

# VOICE

TAKING PRIDE IN OUR CULTURE

APRIL 2 - APRIL 8 / 1992

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## What's a nice queen like you...?

*Chicago*—An Oval Office headed by a drag queen is just what this country needs, according to a Queer Nation activist who has entered the 1992 presidential campaign.

Joan Jett Blakk, also known as Terrence Smith, announced her bid for the White House this January from her native Chicago. And, despite the campaign's often campy overtones, Blakk promises that her platform is more substance than style.

"You might think we're joking," Blakk said in a press conference launching her election effort. "I'm sorry, but I think the fact that the U.S. is the only industrialized country without national health care is a joke...I think the fact that a woman who accused a Supreme Court nominee of sexually harassing her was judged by a group of all men is a joke. Are you still laughing? California Governor Pete Wilson, are you still laughing? (Rep.) William Dannemeyer, are you still laughing? Cracker Barrel, are you still laughing?"

Blakk concedes she faces an up-hill battle to win votes. Because each state has different regulations to be placed on the ballot, voters in some parts of the country may not be able to choose Blakk at the polls. "For example, in Tennessee it takes something like 25 signatures to be placed on the ballot. People tell me that even in Tennessee they can find me 25 supporters. In other states, it can take thousands of signatures," she says.

Blakk's campaign is run by Queer Nation / Chicago. "I have eight campaign managers," she says. Other Queer Nation chapters from across the country are also pledging their support to the cause.

Blakk has already caused quite a ruckus in Chicago at various political fundraisers, and plans more disruptions in the future. She recently crashed a \$150-a-plate dinner that featured Geraldine Ferraro as the keynote speaker. Blakk arrived dressed in a skin-tight pink dress and white wig, flanked on both sides by leather-clad bodyguards. "People were like, 'What's she doing here?'" she says.

Ferraro, she says, made it a point to meet her afterward. "She was actually very sweet," Blakk says. She also met with fellow candidate former Senator Paul Tsongas during the Illinois primary. "How many drag queens can say they've done that?" she asks.

She wanted to crash the city's St. Patrick's Day parade, which is visited by many political VIPs, but she couldn't garner enough security. "I'm not going out there dressed in a green skirt and red bow alone, surrounded by people who have been drinking green beer all day," Blakk says.

Blakk's campaign promises are laced with a cynical humor not found in the more mainstream candidates' statements.

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Pictured: Joan Jett Blakk, photo ©1992 Victoria E. Kensington

## Gay Center reps impede progress of domestic partnership meeting

*Atlanta*—A committee authorized by Mayor Jackson, to gather information on domestic partnership for possible implementation in the city of Atlanta, held a town meeting last week successfully weathering efforts by representatives of the Atlanta Gay Center to keep the discussion on the committee instead of domestic partnership. The meeting, designed to solicit input, questions and suggestions from the community for a report to be presented to Mayor Jackson later this spring, drew about 35 participants, who were treated to an occasionally raucous discussion.

Gay Center representatives, who had been critical of Jackson's Domestic Partnership Study Committee in the pages of *The (Atlanta Gay Center) News*, repeatedly tried to steer the discussion on March 25 to questions of whether or not committee members and the mayor supported legislation introduced last November by City Councilmember Mary Davis. Davis's ordinance would provide benefits and recognition for the domestic partners of city employees.

"There are so many things about the process that

trouble me," said the Gay Center's Michael Wilson, who went on to dismiss data the committee had gathered from other cities throughout the country.

"I frankly don't care what's happened in Seattle," he said. "If it ain't happening in Atlanta, it doesn't matter to me."

Wilson accused the committee of spending too much time studying and "essentially co-opting the political process at the expense perhaps of a concrete piece of legislation that provides the very benefits that you're studying (referring to Davis's ordinance)."

Committee member Annie Archbold countered that while the group both "as a body" and as individuals supported Davis's ordinance, that was not the purpose of the group.

"The purpose of the committee is to study the breadth of domestic partnership," she said, "and make recommendations to the mayor."

Archbold also defended the committee's extensive research, saying that without it neither the mayor nor city council would have enough information to make an

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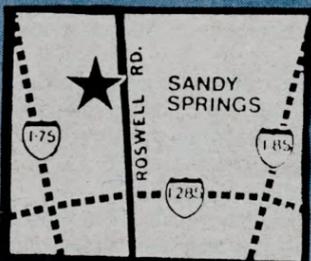
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## Six arrested at latest Cracker Barrel demo

Lithonia, GA—Six members of Queer Nation/Atlanta were arrested on March 29, during a demonstration at the Cracker Barrel restaurant here. The demonstration was part of the kick-off of what organizers call "Roll Out The Barrel Week," a nation-wide series of protests against the Tennessee-based company's anti-gay employment policy.

Larry Pellegrini, Dave MacDonald, Stan Mobley, Lynn Cothren, and Goldy and Joe Criscuolo were charged with criminal trespass and released on \$240 bond each from DeKalb County jail. The six are scheduled to appear in court on June 1.

"What a waste of taxpayer money," said Pellegrini upon his release. "Cracker Barrel, in their attempt to deny people the right to protest, was just being their old sleazy selves."



Goldy Criscuolo said that the arrests were harassment. "This is very indicative of the Cracker Barrel policy, and proof that it goes beyond sexual orientation. We were standing up for what we thought was just." Criscuolo and her husband Joe, both over 70, have been frequent demonstrators at Cracker Barrel actions.

Over 60 protestors picketed peacefully outside the Lithonia restaurant for nearly two hours, chanting and carrying signs. A few potential patrons of the restaurant turned away at the sight of the protestors, and many drivers honked in support as they drove past.

At around 1:30 pm, the protestors, after asking permission from DeKalb County police, ended their demonstration by marching down a road that cuts through Cracker Barrel's parking lot to a motel behind the restaurant. As the group wound

its way into a nearby bank parking lot where most of the protestors had parked, Cracker Barrel corporate loss control specialist Rob Jacks pointed out Pellegrini, president of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Chapter of the ACLU of Georgia, to DeKalb police Capt. R. W. Slade. Jacks told Slade, "I want him arrested."

Slade, a DeKalb police officer, and Jacks waded through the last few marchers to Pellegrini, who was videotaping the protest, and told him he was under arrest. The protest shifted to the DeKalb County jail off Memorial Drive, where Cracker Barrel representatives Jacks, Alan Arkin and James Bishop swore out warrants against the other five, who surrendered in front of the jail facility.

The six arrests raised the total number of arrests in the Atlanta area to 37. "I get butterflies every time I go to a Cracker Barrel demo," said Cothren shortly before learning he was to be arrested for the fourth time. The arrest was the first for the Criscuolos and Pellegrini.

Demonstrations also took place on Sunday in Detroit, Dayton Ohio, Chicago, Milwaukee and Fredericksburg Virginia, where a member of the gay press was arrested on criminal trespass charges.

Tim McCarthy, Washington DC correspondent for New York's Gay Cable Network, attended the protest with some 50 or 60 demonstrators, who occupied about 25 tables in the restaurant for two and a half hours. McCarthy said he took his video camera into the restaurant, but that it remained in his camera bag except for about a minute when he taped a Cracker Barrel manager who was taping the protest.

"The manager asked me to take the camera out into the parking lot," said McCarthy. "I refused. We went back and forth, then he went away."

As for the camera, McCarthy said he "never used it again." Forty-five minutes later the manager returned with a sheriff and two deputies and arrested him.

"They slapped the cuffs on me and dragged me away," he said. "I was not warned, I was not asked to leave. The civil disobedience this morning was about freedom of the press."

McCarthy was released on his own recognizance and summoned to court to face the charges on May 21. He said that there were no other arrests at the Fredericksburg action. The protestors left the restaurant when Cracker Barrel management went table to table asking them to leave or face arrest.

Other protests are scheduled during the week, including an action sponsored by Queer Nation/New York on Wall Street on Tuesday, and a demonstration in Moody, Alabama on Monday.

KC WILDMOON

Pictured: Stan Mobley assists Goldy Criscuolo as they and Lynn Cothren are arrested.  
Photo by Evett Bennett

## HRCF Dinner slated for May 16

Tutu on honorary committee, Dick Sargent will attend

Atlanta—The 5th Annual Atlanta Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF) Dinner is slated for May 16, with South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu joining the list of local dignitaries as the honorary committee. At the dinner, four awards will be presented to community members or organizations who have contributed in an extraordinary manner to the Advancement of the Gay and Lesbian Community.

The first ever Human Rights Special Achievement Award will be presented to long-time HRCF Southeast field director, Cathy Woolard, who recently left Atlanta for a lobbyist position at HRCF headquarters in Washington, DC. HRCF's prestigious Dan Bradley Humanitarian Award will be presented to actor Dick Sargent for his efforts on behalf of the gay and lesbian community. The former "Bewitched" co-star, who came out publicly late last year, will attend the Atlanta dinner

to accept the award.

The winners of two additional awards will be announced at the dinner.

Joining Archbishop Tutu on the Honorary Committee are Nathalie Dupree, Lt. Governor Pierre Howard, Rev. Kathryn Cartledge of the Atlanta Interfaith AIDS Network, Congressmen Ben Jones and John Lewis, Christina Cash of Southern Voice, State Representative Jim Martin, Atlanta City Councilwoman Mary Davis, DeKalb County Commissioner Sherry Sutton, Decatur Mayor Mike Mears and actor River Phoenix.

Others include: Joe Blount, Jack Pelham of ETC. Magazine, Georgia Representatives Nan Orrock, Mary Margaret Oliver, and Rita Valenti, former director of Planned Parenthood Faye Waddleton, Queer Nation and Atlanta Pride Committee co-chair Kelvin Lynn Cothren and DeKalb Commissioner Jackie Scott.

Tickets for the May 16th Black Tie dinner are \$150 with over \$100 going to HRCF. For tickets, call Voice Mail (404) 662-4280 or write HRCF, PO Box 8594, Atlanta, GA 30306. Chairing this year's dinner are Michael Bailiff and Pamela Evans.

## Frohnmayr blasts critics of NEA, calls them Nazis

Washington—Outgoing National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Chair John Frohnmayr lashed out at gay-basing presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan here March 23, calling him a "Frankenstein monster that George Bush helped to create."

