Carl Walker, who with this material gives the new theatre season its first sensational, must-see show.

While it may add a nostalgic fillip to one's enjoyment of *Plaid* if one actually remembers the Four Lads, the Ames Brothers, the Four Aces, the Crewcuts, the Four Freshmen and all those other singing groups that often dominated the pop music charts of the Eisenhower era, when most records were purchased by Caucasian adults, it's really not necessary to be the possessor of a Medicare card to celebrate this homage to a long-lost art of our past pop culture. The charming cast's evocation of it, and the audience's enthusiastic reaction to it, indicates that such "clean-cut" close-harmony singing groups may be ready for the "biggest comeback since Lazarus." Or maybe folks are just revelling in a sound that "is to contemporary music as formica is to marble." (Take that as a compliment)

Anyhow, the Plaids are vibrantly alive in their deadness, belting out all those songs like "Moments to Remember," "No, Not Much," "Shangri-La," "Love is a Many Splendored Thing" and "Three Coins in the Fountain," which the recently deceased Jule Styne described as the worst of his Oscar nominated songs—and the only one that won.

Portraying the Plaids is no simple task; it requires a cast which can satirize an era they are too young to remember, and which is capable of complex musical harmonies. This production is blessed with a quartet of performers who joyfully achieve those ends. Steve Benton is a striking Frankie (aka Francis), who hyperventilates when things go wrong, as

they often do, but still carries about half of those unreachable high notes. The other half are assigned to the comically gifted Kilty Reidy as Jinx, who has an unfortunate tendency to nosebleeds at sustained A-flats. The personable Randy Juneau is admirably successful as Sparky, who is as anxious to please and as endearing as an oversized puppy. Tony Pickeil brings a droll understatement to Smudge, the quartet's would-be bass baritone who can't quite distinguish between right and left, but who erupts in Johnny Raye hysteria when he casts off his horn-rims and almost lets down his slicked-back hair in "Cry."

Obviously, this wouldn't be much of a musical if the Plaids just stood there and sang like the four et ceteras, so they get into some quite risible production numbers when they go calypso, or demonstrate how they once rehearsed with plumbers' helpers instead of real mikes, or do a three minute version of the Sullivan show complete with jugglers, plate spinners, Topo Gigio, Señor Wences, and a commercial for the 1954 Mercury (which was the car I learned to drive in).

In short, *Forever Plaid* is truly a many splendored thing, and to director Carl Walker, musical director Pam Legendre, and the marvelous cast, we should all be deeply grateful, and deeply plaid.

Maybe it's the nearness of Halloween that causes these things: not only did we have a musical about four dead guys, we also had *Frankenstein*. An adaptation of the Mary Shelley novel by Jonathan Taylor found its way to Loyola's Lower Depths Theatre, under the direction of John Grimsley. I might have had a bit more enthusiasm for the project if I hadn't seen Grimsley's treatment of another purple-prosy novel (*Moby Dick*) just a couple of seasons back. While I appreciate the effort and ambition involved in condensing and adapting such difficult tales for the stage, I'm not sure two so stylistically similar ventures can avoid the sensation of *déjà-vu*. If Hitchcock thought that actors were cattle, Grimsley must think they are furniture, for he's up to the same tricks here of having his black-clad troupe take the form of chairs and couches that he employed in *Moby Dick* and *Do the White Thing*. How quickly the "experimental" becomes a cliché.

A more serious problem than theatrical style is that this adaptation from the medium of nineteenth century prose to modern stage doesn't want to give up literary conventions that only work in old-fashioned novels. We start here with Mary Shelley, Percy B., Byron and company instigating the novel in one of their romantic and drunken splurges, move

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on to the epistolary exchange with which the novel reveals the plot, and finally arrive at some fairly straightforward dramatic treatment of the mostly unfamiliar story (Hollywood never covered the half of it). What we get is a picture within a frame within another frame—by the time we sort out who is playing whom telling whatever to whomever, the play is half over. Better diction, and certainly more imaginative use of costuming would have helped a lot in the early stages of this exercise.

Still, we salute Loyola's theatre department for offering its students and audiences this experiment so radically different from the run of the mill experience they usually get in theatre productions.