In his first public appearance since his ouster last month, Frohnmayr told an international First Amendment seminar at the National Press Club, "To me the most damaging sound bite is not 'My opponent voted for obscenity,' but rather, 'My opponent jettisoned our precious right of free expression to cover his fanny.'"

He attacked Buchanan's use of scenes from gay black filmmaker Marlon Riggs' "Tongues Untied" in a campaign ad for appealing "to peoples' basest instincts, to their prejudices, their hates. That's a direction that can only destroy us as a nation," he said at a National Press Club speech here. The commercial, called "Freedom Abused," ran in Georgia before the presidential primary on March 10.

In his particularly biting speech, Frohnmayr

compared NEA critics to followers of Adolf Hitler who denounced "degenerate" art, which he said was the subject of a recent Smithsonian Institution exhibit.

"If you saw it," he charged, "you'd be chilled to the bone with the similarities between even the language that was used, in the words of Hitler and Goebbels, to what is being used in the political discourse today."

"It was a wide cultural war," he said. "The Germans wrote a sign saying, 'Your tax money goes to pay for this filth.' That could come right out of the Congressional Record, my friends."

Frohnmayr, who will leave office on May 1, blasted Congress members for reneging on their obligations as leaders of a democratic nation by chipping away at funding for the national arts organization.

"All of us in government," he said in a powerful speech, "are sworn to defend the Constitution against all enemies. For two-thirds of both houses to have voted for the latest Helms language, which is unconstitutional under every test I know, in my view violates that oath."

Helms has repeatedly tried to stop the NEA from funding works that depict "sexual or excretory activities or organs. His legislative add-on passed both houses last year, but was later traded for a natural resources amendment.

JOHN ZEH

## NGLTF says crimes against gays/lesbians up 31%

Washington—The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) released its report on anti-gay and lesbian violence last week, concluding that such violence is pervasive, and has a "profoundly destructive" impact on gays and lesbians and society in general.

The report, released on March 19, detailed 1,822 incidents of harassment, threats, physical assaults, vandalism, arson, police abuse and murder. The crimes were reported during 1991 in New York, Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul and San Francisco, and showed an overall increase of 31% over incidents reported in those same cities in 1990.

At that press conference, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) blasted government officials over their hypocritical failure to enforce the federal hate crimes law protecting gay men and lesbians.

"The Justice Department is not fully implementing the intent of Congress to educate law enforcement officers on how to gather these statistics so we can document the gravity of the problem," she said.

"Some states have taken measures that are, frankly, more progressive than the federal government's," she said about the U.S. Hate Crime Statistics Act.

"The Justice Department seems to be edu-

cating its law enforcement officers in terms of crimes based on race," she continued, "but in terms of religion and sexual orientation, much more needs to be done."

Underreporting by victims—as much as 85%, according to NGLTF anti-violence project director Kevin Berrill—means the group's figures reflect a fraction of actual incidents. Of the over 1800 incidents reported to gay or lesbian agencies, only 362 were reported to local police, an increase of 41% over 1990.

"Anti-gay and lesbian violence continues to be a widespread and critical problem," said Berrill, who also authored the book *Hate Crimes*. "Each attack sends a message of hatred and terror intended to silence and render invisible not only the victim but all gay people," he said.

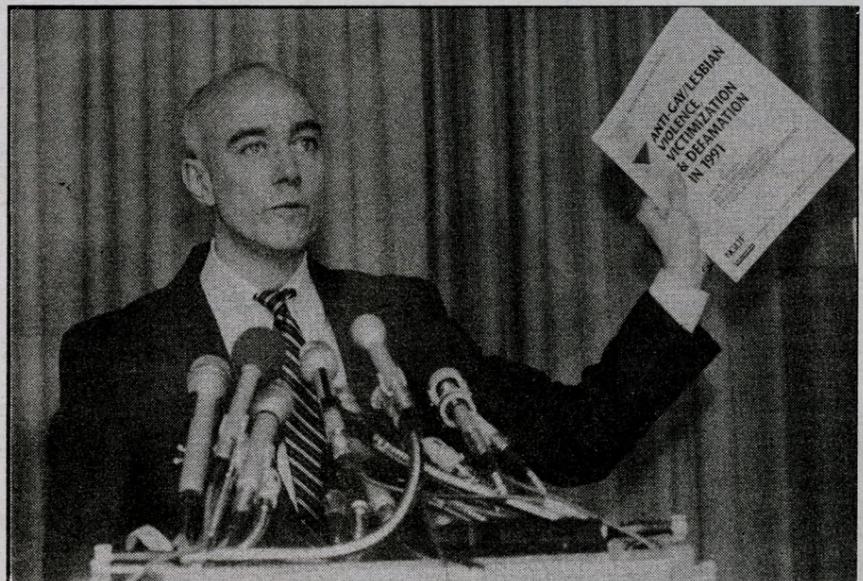
NGLTF's report urged new actions against anti-gay violence, including more money for the FBI to implement the hate crime law, passage of local and state bias crime laws, mandated sensitivity training for law enforcement personnel, and educational programs to counteract intolerance.

Working with NGLTF, federal Hate Crimes law co-sponsor Pelosi had language put into a recent appropriations bill strengthening the federal response to hate crimes.

"Hate crimes against gay and lesbians must come to an end," she said. "I'm not pleased with [the government's] response. The statistics should compel us, as George Bernard Shaw said, to move to action."

JOHN ZEH

Pictured: Kevin Berrill. Photo by Patsy Lynch



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**Joan Jett Blakk**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"First thing I'm going to do is fire everyone in sight," Blakk says. "I'm going to the Pentagon with a bullhorn and tell them to get lost. Who better to clean up than a queen?"

She vows to rename the Federal Bureau of Investigation the Fashion Bureau of Investigation, "because crime will be a thing of the past if we arrest the poorly dressed before they can do any wrong." Accordingly, she also pledges to award a Congressional Medal of Honor for the best hairdo. The CIA will become the Center for Intelligent Accessories.

"People always ask me, 'Joan, what about defense?' I'll paint da fence," she says. "We'll make it America the Beautiful again."

An impressive array of endorsements have been lined up for the campaign. Unfortunately, Blakk says, most of her supporters are dead. "We had a seance where we had all these gay leaders from the past come back to pledge their support for my campaign," she says. Figures like Oscar Wilde, Sappho,

Gertrude Stein and Liberace all "came back from beyond" to back Blakk.

In 1991, Blakk began her political ambitions with an unsuccessful bid for the mayor's office in Chicago. She was deemed Mayor of Gay Chicago after receiving "a couple of thousand votes" from the city's gay community.

Blakk keeps her tongue firmly planted in her cheek as she plans her election assault, but she maintains that while her delivery may be comical, her real message is serious.

"It's a joke, but it makes you stop and think," she says of her efforts. "We're having a lot of fun because we can say things the other politicians can't say."

Even if she doesn't win the White House, Blakk says the experience has been a good one. "I can put on my make-up now in under 45 minutes," she says.

Blakk is tentatively slated to appear at the Indianapolis Pride celebration June 13. Campaign contributions can be sent to Joan Jett Blakk for President, P.O. Box 14356, Chicago, IL 60614-0356.

JONATHAN MITCHELL

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**Domestic Partnership**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

informed decision about legislation.

Wilson and other Gay Center representatives continued to badger committee members about the mayor's position on Davis's legislation, prompting Marcia Okula, Jackson's special assistant for gay and lesbian issues, to respond.

"The committee has gone on record to every member of City Council in support of Mary Davis's legislation," she said. "But this committee is not authorized to make public statements on behalf of the mayor or the city."

Committee members and Gay Center representatives traded accusations of undue interruptions, but attempts to turn the discussion back to domestic partnership itself eventually succeeded, after Okula, who had been charged by the mayor to convene the study group, asked that the meeting not be turned into "a pissing match."

Gay Center representatives disrupted the meeting twice more, but the discussion was quickly put back on track by the committee and audience members, who several times applauded committee responses to the Gay Center reps' accusations.

By the end of the meeting, tempers had cooled, and Wilson suggested that the committee hold another town meeting before releasing the report.

"I think this has been a productive meeting," he said. "The Atlanta Gay Center appreciates the work you have done."

Other issues discussed by community members who attended Wednesday's meeting included how to combat expected right-wing opposition, and how to draw on the support of unmarried heterosexuals who would also benefit from such legislation.

Mayor Jackson asked Okula to convene the study committee last October to investigate what options for domestic partnership legislation were available to the city. The committee has compiled extensive informa-

tion on financial and legal considerations, what other cities and corporations have done in the past and currently, and demographics of households in the metro Atlanta area.

Committee member Jeff Corrigan said that the study group's work is but the beginning steps along the way for recognition of gay and lesbian relationships.

"Most of the work will go on after this," he said, adding that what Jackson does with the information presented to him by the committee will depend largely on "what the citizens want."

"This committee is not put together to organize the constituency," he said, "but that will have to happen."

Among recommendations that may be made to the mayor are the arrangement of a registry for domestic partners, city employee domestic partnership legislation (Davis's ordinance), city-wide domestic partnership legislation, and the requirement that companies doing business with the city provide benefits for domestic partners.

Whatever the recommendations, the committee is certain that domestic partnership will come to Atlanta in stages, most likely starting with benefits for partners of city employees.

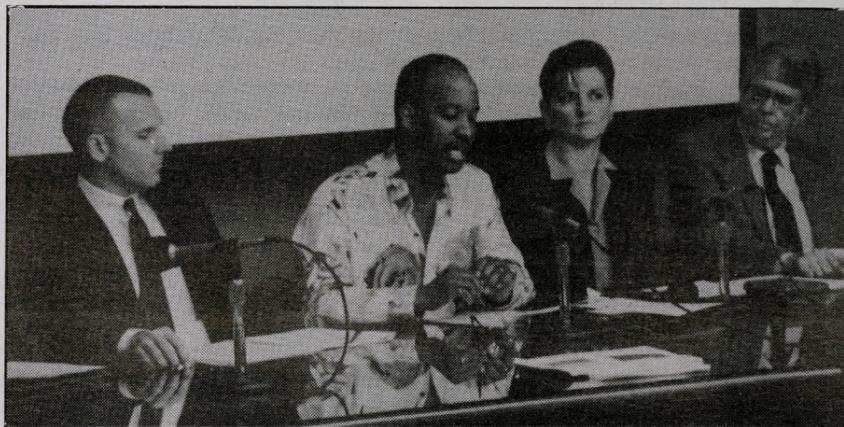
"The city's power is limited in terms of being in the state of Georgia," said Okula, "but it's easier for a city to pass domestic partnership for its employees because a city is a corporation."