From Shelley's Northern Italy and the polar ice-cap, it was just a streetcar ride to Rodgers and Hammerstein's Austria and the Anschluss. *The Sound of Music* opened the Saenger's subscription season, and if this item on the theatre's agenda is the weakest attraction of the season, as we believe, the Saenger is in good shape indeed.

However much one might dread another onslaught of kittens in kettles and Nazis in dance shoes, and especially of lonely goatherds and larks learning to pray, *The Sound of Music* does offer an old-fashioned craftsmanship which was here supported by first-class production values. The show is definitely not my cup of that "drink with bread and jam," but it pleases a vast audience, and if it helps pay for an infinitely more interesting show like *Jelly's Last Jam*, next on the schedule, I am delighted.

Perhaps the reason this *Sound of Music* succeeded was that the lyricist's son was at the director's helm, giving almost reverential treatment to his father's last endeavor. Thus we got material which is often cut from other productions—songs like "How Can Love Survive" and "Ordinary Couple" which remind us of why we've forgotten them.

Of course, the fact that this was Hammerstein's last show—he died nine months after it opened, probably accounts for its Tony success—it shared the Best Musical award with the vastly superior *Fiorello*, which this year will finally get a local production thirty-five years after winning the Pulitzer. My biggest gripe about the *S of M* is that the aging Goody Twoshoes, Mary Martin took home the best actress prize, in a year when Merman was nominated for *Gypsy* (Ethel remains the only star not to get the Tony for a Broadway Mama Rose). In this version Marie Osmond at least transcended the false schmaltz of the usual perpetrators like Martin and Debby Boone, even if she didn't attain the radiance of Julie Andrews. [This paragraph is dedicated to George Dansker].

The New Orleans Ballet Association also opened its season with a somewhat conservative program. The organization has tended in recent seasons to feature more contemporary works and to address its ethnically diverse constituency, so a presentation of the Salt Lake City-based Ballet West in a traditional *Swan Lake* seemed an effort at balance and an overture to those who believe that if it ain't one of the Russian war-horses, it ain't ballet.

Those whose tastes lean toward rigorous precision of execution in formal, traditional-choreography set to lushly romantic scores, in rich costuming against opulent settings could not have been better served. The Ballet West company, under the leadership of John Hart, has a definite flair for presentation in the grand manner, so that it perhaps looks better than it actually may be. If all its dancers were in a league with Jane Wood, the Odette/Odile of the Saturday performance, the troupe would be truly spectacular.

Ballet West's *Swan Lake* was an appropriate and appealing diversion from the usual fare presented by the ballet association, and further programming of this conservative nature will undoubtedly be welcomed by a large portion of the local dance audience. Δ

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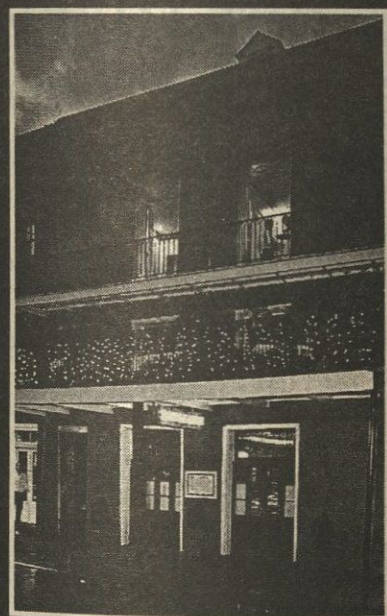
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 October 20: Aelbert Cuyp, 1620; Sir Christopher Wren, 1632; Pauline Bonaparte, 1780; Anton Romako, 1834; Arthur Rimbaud, 1854; Charles Ives, 1874; Evelyn Brent, 1899; Ellery Queen, 1905; Jean-Pierre Melville, 1917; Dr. Joyce Brothers, 1928; Wanda Jackson, 1937  
 October 21: Domenichino, 1581; Hokusai, 1760; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1772; Alphonse Lamartine, 1790; Ted Shawn, 1891; Simon Gray, 1936

October 22: Franz Liszt, 1811; Ivan Bunin, Lord Alfred Douglas, 1870; Cecilia Loftus, 1876; N.C. Wyeth, 1882; John Reed, 1887; Robert Capa, 1903; Constance Bennett, 1904; Joan Fontaine, 1917; Mitzi Green, 1920; Robert Rauschenberg, 1925; Annette Funicello, 1942; Catherine Deneuve, 1943  
 October 23: Restif de la Bretonne, 1734; Pierre Larrouse, 1817; Una O'Connor, 1884; Helen Gray, 1922; Ned Rorem, 1923; Gore Vidal, 1925; Reginald and Ronald Kray, 1933; Bernadette Lafont, 1935; Pele, 1940  
 October 24: Domitian, 51 A.D.; August von Platen, 1796; Dame Sybil Thorndyke, 1882; Manbocher, 1890; Fritz Eichenberg, 1901; Tito Gobbi, 1915; Sena Jurinac, 1921; Bill Wyman, 1936



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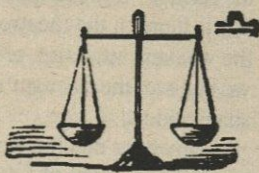
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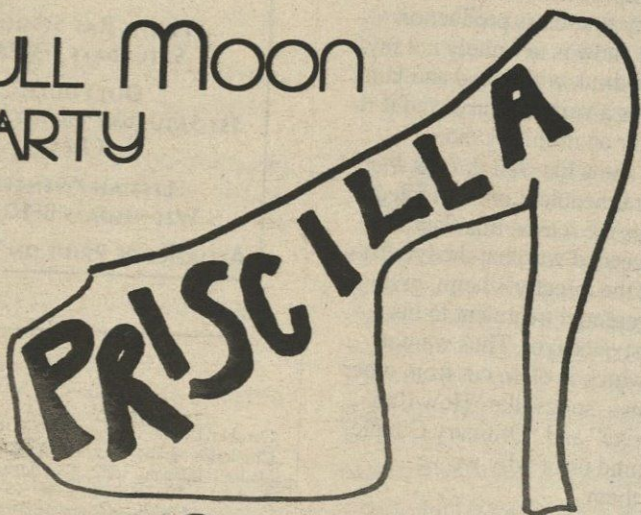
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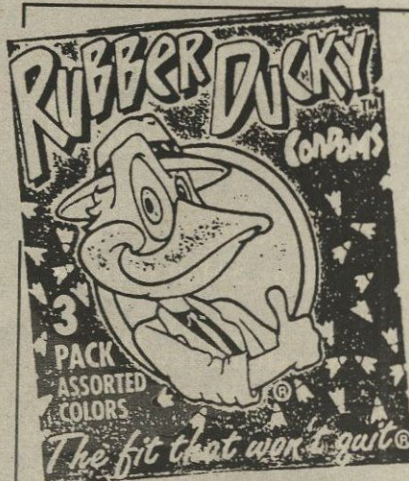
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# THE MOVIE POLICE

SUNDANCE KIDS

BY KAREL GAZDACKA

**S**panking the Monkey and Killing Zoë arrive festooned with garlands of praise from the Sundance Film Festival, the annual gathering of film geeks from around the country, indeed, around the world, at the Utah ski resort of Robert Redford, the Great White Father of the American Independent Film Community. Ever since *sex, lies, and videotape* created a stir at an early festival and made a nice piece of change for Miramax Films, representatives of the major "arty distribberies" descend on Mr. Redford's confab every January to sign up the kids to distribution deals. It doesn't seem to matter that only members of the filmmaker's immediate family and his or her college classmates could possibly sit through ninety minutes or so of what amounts to Film-Making 101. Some of Bobby's Kids do show promise, but who wants to shell out good money to watch some film tyro's classroom exercises? As recently as ten years ago, the kind of movies that win big at Sundance would never have reached the screens of your local

art theatre, much less the suburban cinemas. I've come to look upon any film labeled a Sundance Festival award-winner as inferior merchandise: Let the buyer beware.

As a taxpayer, I was also dismayed to learn that \$20,000 came out of the public coffers to help finance *Spanking the Monkey*, via an NEA grant to David O. Russell, the writer-director of this story of a casual incestuous encounter between a college-age boy and his mother who is confined to her bed with a broken leg.