Davis, who attended the meeting, told the group that she needs the support of all organizations and individuals for her legislation, which is currently in committee waiting for city departments to complete a report on the financial implications of the legislation.

"There is a lot of support in this city," she said, "but I need all of you to make this work."

KC WILDMOON

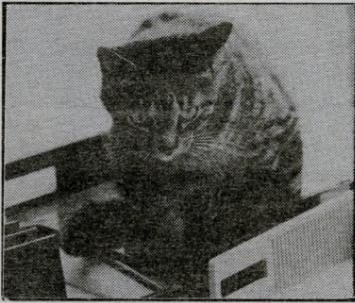
Pictured: Members of the Mayor's Domestic Partnership Study Committee, David MacDonald, Sam Bostick, Special Asst. to the Mayor Marcia Okula, and Jay Neely. Photo by KC Wildmoon.



**ACT UP Gets Grants:** ACT UP/Atlanta was among 51 ACT UP chapters to receive grants from the Physicians Association for AIDS Care (PAAC), which recently distributed \$470,000 to the organizations. The funding represented a portion of the profits from the sale of "Red, Hot, and Blue," an album of Cole Porter songs performed by pop/rock superstars such as Sinead O'Connor, k.d. lang, Jimmy Somerville, and Annie Lennox. ACT UP/Atlanta received \$9,000 from PAAC, which said that many of the artists involved in the "Red, Hot and Blue" project had requested that some money go to ACT UP.

**Continuing Saga Over Gay Student Groups In Alabama:** The Auburn University Board of Trustees skirted the issue of a lesbian and gay group on campus last week by voting to ask a federal court to determine whether or not the university can legally fund a gay group. In the continuing saga of Auburn's Gay and Lesbian Association, the trustees' vote came four days after Alabama Attorney General Jimmy Evans had issued an opinion that a gay group cannot use state buildings or funds to promote "illegal deviate" sex. That ruling came in response to a request by the student government association at the University of Alabama. Also after Evans' opinion, the UA student government association voted on March 25 to cut the University of Alabama Gay and Lesbian Alliance's (GLA) budget from \$800 to \$264, just enough to cover the group's phone bill. The GLA says it will appeal the budget cut. The Auburn Gay and Lesbian Association has been in the news since last fall, when the student senate at Auburn refused the group a charter, but was overturned by university officials. The Alabama legislature has passed resolutions opposing the gay group, and the American Civil Liberties Union has indicated that it will sue if the group's charter is revoked.

**Gay Cat Joins Democratic Presidential Primary:** An openly gay cat has thrown his food bowl into the ring in the fight for the Democratic Presidential nomination. Tiger Dude, who works in the offices of Atlanta's gay and lesbian newspaper *Southern Voice*, said he was tired of hearing the current crop of candidates ignore the real issues, which he characterized as warm windows, naps, and plenty of food in a bowl for all. According to Dude, "It's time for the meows and purrs of all our citizens to be heard in the Oval office. If I'm elected," he continued, "I can



guarantee that gays and lesbians will have unprecedented access to me and my staff, at least when it rains too much and I can't play in the Rose Garden." Dude also promised not to claw the furniture or spray the walls, except for some of "that hideous stuff left over from Nancy Reagan." "It's offensive," he said. "I wouldn't even expect a dog to sleep on it." Need we tell you — April Fools!

**Update on Sex Education Bill:** HB 1837 passed the Georgia Senate on March 25, after being amended to allow teachers to discuss methods of preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. The sex education bill, which passed the House earlier this month, prevents teachers from teaching anything illegal under Georgia law, and advocates feared it would seriously curtail AIDS and pregnancy education. The bill, with the language preventing the teaching of illegal activities intact, now goes back to the House which must approve the amended version before sending it to Governor Miller's desk for his signature.

**GAA, Lavender Hill Mob Founder Dead At 49:** Martin Robinson, a long time gay activist, died last week in Brooklyn, NY, of complications of AIDS. Robinson, who was present at the 1969 Stonewall riot, was a member of the Mattachine Society and founded the Gay Activist Alliance and the Lavender Hill Mob. Robinson also worked in the Gay Liberation Front and was a founding member of GLAAD and ACT UP, where he helped originate "zapping."

**Former Senator, Not Southern, Attacks Gays:** Bill Armstrong, a former U.S. Senator from Colorado, attacked gays and lesbians in a letter supporting a ballot initiative that would block civil rights protection for gays. Armstrong said that AIDS was "self-created personal miseries of pleasure-addicted gays," that gays are trying to "force you and me to condone...aberrant homosexual behavior and lifestyle," and that comparing gay lives to "the innocent sufferings and crippling poverty of legitimate minority groups is an insult to those who've struggled to achieve true civil rights in America." Armstrong also called gays "tragically misguided people" and said that taxpayers should not bear any part of the cost of AIDS services. The former senator said that gays do not need any civil rights protection because they already have the same protections other citizens have.

**Hate Crimes Legislation Passed In Utah:** The Utah legislature passed bills mandating the state to collect hate crimes data on February 25. According to the *Washington Blade*, Republican Gov. Norman Bangertter signed two bills into legislation, one mandating data collection and the second increasing penalties for hate crimes. The legislators first removed language that specifically mentioned sexual orientation, but replaced it with language indirectly requiring law enforcement officials to track data on crimes based on sexual orientation. One bill required the state to follow the federal Hate Crimes Statistics Act, which does include sexual orientation, and the second defined a hate crime as a crime perpetrated "with the intent to intimidate or terrorize another person or with a reason to believe that the action would intimidate or terrorize."



**Souter Soft On Sodomy?:** The *Washington Blade* has reported that a 1976 article in the "Sexual Law Reporter" indicates that Supreme Court Justice David Souter may be a little soft on sodomy. The article concerned attempts to reinstate New Hampshire's sodomy laws when they were inadvertently repealed during the state's rape law re-vamping. According to the article, Souter, who was then New Hampshire's attorney general, called the sodomy laws "no great loss" since they were "virtually unenforceable and unenforced."

photo by Patsy Lynch

**Conservative Jews Say No To Gay Rabblis:** A committee of Conservative Jews rejected a proposal on March 25 that would have allowed gays and lesbians to serve as rabbis in the Conservative movement's 800 synagogues. The committee, which sets religious standards for the movement, also ruled that rabbis may not perform marriages or commitment ceremonies for gay or lesbian members.

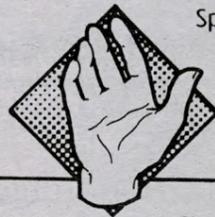
**Black Lesbian And Gay Pride Day In DC:** The second annual Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in Washington DC is scheduled for May 24. Plans include kick off parties on May 22, a film festival and other entertainment on May 23, and an outdoor festival on May 24.

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**SF Supervisor tries to make AIDS an issue in presidential campaign**

In an effort to bring AIDS to the campaign forefront, San Francisco Supervisor Terence Hallinan is sponsoring a resolution that calls on the candidates to develop an AIDS program based on the resolution's 23 points. The Supervisors' Administration and Oversight Committee, which Hallinan chairs, invited the candidates' representatives to a hearing on March 24 on the proposal. The comprehensive proposal contains a long wish list of areas requiring further funding (including research, frank education materials targeted to specific at-risk communities and housing) as well as a call for unprejudiced, forthright leadership from the White House.

So far, the AIDS epidemic has not been a major issue in the presidential campaign. Only Jerry Brown and Pat Buchanan have mentioned AIDS on their own initiative.

Buchanan brought up the disease only as part of an attempt to paint George Bush as weak on family morality. According to Buchanan, AIDS is "nature's retribution for violating the laws of nature."

Brown's tiny staff has been spread so thin that it seems unable to fully elaborate its position on AIDS—beyond the occasional sound bite.

"We only have seven paid staff, and piles of paper everywhere," lamented issues aide Lee Newman at Brown's campaign headquarters. Newman, like most presidential candidates' staffers, was more informed on the general issue of access to health care than on the AIDS-specific difficulties lurking in the background of the health insurance controversy.

Only the Bill Clinton and Jerry Brown campaign staffs elected to respond to the resolution. Hallinan aide Jean-Paul Samaha reports that the Bush campaign said that it could not testify because it lacked authorization from Washington. Samaha says that Buchanan's local campaign chief flatly turned down Hallinan's invitation as a "set up" that ignored the "real issues" facing San Francisco.

Appearing for Clinton was noted lawyer and gay rights activist Ben Schatz, who was asked to assist the Clinton campaign in developing a position on AIDS.

"Bush and Reagan don't listen to people like me, but Clinton is actively soliciting input from gay and AIDS activists," Schatz said in an interview. "Hallinan's resolution played an important part in framing the issues, and I'm hopeful that we'll get most of what we're looking for."

Clinton is expected to issue his plan for combating the epidemic in the next few weeks. Although Schatz defended Clinton's interest in AIDS as "heartfelt and genuine," others have questioned Clinton's understanding of AIDS policy issues because of his record as governor of Arkansas.

National Public Radio (NPR) reported last week that Clinton was confronted by an unnamed AIDS activist at a New York campaign stop on March 26. At the \$100-per-plate dinner, the activist interrupted Clinton's speech, shouting that "people are dying of AIDS." Clinton responded that he had "friends who have died from AIDS," and the activist countered with "you [Clinton] are dying of ambition to be president."

Clinton, according to NPR, became "visibly angry," shouting that he was sick of being personally attacked, that "this is all a bunch of bull," and that he was sick of "dealing with this crap." His diatribe lasted for nearly ten minutes, ending with applause from the gathered Clinton supporters.

At Hallinan's hearing in California, Keith Politte, Brown's representative, told this correspondent, "I first met Jerry at a meeting of the AIDS Legal Referral Panel. In 1975, he signed a bill as governor that decriminalized private sex acts. Meanwhile, Arkansas has remained a state with an anti-sodomy law under Clinton, who also approved a law establishing mandatory reporting of HIV-positive people."



Hallinan's resolution represents the broad consensus of the San Francisco AIDS community, but one prominent witness at the hearing suggested that it did not go far enough in addressing the underlying structural problems impeding the federal government's anti-AIDS work.