No, I'm not objecting to the "delicate subject matter," nor to Mr. Russell's sympathetic approach; I'm just distressed that public monies financed such a lousy movie. (In point of fact, Mr. Russell was originally granted the money on the basis of a proposal for a different project; the NEA subsequently demanded its money back on the grounds that Mr. Russell didn't fulfill his part of the contract. He has since returned the money and thanked the NEA for the loan.) So lacking in psychological dynamics is the mother/son relationship in *Spanking the Monkey* that the viewer could only surmise that he or she is being warned of the dangers of having a horny sophomore at home with Mom and little to do to occupy his time—or hands. Nothing in the

writing, nothing in the use of the camera indicates any reason for the NEA or the paying moviegoer to continue to support Mr. Russell's forays into filmmaking. Get a job, David.

*Killing Zoë* didn't generate much excitement even at Sundance, but the writer-director Roger Avary just happened to work at the same video store as Quentin Tarantino and contributed to the screenplays of *True Romance* and the eagerly anticipated *Pulp Fiction*, so he was able to sell his pedigree to October Films. *Zoë* begins promisingly with Eric Stoltz as a safecracker in Paris to help out a friend with a bank job. Once inside the bank, however, *Killing Zoë* is little more than one mind-numbing shoot-out after another. Mr. Avary is obviously not the genius behind *Pulp Fiction*; he would be well advised not to quit his day job at the video store.

Were movies as godawful as *Spanking the Monkey* and *Killing Zoë* a generation ago? "Godawful" is not quantifiable and we all know how selective memory can be, but I do believe that even a Hollywood hack was required to know the rudiments of storytelling back in the bad old days under the hegemony of the studio moguls. Hence, even when a director had little visual style, he still knew he had to involve the audience in a narrative web that drew the viewer in; otherwise, it was waiting tables at the Brown Derby or the Chateau Marmont. Of course, nobody would think of shooting a picture back then without a reasonably

well-crafted script to work from; today, films with hundred-million-dollar budgets routinely go into production without even a completed screenplay. And yet everyone professes amazement that a *Last Action Hero* crashes and burns the first week in release. A nouvelle vague director like Jean-Luc Godard could make films with little if any plot, and Robert Altman works frequently with little more than an outline, but when they failed what ended up on the screen was almost completely unwatchable. When a *Killing Zoë* fails to ignite, there's no fail-safe story for both the film-maker and the film buff to fall back on for the couple of hours that remain. You're out six bucks and that's about it. Maybe Robert Redford should close down the Sundance Festival, then perhaps more than a jury award will be required to have a film distributed in theatres across the fruited plain.

**B**riefly: Looking through a production schedule of forthcoming features in *Variety*, I'm forced to conclude that Hollywood has decided that *Philadelphia* will be the token gay film of the Nineties. Except for several campy drag movies, there is nothing currently in production or scheduled for production that focuses on a gay character. The gay-themed movie was an even shorter trend than the Lambada. Δ

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## PRESSWATCH

### KOOL THINGS

**TINA BROWN'S NEW YORKER**—the possessive suggests something like *National Lampoon's Animal House* or, perhaps, *Fellini Satyricon* in that it is optional, but still hangs Damoclean in the air—has become so ridiculously PC that it makes the *Times-Picayune* look like *The American Spectator* by comparison; we might be too astringent here—Jim Windolf's lengthy piece of take-out greeting Brown's second year at the magazine that appeared in the *New York Observer* is so pitiless that it almost makes one a bit sorry for her. Since Newhouse owns both the *New Yorker* and the *Picayune*, that could be the slender ithmus between the two publications, though the *New Yorker* probably didn't have to drop as big a bundle for L.C. Cross' Self-Esteem-While-U-Wait training—the *New Yorker's* been lost in those woods for some time now.