"All the money in the world will not help if it is spent in an uncoordinated, disjointed way," said Sandra Hernandez, who heads the city's AIDS Office.

In a strongly worded statement, Hernandez called for creating a more focused, Manhattan Project-type program to fight AIDS. This program would also have to cover such broader issues as homelessness and drug use in HIV-negative people if it is to stop the epidemic, Hernandez pointed out.

Hernandez also complained about the unorganized nature of AIDS research. She noted in particular that vaccine development is suffering lengthy delays because of lack of coordination and duplication of effort.

Another witness was Rene Durrazzo, policy director of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. In a prior interview, Durrazzo observed that electing a president with a good understanding of AIDS issues is not sufficient.

"The president may be well intentioned, but Congress might not want to appropriate the money for a more concerted AIDS drive. AIDS champions in Congress are few and far between," Durrazzo said.

DAVE GILDEN  
AIDS NEWS SERVICE  
Pictured: Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton

## HEALTH

**Breast cancer linked to brain shape?**

Researchers at Beth Israel Hospital and Harvard Medical School have uncovered a possible link between a woman's brain shape and her risk for breast cancer. The study, published in a recent issue of the British medical journal *Lancet* and reported by the *Washington Blade*, showed that the "hormonal environment" in a pregnant woman's uterus may determine the shape of her female children's brains, leading to a predisposition to breast cancer.

**Breast cancer drug protects bones, heart**

New research conducted at the University of Wisconsin indicates that a drug used widely to prevent breast cancer may also protect women from broken bones and heart attacks. Published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the study showed that in women who took the drug tamoxifen, bone strength increased by about half of a percent per year, while women who did not take the drug saw bone density decrease by 1% per year. Dr. Richard R. Love, who directed the study, also said that women who took tamoxifen saw a 12% drop in overall cholesterol levels, including a 20% drop in LDL, the so-called "bad" cholesterol. Love said that the drug does cause menopause-like side effects, and announced plans for a study on 16,000 women to determine if the drug prevents first-time breast cancer, heart attacks and broken bones. Tamoxifen is currently used to prevent recurrence of existing cancers.

**AZT not harmful to pregnant women**

A report in the *New England Journal of Medicine* reveals that AZT did not harm either the woman or the fetus in 43 cases of HIV+ women given the drug during pregnancy. The researchers said that clinical trials on the drug will begin soon to determine whether or not AZT prevents transmission of HIV from mother to fetus.

**Younger prostitutes sought out of fear of HIV**

The fear of contracting AIDS is driving some people to seek out younger and younger prostitutes, according to Vitit Muntarbhorn, a law professor in Thailand in a report to the U.N. The report says that children as young as 9 or 10 are frequently taken across borders and then tricked or

forced into prostitution. Customers are often indifferent to the children's plight, said Muntarbhorn, "If they do care, it is usually for their own health." Many child prostitutes in India, Thailand and the Philippines have tested positive for HIV. The number of young prostitutes, up to the age of 17, was highest in Asia and Latin America, where millions of street children are lured into prostitution. "Criminal elements wait in the wings to lure or trick many children into prostitution," Muntarbhorn said, adding that "in some parts of the world it is parents who sell their children into prostitution either wittingly or unwittingly."

**Home test kit for HIV**

A California firm that began to advertise the first at-home test kit for HIV ran into immediate objections from state health officials. Health Test, Inc. of Costa Mesa advertised on California cable TV that for \$24.95 people could take their own finger-prick blood samples, mail them to a lab and get the results by mail or phone. Scott Lewis of the California Department of Health Services told USA Today that the firm's test was "a clear violation of state law." After meeting with officials, Health Test agreed to revise its testing plan, with the biggest change being sending employees to customers' homes to prick their fingers. The firm plans to continue to advertise its 800 number. AIDS activists are very critical of the at-home test kit since there is no face-to-face counseling offered. AIDS Project Los Angeles says it will urge the public not to use the kit.

**Drug shows promise against KS**

According to a report in the *Washington Blade*, the soil-based bacteria drug SP-PG (sulfated polysaccharide-peptidoglycan) has blocked the growth of Kaposi's sarcoma cells in test-tube experiments. Japanese researchers, with Dr. Robert Gallo, published their report in the March 13 edition of *Science*, and say they expect human trials of the drug to begin in the near future.

**Doctors suspended over AIDS cure**

Two doctors in Tennessee were recently suspended from practice for telling AIDS patients that they could be cured with a secret drug. Dr. Everett Echols III, a Shelbyville psychiatrist and Dr. Therial Bynum of Murfreesboro told an AIDS patient that they had cured 27 others. According to state Health Department records, the doctors said the drug cost \$10,000. A hearing on the case will be held in May.

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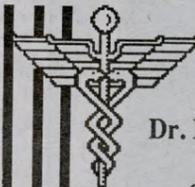


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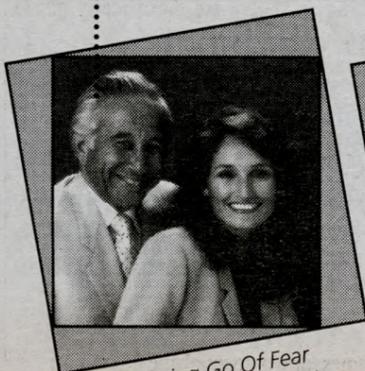
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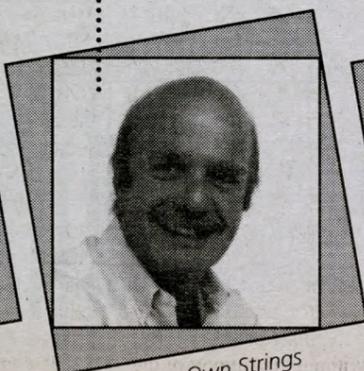
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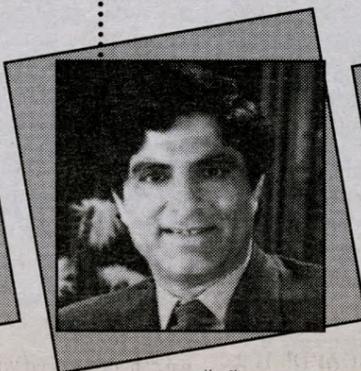
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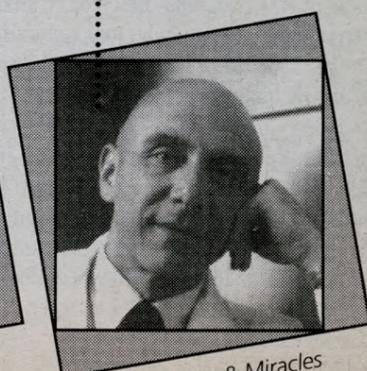
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NEXT WEEK

Shelly Roberts, known as the "lesbian Erma Bombeck," will make her debut as a Southern Voice columnist next issue.

Queer sports. The Dixie Bowling Tournament and The Peach Tennis Tournament are coming to Atlanta later this month. We'll tell you everything you need to know next issue.

VIEWPOINTS is intended to provide a continuing forum for the lesbian and gay community. We encourage you to share your ideas, comments and feelings on these pages.

The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of Southern Voice.

Submissions should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than two pages. We are happy to offer anonymity when letters are printed, but all submissions must be signed. Please also give us your phone number in case we have questions. We reserve the right to edit for space.

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GARY BASTIAN

The Not-So-Secret Phobia of the Gay Press

Does the gay press in America report fairly on all gay political issues? Or are most gay newspapers easily confused with Democratic newsletters? Do gay reporters and editors put aside their own personal political views or are they biased? Is "Republiphobia" (the fear of Republicans) running rampant in the newsrooms of the gay press in our land?

Recently, Metroline, a gay publication in Hartford, Connecticut published a letter that a group of gay Republicans sent to Senator Bob Kerrey. In the letter, Republicans for Individual Freedoms (RIF), criticized the Democratic presidential candidate for making a joke about lesbians. Metroline then added two editorial notes about the letter.

First they stated that Dan Quayle's press secretary had made a similar joke about lesbians. Were they implying that a joke about lesbians made by a Democrat is any less insulting because a Republican made a joke too? Are they implying that "two wrongs make a right?" Come on, gay press, stand for something!

The second editorial note charged that RIF was being "political." Of course RIF was being political—they are a political group just as much as the gay Democratic clubs are political groups. But then again, think about it. In hundreds and hundreds of gay articles in dozens and dozens of gay newspapers, I have never, never, never seen a similar charge being made against a Democrat. Not once have I seen an editorial note suggesting that a Democrat might be playing politics. TALK ABOUT A DOUBLE STANDARD! Is the gay press so naive that they believe that only Republicans try to get political advantage on an issue or that only Republicans try to score political points with the voters. Come on gay press, get real! Democrats play the political "game" just as much as do the Republicans. Why does the gay press constantly let the Democrats off the hook?

Take a look at the political leadership in the gay community; Democratic Congressmen, Democratic City Councilmen and councilwomen, Democratic County Supervisors. These are the people who are always interviewed and quoted in the gay press. Come on, gay press, don't you think that might be a little biased? After all, their jobs, power and sometimes money depend on the Democratic Party. Don't you think they might be a little tainted in their comments? I'm not suggesting that they are not prominent leaders in our cause, but for pete's sake, get a grip on the political realities of today. When Senator Bob Kerrey was in trouble for that lesbian joke—who did the gay press quote? They quoted Democratic Congressmen, Democratic Councilmen, Democratic party officials. Come on, gay press, don't you think that a Democrat might pull his punches against his fellow Democrat? Why didn't you interview the presidents of the gay Republican clubs in New York or Chicago or Dallas or Los Angeles? Why didn't you quote Jim McFarland, an openly gay Republican who served on the city council in Madison, Wisconsin or Bob Ebersole, an openly gay official who served in Massachusetts and is respected in the Republican Party?

In connection with my activities as a gay Republican, I have had some horrifying contacts with the gay press. One gay reporter told me that gay Republicans are a "contradiction" and do not exist. Another told me that his editorial board is only interested in Democrats. But the best was the reporter who questioned whether I was "really" gay since I was a Republican. What do I have to do, show the box tops from my latest purchase of condoms and lubricant? Or will a Polaroid photo of my boyfriend and I in bed last night "prove" my orientation?