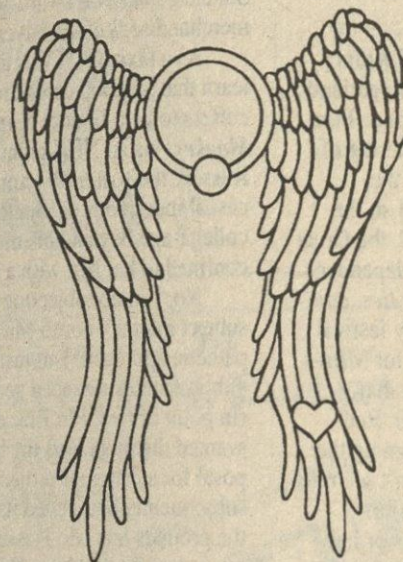
A good example of this is a story that should have been fascinating, at least in its details—how, by letting anti-porn feminist-types like the loathsome and litigious Catherine MacKinnon influence the parlia-mentary process, the Canadian government left itself open to the sorts of censorial abuses that have only been aggravated by the new law. (Alas, most of the unpalatable laws that attempt to legislate morality and private behavior turn out to be liberal pipe-dreams, a form of heightened altruism gone sophistical and berserk.) Jeffrey Toobin's "Annals of Law: X-Rated" in the October 3 *New Yorker* is so determined to be fair and even-handed to MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, who actually split a bit on the Canadian law and who wouldn't think twice about being unfair to someone else, that the

piece—ostensibly devoted to the sort of nonsensical incidents where a law designed to revamp thinking on obscenity-as-social-menace has instead proved so elusive and so malleable in definition that abuses continue in even more extravagant fashion than before. (Toobin worked once for Lawrence Walsh and also did the infamous O.J. Simpson story the *New Yorker* ran this summer which seemed designed to help Simpson's defense lawyers rather than illuminate any unexplored aspects of the case.) Butler, the Canadian law, is—this is possibly the strongest statement Mr. Toobin seems willing to make—"a political football that almost anyone can carry toward his or her own goal."

Take, for instance, the case of Glad Day Book Shop, a tiny gay and lesbian store located on Yonge Street in Toronto. Yonge Street, Canada's equivalent of gaudy-bawdy-naughty 42nd Street in New York, is Smut Central but, this being Canada, it's somewhat antiseptic in comparison and has better grooming if not breeding. The porn emporia on the street don't get shut down, don't get prosecuted for obscenity, don't have their stock shipments confiscated by the notorious Canadian Customs; Glad Day does. Among the books seized by customs are David Leavitt's short stories, *The Joy of Gay Sex*, virtually all of Pat Califia's books, *Living With AIDS: A Manual for Long-Term Survival*, as well as cartoon books (everything from Hothead Paisan to R.Crumb and Matt Groening to Tintin!), and even—happy irony of ironies, you'll say—two books by Andrea Dworkin *elle-même*. In the case of the 1986 seizure of *The Joy of Gay Sex*, Mr. Justice Hawkins noted with an insouciant gravity, "To write about homosexual practices without dealing with anal intercourse would be

*There is always deep sensitivity among black people about any movement that seems to displace black suffering. We finally got the attention of the nation for a short moment in the Sixties and then, boom, we're pushed off the stage. But that's also narrow and truncated, and to me it's inexcusable to completely downplay genuine suffering among gay brothers and lesbian sisters in the name of making black suffering central.—Cornel West, author of "Race Matters," quoted in Out Magazine, October issue*

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equivalent to writing a history of music and omitting Mozart." (Right on, Judge.)

The law, known to its victims and devotees as Butler—shorthand for R. v. Butler, the case that defined the statute—had one of its most notoriously elastic tests when an undercover policewoman went into Glad Day one April morning in 1992 and bought a copy of a lesbian magazine called *Bad Attitude*: a few weeks later, the owner of the store and the clerk who sold the lady flatfoot the magazine were popped for obscenity. The store's manager, Kimberly Mistysyn, said, "The whole thing was, in a way, a joke. I mean, it's not as if they were responding to a complaint about what we were selling. No one had complained. They had just decided to do this undercover investigation of us." (In the same way that, Mr. Toobin points out, Canadian Customs consistently checks shipments to queer bookstores—there are all of four in Canada—first.) Judge C.H. Paris, examining the contents of the issue of *Bad Attitude*, found against the store; he was particularly exercised by a first-person fantasy about a woman grabbing another woman from behind in a shower, blindfolding and handcuffing her, putting some clamps on and then fist-fucking her. Clare Barclay, representing Glad Day in the prosecution, found herself in an odd predicament thanks to the Butler law: since "the whole point of Butler was to protect women from men...I argued that there were only women involved in this story. Censoring women in the name of protecting women is wrong." Judge Paris disagreed, finding the story repugnant no matter the sex of its *dramatis personae*: "The fact that the aggressor is female is irrelevant because the potential for harm remains....The consent in this case, far from redeeming the material, makes it degrading and dehumanizing."