Gay Republicans are trying to fight homophobia in the Republican Party. But we cannot succeed without the support of the gay press. The editors and reporters don't have to be Republican, or like Republicans, just report on our activities in a fair and balanced way. Several gay papers have conducted surveys of their readers and have found that around 20% are Republicans. Don't they deserve to be informed and served by the gay press? I challenge the gay press to

conduct their own internal poll—how many of their editors or reporters are Republican? Then ask yourselves if you are truly representative of the community you seek to serve.

If you want to condemn or blast a particular Republican, fine. But don't condemn an entire political party, there are some Republicans who are good on gay issues; Seattle Congressman John Miller, Connecticut's Chris Shays, New York's Bill Green. And there are plenty of Democrats who have a dismal record of supporting gay issues. Keep the editorial comments on the editorial page—not in the news stories—a first year journalism student knows that. News stories should not refer to George Bush as "President Death" or to Dan Quayle as "dummy" as I have read in gay publications. Shouldn't news stories and articles be based on facts, not opinions? Shouldn't you save opinions for the editorial page where you can, and should, print whatever you, the editor, want to express?

And as a gay paper serving the gay community, would it be too much to ask to stick to gay issues. In many presidential campaign articles, not only have I read candidates' views on AIDS funding levels and hate crimes legislation, but also other topics. These topics have included the US-Mexico Free Trade Agreement, the Water Quality Incentives Program and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Act. Are these really gay issues? Or Democratic issues?

The fight for our rights as gay Americans is to seek protection of our rights even though we are a minority within American society. Gay Republicans seek protection of our rights as a minority within gay society.

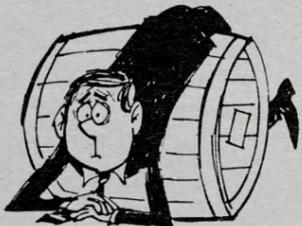
Well editors, it's up to you. You can prove my point, be Republiphobic, and throw this commentary away. Or you can publish it and engage our community in a healthy debate about the gay press and the political process.

It comes down to one question; if the gay citizen cannot trust the gay press to report on all aspects of the American gay experience, who can we trust?

Gary Bastian is founder of Republicans for Individual Freedoms, a gay Republican organization with chapters in New York and Atlanta.



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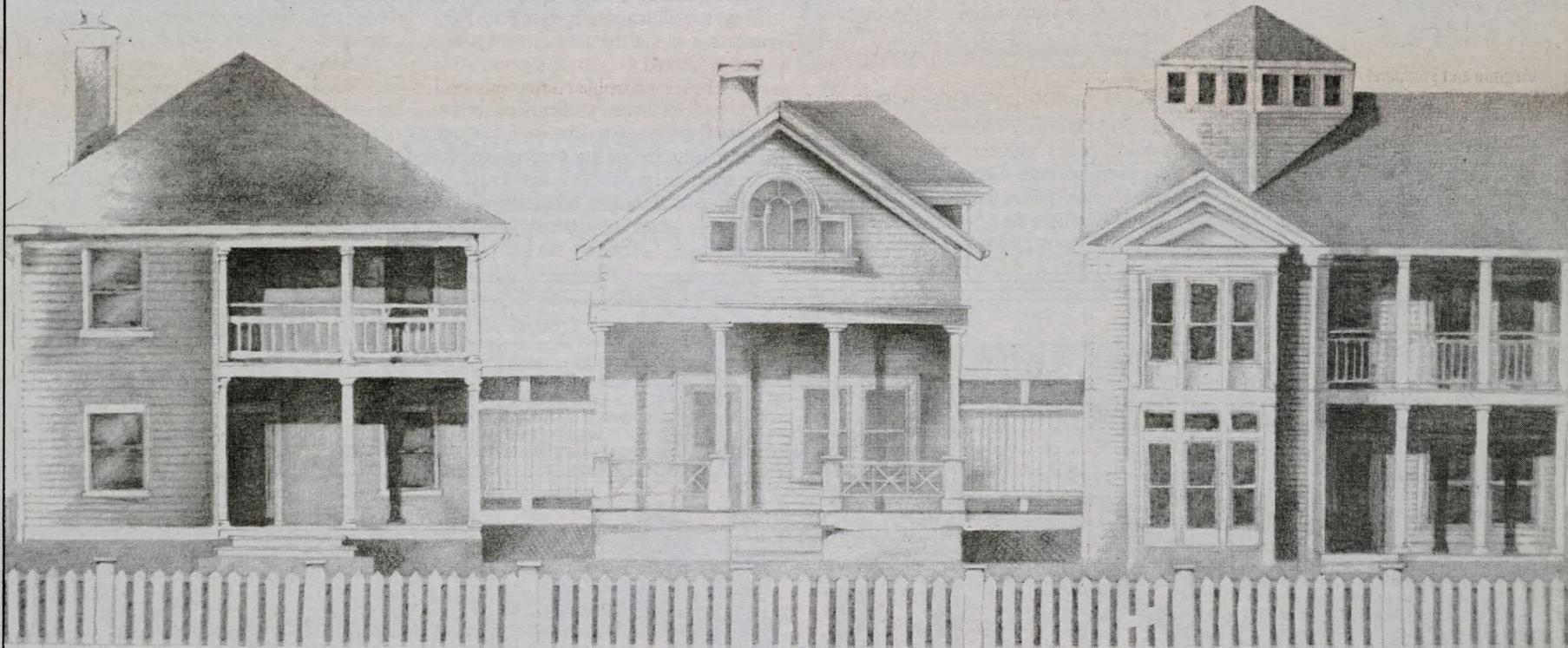
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AL COTTON

Until Jaye Evans, owner of the Eagle, died in February, I had pretty much taken for granted the presence of a leather bar in Atlanta, and their omnipresence in the gay community generally. Leather bars have always been around—every major city has its Eagle or Ramrod or Spike. They must not be anything special if they're so common.

But with Jaye's death, I imagined Atlanta without the Eagle and didn't like what I saw. And the thought struck me, excuse the horrible grammar, that leather bars may be the most unique institution in the gay community, the most radical thing we've ever managed to create.

Urban-wise, the presence of a leather bar has always been for me a threshold for the coming of age of a city's gay community, and for the city itself. Just like gay neighborhoods, gay radio, gay film festivals, a weekly gay newspaper (at last!), and gay waiter jokes (My favorite—How many straight Atlanta waiters does it take to change a light bulb? Both of them), a leather bar is a sign that a gay community has achieved critical mass, and that its straight community will tolerate that level of diversity.

Atlanta-wise, the Eagle's predecessor, Texas Drilling Company, had its place in the gay community's restoration of Virginia-Highland. When Texas opened in the late '70s, a leather bar smack on the corner of Virginia and Highland, believe it or not, didn't seem out of place. Would those jazz clubs and pasta shops have moved in if *someone* hadn't already been there? Gentrification finally won in 1988, as Texas renamed itself The Eagle and escaped to Ponce. Now, it and Krispy Kreme bestride the street like twin sleazy colossuses.

And let's not take for granted the people who opened these bars during times when "alternate lifestyles" weren't so tolerated. When Jaye opened Texas, dealing with the police, the city's licensing bureaus and the obscenity and passion police who keep haunting Atlanta's reputation for tolerance could not have been easy. It took courage to spend money on something your city's solicitor wanted to shut down.

So if leather bars are institutions, what is

it that they institutionalize? Well, let's start with another joke, this time Lynn Lavner's: "We say the gay community celebrates diversity, but what we really mean is 'I celebrate my diversity; your diversity makes me nervous.'"

Leather bars, as veritable salad bars of sexual diversity, communicate the fact that, just as we are not limited to sexual partners of the opposite sex, neither are we stuck with the gay version of the missionary position. In our community, going to a leather bar is a form of sexual shock therapy. It helps facilitate the attitude adjustment necessary to erase the old sexual programming that we carry from our straight upbringing.

As for uniqueness, New York and San Francisco excluded, leather bars are without parallel in the straight community. Think: were a straight person so inclined, where could they go to mingle in the midst of (pardon the oxymoron) straight sexual diversity? They have no places for reassessing their sexual prejudices; ergo, their prejudices remain.

I experienced all of this the night I first wandered into Texas, my first bar after coming out. Located where Highland Tap is now, the cave-like interior seemed to ooze with sexuality. I swallowed hard—I had known this wouldn't be easy, but aren't those shackles on the wall?—and ordered a Cape Cod. But the discomfort was so strong that I didn't wait for the alcohol to calm me down. Nothing in straight society had prepared me for that place—and this was on a Wednesday night, no less.

Recently, I saw that readjustment process still at work at the Eagle. As two un-leather clad young men walked by, I heard one ask the other, "This doesn't make you uncomfortable, does it? It used to for me, but I got used to it."

Now, if these "tourists" were truly uncomfortable, they would have gone elsewhere—there is no shortage of gay bars in Atlanta. They are at the Eagle, I would argue, because they instinctively know they need to learn something here. Like how to tolerate other people's sexuality, even if it makes you uncomfortable.

In my mind, learning that lesson is what being gay is *all* about. Until we learn it ourselves, we shouldn't be surprised that society doesn't want to lean it about us. And thanks to people like Jaye Evans, who had the courage to build such "disreputable establishments," we have places where we can learn those lessons. Without them, how less diverse, and how much more diminished, might we be?

## FIRST PERSON

cumulative AIDS cases has reached 5,735 (including 1,434 new cases reported in 1991). Cumulative Atlanta cases number 4,278 (1,092 of which were reported in 1991).

These are some of the statistics about AIDS. So what does that mean to you? Maybe you're not infected. You may not know anyone who is infected — or, if they're infected you don't know it. But if you don't know someone with HIV disease now — you soon will. AIDS will, in one form or another, touch all of us.

While we're waiting on a cure we must ask ourselves—again—what we can each do in the fight against AIDS. First, we can arm ourselves with the facts of how HIV is transmitted and how it is not. We can share our knowledge with others, and correct people when they're afraid of eating in a certain restaurant because the waiter is "well, you know." We can tell them that unless they have sex or shoot drugs with him, they will not contract the virus.

CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN

We can tell others that they won't contract HIV from a swimming pool, a water fountain, a telephone, a toilet, eating utensils, or from hugging a person with the virus. We can tell others that HIV is not spread by mosquitoes, sneezing, tears or sweat; that the AIDS virus is actually an extremely fragile virus outside the body, and that unless blood, semen or vaginal fluids of an infected person are mixed with any of those body fluids of another person, the virus will not spread.