And what does that Nuremberg Bride, Ms. MacKinnon think of what she hath wrought? Basically her tough-cookie attitude is a lofty variation on tough-shit; she thought the *Bad Attitude* decision "reeks" of homophobia, but she "by no means believes that gay publications should be exempt from her enveloping scheme

for the regulation of pornography [emphasis ours]." Queers and dykes who don't like the law are simply "being used" by por-nographers. Butler is "a real milestone for women's equality, worldwide," she exalts but the statement is specious since the law is both Canadian and parochial, and attempts at similar laws in this country have failed. The dissenters, on different sides of the legal fence, Ms. Dworkin and "her longtime nemesis" Nadine Strossen, president of the ACLU, have their say as well, though almost as an afterthought. Dworkin: "Obscenity laws are a total dead end in dealing with the pornography industry....I think obscenity laws are real censorship laws, easy to use against literature that ought to be protected, and hard to use against what really harms women." Strossen: "MacKinnon and her allies in Canada say that all the problems in Canada with customs and with obscenity prosecutions really haven't changed at all since Butler. The problems existed before, and they exist now. But that's exactly the point. Censorship is no different after Butler from what it was before. It was anti-woman, anti-gay, anti-freedom before, and it's that way now." And in the meantime, places like the five-thousand-square-foot Adults Only Video on Yonge Street—"Satan's blockbuster," Mr. Toobin cleverly calls it—is unaffected by the laws old or new, and the people at Glad Day Book Shop suffer, and Catherine MacKinnon looks like an ever-more-hollow and posturing porcelain madonna.

**KEVIN BACON—AN APPROPRIATE NAME** for such a Big Star (cf. jockey shorts scenes in John Hughes' otherwise uninteresting *She's Having A Baby* for confirmation), his nickname should perhaps be Slab—has a few interesting things to say to Ray Rogers in October's *Interview*. Asked about his feminine side, though mercifully not about getting in touch with same, he says that his character in *Criminal Law*, a dud of a picture, "was sexually confused at the very least, that he would never admit to being gay and was probably deep in the closet. But he has a huge crush on Gary Oldman's character that really drives the film.

First it was a passion, then it was a habit, then just one woman looking after another who was ill.—Novelist and member of the French Academy Marguerite Yourcenar, speaking of her 'conjugal' companion Grace Frick; Frick suffered a twenty-one-year-long bout with cancer. Quoted in a review by Ann Begley in *The American Scholar*, Autumn issue.



## MORE PRESSWATCH

And in *JFK*, the same thing—my character's a gay hustler who's very into his body [Bacon did look sweet in panniers and powdered peruke in the infamous 'party' scene]. It was important for me not to do some queeny thing with those characters, though I do want to do that some day." Hope we get to see it; and this fascination with Gary Oldman seems to be a recurrent theme in the interview. Discussing his role as an Alcatraz prisoner in a new film entitled *Murder in the First*, sugar-cured Bacon says, "Most of the film was done in L.A. in this four-by-six cell—wet, naked, covered in shit, live bugs in my hair, live rats chewing on my leg. Chained to the walls for a lot of it. Being beaten by Gary Oldman; of course, I can't think of anyone I would rather be beaten by..." The next Myrna Loy and William Powell, perhaps.

**THURSTON MOORE OF SONIC YOUTH**—one of the only-bands-that-matters, to quote an elderly bit of advertising swill—in the September 22 *Rolling Stone*, tells a sweet anecdote that is a fine corrective to all the inundation of overstated crocodile tears concerning the late Kurt Cobain. Asked about the last time he saw Cobain, Moore says, "It was in Los Angeles and San Diego; I went to both shows

there on Nirvana's last tour. He seemed very content. He was having fun playing the gig, especially in L.A., because Eddie Van Halen was there. It was funny. Kurt was walking down the hall, and I said, 'Dude, Eddie Van Halen's in your dressing room holding court.' And Kurt goes, 'No way!' He was real excited. Kurt went into the dressing room, walked right up to Eddie and kissed him on the mouth. He *had* to do that." Precisely why he had to is unrecorded, but we certainly appreciate the gesture.

**SOME YEARS AGO**, *SPY MAGAZINE* listed the *New York Review of Books*' Letters column as one of the prime venues for 'Sore Losers'; they're correct, of course, pettifogging and trivial academic hair-splitting and point-scoring, bickering and bitchy put-downs are raised in that quiet corner of the churchyard to levels majestic and magisterial. In the October 20 issue, "the Corbetts are at it again," to quote the tag-line of Raoul Walsh's *Gentleman Jim*. Charles Rosen's piece on the 'new,' gender-conscious musicology in a June issue—much of it devoted to the question of Schubert's sexual orientation (cf. *Presswatch* for June 24, or better still, *NYRB* for June 23); Mr. Rosen readily agrees that Schubert was queer but, with equal readiness, dismisses the notion that this had much to do with either the shape or value of his work.

A contentious woman musicologist named Dr. Rita Steblin writes to protest both her omission from Rosen's piece ("Is this an attempt on the part of the old boys' network to keep the public from reading my critique of Solomon's scholarship?"—Maynard Solomon is the scholarly proponent of Schubert-as-inveterate invert) and Rosen's mockery of her own theory of Schubert as unrequited heterosexual, hopelessly and "seriously" in love with Caroline Esterházy. "Why, when the evidence is so questionable, is Schubert being promoted now with such passion as a homosexual composer?" asks Dr. Steblin, making the inference that such promotion is comparable to the "Nazi...abuse [of] Schubert to promote their theories of pure Aryan race."

Rosen's scorn would peel the paint off a wall: "Dr. Steblin's...attempt to bracket Nazi cultural policy and gay rights...I found morally repellent. Dr. Steblin may have a physical disgust of homosexuality and it may be understandable that she should wish to protect the great Viennese composer from an accusation of such horror."

*I didn't sleep with him, which is the usual way I get cast in productions.—Rocky Horror and NYC club scene veteran Nell Campbell talking about her role in Charles Busch's You Should Be So Lucky. Sleeping with the greatest living male actress, at least in the Occident? We should think not! The comedy is also unusual in that it is the first out-of-drag part Mr. Busch has written for himself. Quoted in "On Stage, and Off" by Donald McNeil, Jr., in the Times' October 7 edition.*

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The presence of Esterházy, "a woman with whom he not only had no sexual relations but even no hope of sexual relations," instead "tends to bolster the theory that he was not just bisexual but homosexual." There is more disagreement over the meaning of the phrase "young peacocks"—which Rosen takes to mean available male flesh (because of a phrase in Cellini's *Autobiography*) while Steblin says the consumption of peacock meat was a folk-medicine *panacea* ("Do we know of anyone—aristocratic, bourgeois, or just plain folks—having eaten a peacock for medicinal reasons at that time in Germany, or anywhere else in Europe for that matter?" he asks).

To Rosen, Schubert—on the basis of biographical evidence new and old—"was a man of ebullient and powerful sexuality living in a society in which his nature had to be repressed. It is interesting that all treatments of Schubert's sexuality have been forced into trying to decipher a code: It suggests there was something to hide.... So long as we are ignorant of crucial details, like whether Schubert was passive or aggressive, preferred immediate satisfaction or extended foreplay, I do not care if he slept with men, women, or horses."

**IN THE SPHERE OF BITTER-OLD-QUEEN-STUDIES**, we've read nothing lately to surpass an article by James Reginato in *W*'s October issue about the decorator Robert Denning, the "widow" more or less of the more-famous (and how this still rankles and festers!) Vincent Fourcade who died of AIDS in 1992; even Mr. Reginato refers to Fourcade as "one of the world's great snobs," but Mr. Denning has picked up the torch or mantle nicely, coming out of a sort of purdah, apparently, to drain his spleen in public. Lampshades are simply nothing if they cost less than five hundred smackers apiece; when Denning looks at renderings or plans, in true Firbankian fashion, "I get dizzy. The moment they bring them out, I feel faint. It frightens me. I have an architect who does all that for me." This level of affectation—such