We can also share the load by offering a helping hand. Through AID Atlanta, volunteers can help in many ways. You can help people get to medical appointments, run errands, do the laundry, mow the lawn. You can listen and care. You can volunteer with Project Open Hand and help cook or deliver meals to people with HIV. Often these volunteers are the only other person the client may come into contact with that day.

You can give money. Give to and go see Heartstrings in June, walk in From All Walks of Life this September, go see the NAMES Project Memorial Quilt in town this June. In fact, a merger has been formed to unite Heart Strings (Act I) and the AIDS Memorial Quilt (Act II) to produce "An Event in Three Acts" — an effort to raise \$5,000,000 to raise AIDS awareness and to expand volunteer participation throughout the country. Act III is YOU. You can make a difference. We can all make a difference.

For more information about volunteering with AID Atlanta call Sheila Best at 872-0600. To volunteer with Project Open Hand call Ralph McKay at 525-4620.

Sincerely,  
Ann Byrne, LMSW  
Case Manager, AID Atlanta

### To the Editor:

I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy reading your newspaper on a more frequent basis. Can it be true? Atlanta will support a publication that devotes most of its pages to ideas?

Enclosed is a cartoon I drew after watching a local television program. Any resemblance to any person living or brain-dead is, of course, purely coincidental.

Sincerely,  
Paul Bradley

### To the Editor:

It is not often that I find myself writing a letter to congratulate someone on a job well done. Good job on your new design and weekly format!

Whenever possible I turn to the advertisers in your paper to find services and businesses. I feel that it's important to spend my money with people who are interested and concerned with my particular needs. It's also very gratifying to find that these advertisers are helpful, competent and reasonably priced.

Of even more importance to me on a personal level is that when I do business with gay or gay friendly people, it enlarges my sense of community, and makes Atlanta seem a little friendlier. Thanks for being here.

Sincerely,  
Steve Worthington

God told me to hate you!!



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## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Since the onset of the AIDS epidemic, the number of AIDS cases has continued to skyrocket. People of all ages and races, and of both sexes are being impacted by HIV disease.

In the last two years, the number of AIDS cases has more than doubled. While women represented one per cent of AIDS cases in the early 1980s, they now represent 10% of total reported cases.

The number of teenagers with AIDS is almost twice what it was two years ago. It is interesting to note that since approximately 25% of people with AIDS are in the 20-29 year age range, and given the average ten year incubation period, many of these people were probably infected as teenagers.

Cumulative cases of pediatric AIDS (children less than 13 years old) have reached approximately 3,500. It is estimated that 20,000 children are currently infected with HIV.

In Georgia alone, the total number of

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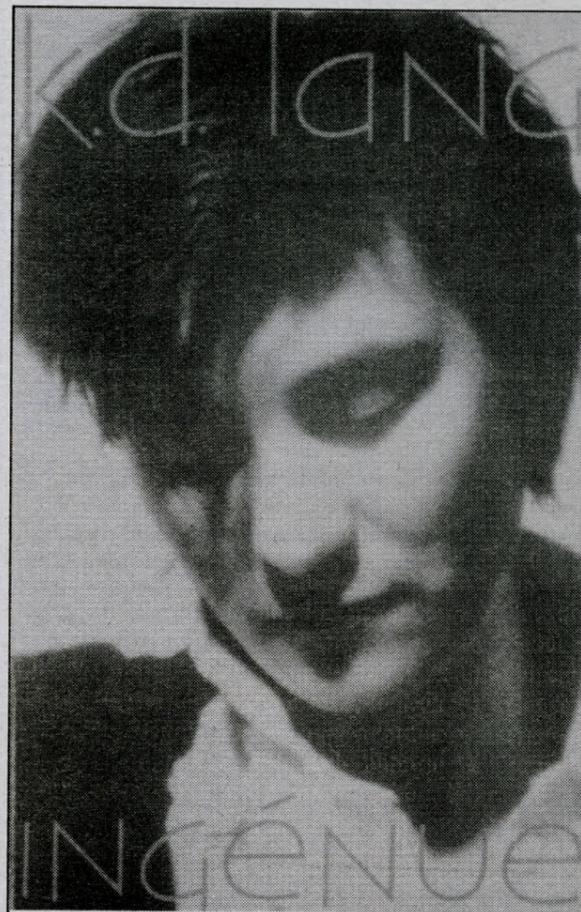
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Arlene Ganem, Financial Planner  
Shea Embry, Real Estate  
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Pat Hall, Tax Attorney

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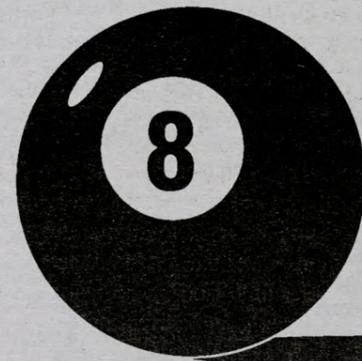


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# OUT & ABOUT

## OUTWRITE '92

GAY / LESBIAN  
LITERATURE

As a virgin to the yearly OutWrite gay and lesbian writers' conference, held this year for the first time on the East Coast, I didn't know what to expect when I entered the Boston Park Plaza Hotel on March 20. Of course, I knew there would be three days in which a bunch of famous lesbian and gay writers on a bunch of panels would say a bunch of things. But I wasn't sure I would really get what I came for — the inspiration to write.

The conference certainly presented matter for inspiration, starting with a rousing opening speech by Southern writer Dorothy Allison, author of "Bastard Out of Carolina," along with an intellectually challenging talk by poet and editor Mariana Romo-Carmona, an immigrant from Chile. And there was emotion at conference end on Sunday when another very prominent Southern writer, Allan Gurganus ("The Last Living Confederate Widow"), preached on the "serene emotion" of rage, and black gay writer Melvin Dixon made a particularly poignant speech on closure.

Not surprisingly at a gay conference, panel topics ranged from the politically correct ("Where Does Gay Writing Fit Into the Debate on Multi-Culturalism?") to the controversial ("Effacing the Boy," referred to as "the NAMBLA panel" by most conference goers). With over 60 panels for 1500 participants, choosing which one to attend was a serious matter — should I go for a particular panelist, a particularly interesting topic, or a combination of both that resulted in something that just couldn't be missed?

In the just-couldn't-be-missed category was my first choice:



"Gay Male Porn: Why Isn't It Hot Anymore?" Then on to the "Wacky World of Lesbian and Gay Cartoonists" moderated by the biting brilliant Jennifer Camper (who is now featured in this paper), and featuring dyke icon Alison Bechdel, Howard Cruse, and Eric Omer of "The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Greene" fame. Definitely fun too was the panel on the emerging gay and lesbian 'zine scene, "Zine Cuisine." A dizzying combination of both brilliance and blatant self-promotion, "Zine Cuisine" introduced me to such shining stars as Hedda Lettuce of Dragnet — "the feminist militant drag queen comic book with a mission." The accent was on the visual again with "Representations of Black Lesbians and Gays" which featured two stunning new videos by Thomas Harris and Cheryl Dunne, artists to watch for who work in the tradition pioneered by Isaac Julien ("Young Soul Rebels") and Michelle Parkerson ("Gotta Make This Journey").

No conference would be complete without controversy, and the Joseph Beam Award, the weekend's biggest controversy, was the topic of a special caucus on Saturday. Sponsored by Outlook magazine (which with Boston's Gay Community News hosted the conference) and Boston's Alyson Publications, the award was named in the honor of the late Joseph Beam, editor of the ground-breaking anthology of writings by black gay men, "In The Life." The award quickly came under attack, however, when the nominations were announced and no black lesbian or gay writer was nominated for the award. A group of black writers, including Essex Hemphill, Barbara Smith, Assoto Saint and others organized a protest which included Beam's mother's withdrawal of permission to use his name with the award. "She believes, as do many of us, that an award in Joseph Beam's name should at least represent the black-identified politics, concerns and issues he stood for," the group wrote in a letter. The letter, signed by over 200 gay and lesbian African-Americans, was circulated prior to the conference. The Saturday evening caucus avoided verbally stoning publisher Sasha Alyson and Outlook publisher Jeffrey Escofier, and turned instead to creating a black lesbian and gay sponsored award that would honor both Beam and lesbian poet Pat Parker. (For more info on the award, write Gallens Press, Box 4026, 524 W. 23rd St., NY, NY 10011).

At the close of the conference on Sunday, still reeling from Melvin Dixon's powerful address in which he talked about his lover's death from AIDS and his own struggle with the disease, I

returned to the reason I came to OutWrite — for inspiration. It dawned on me that I had received that inspiration early on, during Dorothy Allison's keynote address. Allison talked about the need to do more than just survive. We can just survive, she said, writing queer Harlequin romances, where everyone finds their perfect match and lives happily ever after. But to do more, one must tell harder truths, "the mean stories," and she promised, if you show me yours, I'll show you mine.

Watch out Dorothy, because one day, I will.

CRAIG SEYMOUR

Picture: Allan Gurganus. Dorothy Allison. Photos by Jim Marks.

## BREAKING THE CODE

T H E A T R E

Onstage Atlanta presents on April 3 "Breaking the Code," a play by Hugh Whitmore based on the biography "Alan Turing, The Enigma" by Andrew Hodges. Turing was a prominent participant in world history whose contributions go largely unrecognized because he was gay. The play focuses on the dilemmas faced by the intellectual, and sometimes naïve, Turing living in a world that respected his genius and denied his sexuality. Director Marc Gowan says, "it's a very, very important story. He stood up against the powers and the 'norm.' He stood up and fought back."

Turing was a brilliant British scientist and mathematician. He was appointed to the Order of the British Empire for his leadership in breaking the Nazi's Enigma code, though his work was classified a military secret and remained a mystery for years after his death. Turing was also an early innovator in computation machines and was instrumental in the development of modern computers.

"Breaking the Code" opens with the incident that exposes Turing's homosexuality to the law. He reports to the police that his house has been burglarized, and after learning the probable identity of the burglar from a current lover, Turing passes on the information to the police. When pressured, Turing admits that he received the information from a man with whom he has had an affair. Asked the nature of the affair, Turing volunteers information which he naïvely expects will be used to find the burglar — and is promptly arrested. In 1952, he was convicted of "Gross Indecency" and sentenced to probation, which included treatment with female hormones, an experimental procedure expected to cure his homosexuality.