trumpery, such heights of the exquisite are rarely scaled by actual people, fictional creations privy to *l'esprit de l'escalier* do it much better—includes a bit of misogyny as well. Jayne Wrightsman "probably has, for a woman, the world's most sensitive taste." Lady Dudley "understands better than anyone the social shadings of people—what a shine on the shoe means, the quality of a woman's purse. The important things!" (The very fulsomeness of these tributes is demeaning.) Decorating—like such other erstwhile male preserves as cuisine or playing the saxophone—is "a man's talent. Everybody thought it was Babe Paley, but it was really Bill. He had a great under-standing of quality. Babe took credit for things she didn't do." Just plain Bill, an ordinary guy...

Denning's life with Fourcade—whom he met on Fire Island in 1959—"was a complicated union," according to Reginato, although the article makes one privy only to the commercial complications. Since Fourcade believed that "two people can't speak at one time," he (somewhat high-handedly) took all the A-list

clients for himself, but when Fourcade died, says Denning, "I had a unique problem. I was only the first name on the checks they wrote.... I heard people say, behind my back, *Which one is the talent?* That's ridiculous. It was a blending of what we knew and learned and experienced together. When we were alone, we contributed so much to each other. So, while I don't blame them for not continuing with me—it's understandable—I don't think any of them showed any imagination. I feel they abandoned me...." Which is rather like the lapdog complaining that it gets shooed away if it snaps at its mistress; no wonder Denning is so eager to unload on all of them now.

**AT THE END OF SHAKESPEARE'S *As You Like It***, fair Rosalind—who has spent much of the play *en travesti* as a man—steps before the curtain to deliver the epilogue, which ends, "If I were a woman I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions that liked me and breaths that I defied not: and, I am sure, as many as have good beards or good

faces or sweet breaths will, for my offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell." (The joke, if we need rub it in, is that Rosalind is a boy-player playing a woman who masquerades as a man and falls in love with a man—and oh what confusion there is in the Forest of Arden where love has many faces; this same bit of prosody, we add as an historical footnote, was the curtain speech of the famous drag aerialiste Barquette who was the toast of the Parisian intelligentsia in the Twenties. Shakespeare's lines also perhaps give us an idea of the erotic locus in his time—well above the waist; the sweet breath must have been a particularly tall order, given the non-existent state of dental hygiene.) All of this comes to mind because of a large picture in the October 6 *New York Times* of the London Cheek-by-Jowl company's all-male *As You Like It*, of Simon Coates and Adrian Lester as, respectively, Celia and Rosalind cutting a rug together in long white gowns and earrings and sensible shoes. Both of them—Mr. Coates is on the stocky side, Mr. Lester is a tall black man with what looks like quite a body and a sternly beautiful face—look absolutely smashing. In reviewing the production, Ben Brantley notes that the company has taken it rather straight rather than camping up the idea that They're All Men. Mr. Lester as Rosalind "adopts a liquidly feminine carriage but is unmistakably a man...[he] is by no means the winsome, serenely manipulative Rosalind of stock productions. This is a fiercely emotional woman, surprised by love, who spends most of the play wrestling with the frustrations of her assumed persona and her escalating passion....[H]is Rosalind burns with a thrilling compassion for the other love-addled inhabitants of Arden." And Mr. Coates? "[W]ith a soupçon of Monty Python, [he] becomes an officious gentry dowager in the making." Δ

October 14: Mayor Martin Behrman, 1864; Katherine Mansfield, 1888; Louis Delluc, 1890; e.e. cummings, 1894; Lillian Gish, 1896; Hannah Arendt, 1906; Udo Keir, 1944

October 15: Vergil, 70 B.C.; Lord Hervey, 1696; John Vanderlyn, 1775; Mikhail Lermontov, 1814; James Tissot, 1836; Friedrich Nietzsche, 1844; Ralph Blakelock, 1847; Marie Stopes, 1880; P.G. Wodehouse, 1881; Ina Claire, 1895; Boris Aronson, 1900; C.P. Snow, 1905; Bruna Castagna, J.K. Galbraith, 1908; Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., 1917; Jose Quintero, 1908; Italo Calvino, 1923; Tito Jackson, 1953





# F.Y.I.

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