Having spent most of his life resenting the pretense of heterosexuality, Turing may have initially been relieved to finally be open about his sexuality. But he expected a more rational response from the authorities than he received. The experimental hormone treatments caused impotence and enlargement of his breasts, which he was assured would be temporary. Though Turing had many powerful friends who sympathized with him after the trial, none came forward to defend him.

Two years after his trial, he apparently committed suicide by eating an apple dipped in cyanide. His death was never thoroughly investigated, and his mother believed Turing's death to be an accident.

Gowan respects the fact that the script "doesn't answer all the questions. It gives the audience something to chew on." Whitmore's script presents a man who has been made to feel abnormal because of his extreme intelligence as well as his sexual orientation. And neither his intelligence nor the respect of some of his country's most powerful individuals could save him from a murderously homophobic government.

DEBBIE FRAKER

Picture: Thom Gillott as Alan Turing.

B O O K R E V I E W

## INVISIBLE LIVES

Few books in recent memory have rattled the consciousness of Black America as has the novel "Invisible Life" by Atlanta resident Lynn Harris. The novel is a bold attempt to shed light on a reality that is perhaps even more misunderstood than homosexuality in the African-American community. "Invisible Life" is the first novel to be written and published by a Black man about the lives of bisexual Black men. Bisexuality has never been openly discussed in the black lesbian and gay community until this book.

"Invisible Life" is the story of Raymond Tyler, Jr., a New York attorney, who discovers that he is bisexual and is forced to come to terms with himself. The book spans seven years of the character's life, from his senior year in college, where his first sexual contact with another man occurs, to his twenty-eighth birthday where he continues to struggle with society's phobias about homosexuality.

Ironically, this is also the first writing project for the Arkansas native. When asked why he chose this subject for a first novel, Harris replied "...I wrote the novel to rid myself of some personal demons and to (also) bring awareness of the AIDS crisis to the African-American community." I was shocked when I learned that Black women were among the fastest growing population of AIDS victims. While Magic Johnson's recent announcement has brought a much needed focus to the African-American community, I wonder what the response will be when a prominent African-American woman becomes infected with the virus.

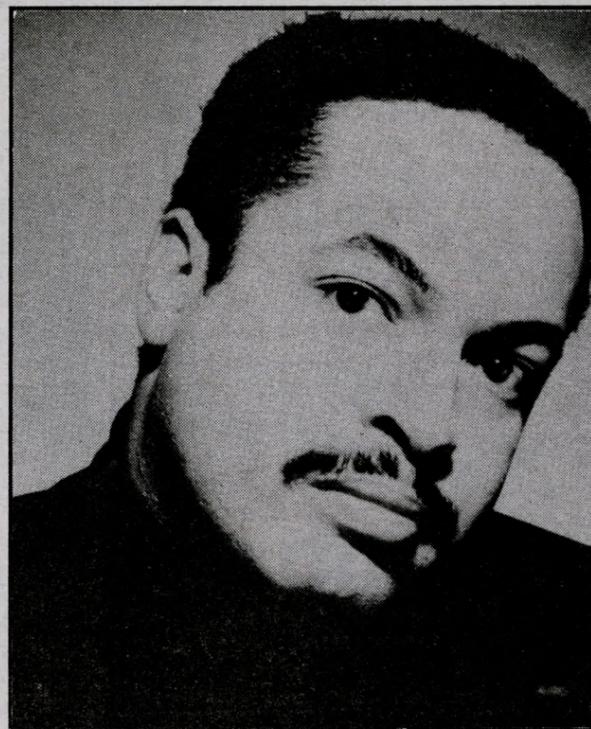
As Mr. Harris points out, Black women are the fastest growing HIV positive group in this country, but not all of them are prostitutes or sleeping with IV drug users — many are acquiring the virus from bisexual partners. Black women, he feels, for too long have ignored or have been misinformed about their chances of contracting HIV.

The book, by virtue of its subject matter, would naturally appeal to a gay audience, "... (but I also wanted) to reach an audience that would never read "Brother to Brother" or "Vanishing Room" or "In the Life," said Harris. "Many Black men are forced to live bisexual lives to appear normal... I hope that hopelessly heterosexual men (and women) will learn something."

Black Americans, regardless of sexual nature, have been given a rare opportunity with this book to broaden their understanding of lifestyles like or unlike their own. Mr. Harris has stimulated a dialogue within the African-American community desperately needed for so long about the complicated issues of sexuality.

PATRICK BELL

*Invisible Lives is available at Oxford Bookstore, The Shrine of the Black Madonna Bookstore and Third World Bookstore. To order by mail send a check payable to Consortium Press for \$15.95 to: 1447 Peachtree St., Suite 1011, Atlanta GA 30309 or call 1-800-523-4520.*





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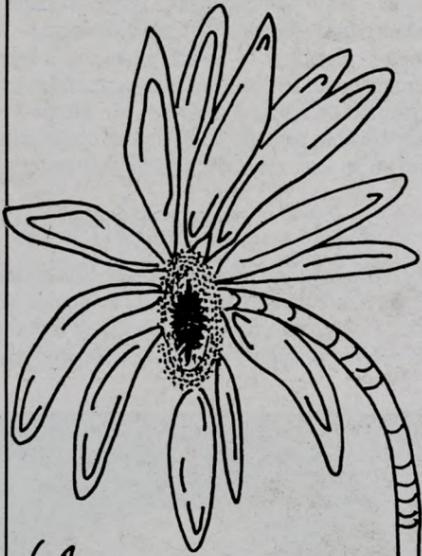
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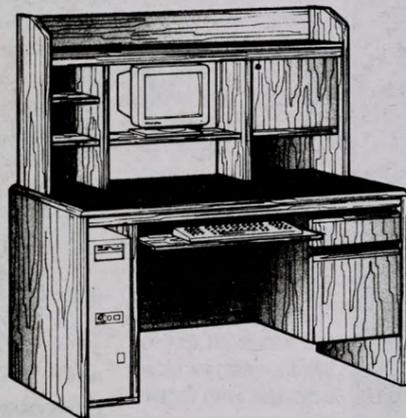
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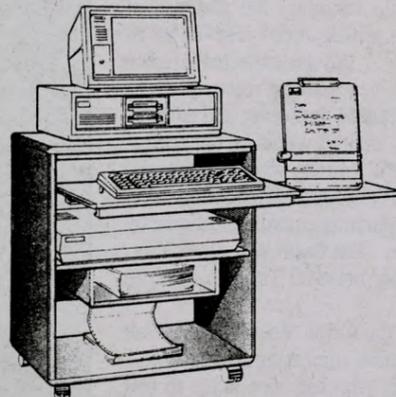
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by  
HUGH WHITEMORE

directed by  
MARC GOWAN

Alan Turing: He broke the Nazi "ENIGMA" code. He developed the concepts for modern computers. He won the "Order of the British Empire." He was arrested and tried for homosexuality.

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OUT & ABOUT 15

C A L E N D A R

2 THURSDAY

**BWMT MIXER.** Atlanta's Black and White Men Together seek new members in possibly one of the hottest social events of the season. BWMT is a fraternity of black and white men working in pride and unity against racism and homophobia. Call 892-BWMT for details on the mixer.

**ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.** ASO Resident Conductor George Hansen leads the Orchestra and pianists Katia and Marielle Labeque in Martinu's Concerto for Two Pianos. Also featured is Dzubay's "Awakening," Haydn's Symphony No. 104 and Richard Strauss' "Till Eulenspiegels' Merry Pranks." Tonight, Friday and Saturday. Symphony Hall. 8 pm. 892-2414.

**WOMAN CONTROLLED CONCEPTION.** Simple, safe and accessible ways for lesbians and single women to choose parenting are discussed and facilitated by Judy Siff, director of donor insemination at the Feminist Women's Health Center. Charis Books & More. 7:30 pm. 524-0304.

Gallery at the Hurt Building. Through May 8. 577-1988.

**BREAKING THE CODE.** Onstage Atlanta presents Hugh Whitmore's play about the life of Alan Turing, the English mathematician who invented the modern computer, broke the Nazi "Enigma" code during WWII, was decorated by Churchill and broken by societal prejudice and homophobia. Opens tonight and runs through April 25. Thurs.-Sat. 8 pm, Sun. matinees on April 5 & 12 at 2:30 pm. 420 Courtland St. 897-1802.

questions, naked limbs — what is art and when is it obscene? A 1916 case of obscenity is dramatized for public consumption. Discussion afterwards. Presented by the Emory University School of Law. Free. 7 pm. Emory School of Law Building, Tuttle Courtroom. 525-6840 for more info.

**THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS.** Alliance Children's Theater presents an all new adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's immortal tale. \$5 Also Apr 18. 892-2414.

**QUARTERLY AIDS HEALING SERVICE.** Sponsored by the Diocesan Task Force on AIDS and Integrity/Atlanta. An opportunity for renewal and refreshment geared toward the needs of those affected by the AIDS epidemic. All Saint's Church. 3 pm. 634 W. Peachtree St. 231-3540.

**MENDING HEARTS.** The award-winning documentary tracing the lives of four Atlantans living with AIDS. Channel 30 at 10 pm, Channel 8 at 11 pm. Also Channel 30 on April 10 at 1 pm.

6 MONDAY

**OUT IN ATLANTA.** Lesbian and gay TV! News, interviews, history, what's happening and more. Channel 12-People TV. 10:30 pm. Fulton County only. Also runs on Wednesday at 3:30 pm in Dekalb County.

7 TUESDAY

**POLAND'S MAGNIFICENT MAZOWSE.** Poland's national dance company comes to town for one performance only. 100 singers, dancers, and orchestral musicians clad in more than 1,000 authentic costumes perform in a breathtaking theatrical experience. Fox Theatre. 8 pm.



8 WEDNESDAY

**GHOSTS.** Through May 24. Directed by Chris Coleman, Henrik Ibsen's intense domestic drama about unburying the ghosts of the past opens at the Alliance. 892-2414 for tickets.

Pictured:  
Below left: Tipton Bishop from "Mending Hearts"  
Upper left: The Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus will perform in two concerts on April 4.  
Above: Mavourenn Dwyer as Mrs. Alving in "Ghosts" at the Alliance

3 FRIDAY

**DENNIS CARLYLE DARLING: THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS.** A photographic exhibition from the artist whose *Terra Incognita* will be available this spring. Nazis, motorcycle gangs, Elvis impersonators and twins abound at ArtSpace Contemporary Fine Art

4 SATURDAY

**ATLANTA FEMINIST WOMEN'S CHORUS IN CONCERT.** April 4. 7 & 9 pm. Southside High School. 801 Glenwood Ave. Tickets available at Atlantis Connection, Charis Books, Gallus and The Boy Next Door.

**TRANSLATED INSIGHT: AN ISSUE OF CENSORSHIP.** Dirty

5 SUNDAY

**MARCH FOR CHOICE ON WASHINGTON.** April 5. The pending Pennsylvania decision in the Supreme Court threatens the right to an abortion. This pro-choice march is organized by the National Organization for Women. Marchers are urged to wear white. Assemble at 10 am at the Ellipse. (202) 331-0066 for more info.

O N G O I N G A N D U P C O M I N G

**TRAPS.** Thru April 5. A play by award-winning playwright Caryl Churchill about the things we get stuck in: relationships, careers, causes, families and negativity. Actor's Express. 221-0125.

**FAITH HEALER.** Through April 5. Theatre Gael presents Brian Friel's story of three likeable misfits who travel Ireland, Scotland and Wales dispensing "faith cures." 8 pm, Thursday thru Saturday and Sunday at 5 pm. 14th St. Playhouse. 873-1099.

**THE HUMAN FIGURE: FORM, PATTERN AND SHAPE.** Exhibit runs through April 7. New works by Cecile Broz and John Marino. ALIYA Gallery. 1402 N. Highland Ave. 892-2835.

**STARLITE WALTZ.** Southern Fried Productions presents the story of two women who come to terms with life, love and men in a roadside motel. Hmmm. Through April 11, Friday - Sunday. Mercer Fine Arts Building. 378-8646.

**OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD.** Through April 12, Thursday thru Sunday. Set in 1788, a motley band of pickpockets and whores, officers and thieves team up to produce the first play on the Australian continent. Horizon Theatre. 584-7450.

**RUMORS.** Through April 18, Thursday thru Sundays. The Atlanta premiere of Neil Simon's latest farce. Neighborhood Playhouse. 373-5311.

**NAKED DESIRES.** Through April 18. Arts Exchange resident artist Martha Ferrer's oil paintings of haunting images of nude women suggest the desperate ordeals of women attempting to conform to unrealistic social desires. 750 Kalb St. 624-4211.

**WIGWOOD.** April 12. A festival of peace, love and wigs to benefit ACT UP Atlanta. Weekends. 688 Spring St. 3 pm-mid. \$5.

**GULF COAST WOMEN'S FESTIVAL.** April 15-19. Near Biloxi, MS. Not the same site as

last year. Call (601) 896-3196 for all info.

**LES MISERABLES.** May 13 - 17. The triumphant return of the award-winning musical. Fox Theatre. 249-6400.

**THE LISBON TRAVIATA.** April 16 - May 10. SAME presents Terrence McNally's off-Broadway hit comedy which centers around two men who adore opera, and listen to the voice of Maria Calls as the background for their lives and relationships with two men who do not share their passion. 14th St. Playhouse. 881-0817 for info and reservations.

**DIXIE INVITATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT.** April 16-19. Last year 460 bowlers participated in this 3-day tournament now in its 12th year. Bowlers from four countries will compete for over \$30,000 in prize money. Fairlanes Chamblee and Express Lanes will host the competition. 875-6572 for more info.

**THE PEACH.** April 17-19. A national gay and lesbian tennis tournament hosted by Atlanta Women's Social Tennis and Atlanta Team Tennis Association. Held at Ga. Tech and all proceeds benefit Project Open Hand 766-5824.

**CAROLE AND BREN.** May 1. Chimes and cello, singing bowls and singing voices. Tix available at Charis Books and Phoenix & Dragon. 1st E Con. 8pm

**HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FUND DINNER.** May 16. The 5th annual dinner expects over 1,000 attendees. \$100 of the \$150 tickets goes directly to HRCF to further the lesbian and gay agenda on a national level. For tickets call (404) 662-4280 or write HRCF, PO Box 8594, Atlanta, 30306.

**HOLLYWOOD HOTS '92.** June 6. 7-11 pm. Last year Hollywood Hots raised over \$14,000 for local AIDS organizations. This year's event hopes to raise \$25,000. Morningside Chase Apartments. For more info call 875-3592.



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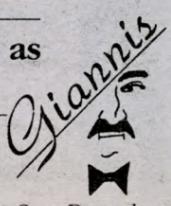
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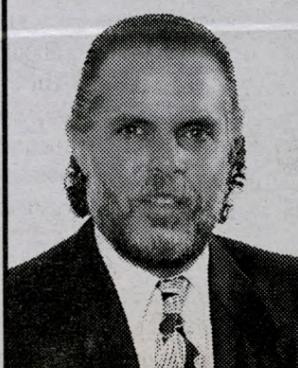
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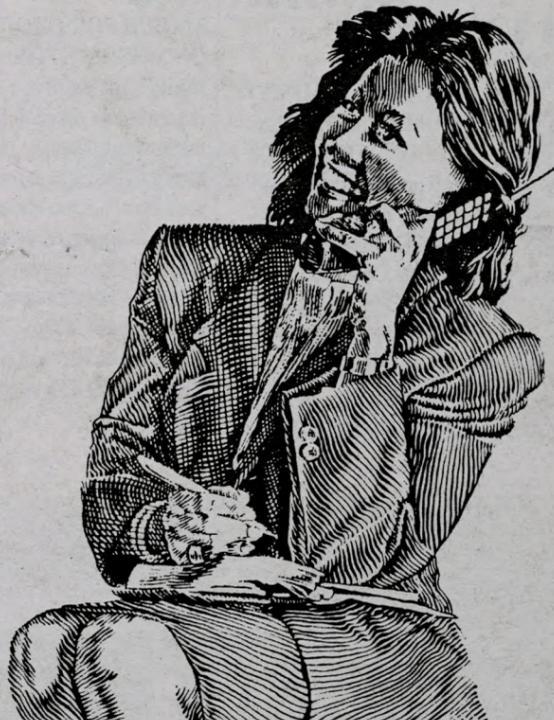
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## L I T E R A T U R E

## LESBIAN WRITERS

Atlanta is a city of intense creative activity—particularly in gay and lesbian communities. A number of lesbian writers live here, or have recently moved from here. Some have published with nationally known mainstream publishing houses, while others make their work known primarily by public readings or have self-published.

The following short interviews are with just seven of probably hundreds of Atlanta lesbian authors. All the writers included here have some things in common—they all feel that being lesbian gives them a special perspective and is integral to their writing. The other thing they have in common is that they write and intend to go on writing. For these women as with most writers, writing is communication, validation of experience, creation; it is a chance to define one's own life. It can be an addiction or an affliction; a discipline and a solace. Here's what they have to say.

**SANDY BAYER** is currently working on the third in her series of thrillers with psychic Stephanie Nolan as the main character. "The Crystal Curtain" introduced Stephanie and her lover, pitting them against a vengeful killer whom Stephanie helped put behind bars. The second in the series, "The Crystal Cage," continues with the women's relationship. The third, tentatively entitled "The Crystal Coffin," will be the last. All are published by Alyson Press.

"I'm exclusively a novelist," says Sandy. "When I'm writing a novel, I have time to develop characters and plot."

What inspired her to write "The Crystal Curtain?"

"St. Augustine, Florida. Ever since I was a kid, St. Augustine has stimulated my imagination. My mother spent her childhood in Florida, and when I was 12 or 14—a really romantic period—we went to Miami and stopped in St. Augustine. I remember the moonlight and palm trees and night air and the sea. When I went back years later, it was a sort of inner voyage, a journey to the past.

Other inspirations have been author Stephen King, John D. MacDonald, and Lawrence Bloch.

"I got a letter from a woman in Tokyo the other day. My book has been distributed in Tokyo, Australia, and London. It's neat to get letters like that."



**BECKY BUTLER** is the author of "Ceremonies of the Heart: celebrating Lesbian Unions" (Seal Press, 1990), a collection of accounts by lesbians of their commitment ceremonies.

The book grew out of Becky's own commitment ceremony and what it meant to her and her

partner, Patty Brawley. "It felt good to see something go from the early stages, from just thinking about it, all the way to hearing stories of women whom it's impacted. I feel grateful for having done the book. Lesbian ceremonies of commitment are very exciting."

At present, Becky is focusing on her counseling career: "I finished my MSW a year ago and have been working as a counselor for troubled adolescents. I'm putting my energies into that work now. But I see myself in the future going back and forth between writing and doing psychotherapy. They have a lot in common actually; they're both about stories."



**KAY LEIGH HAGAN'S** books and workshops on journal-writing as a tool for self-knowledge have become enormously popular in the women's community and with other audiences as well. Kay originally self-published "Intimate Affairs: A Journalkeeping Workbook for Self-Intimacy," in 1990. The book was picked up by Harper, who also published

Kay's second book, "Prayers to the Moon," in 1991.

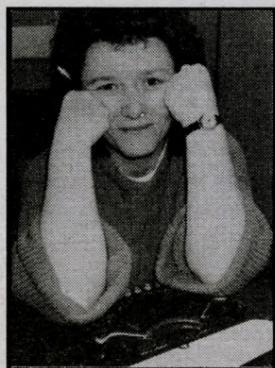
Kay, who now lives in Denver, will have a third book appearing in May entitled "Women's Responses to the Men's Movements: A Feminist Selection." "She had to fight to include the word 'feminist' in the title," says Linda Bryant of Charis Books. "They thought it wouldn't sell." The anthology features an introduction by Gloria Steinem and cartoons by Nicole Hollander, as well as contributions by a range of feminist writers, Bell Hooks, for one. It will also be published by Harper.

**SHIRLENE HOLMES** at 34 has an impressive number of literary achievements. She toured the country with her one-woman show about Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I A Woman?" She has written poetry, plays, and fiction and has performed in her own plays. She is also a professor in the Communications Department at Georgia State University.

"I write about the Black experience, and about women's experience." Her newest play is "Silences," about the effects of incest. Another play, produced in Atlanta last year, is "Current Events," a portrait gallery of contemporary African-American women in which Shirlene played all the roles. "No Detours Ahead" tells the story of singer Billie Holliday. And "A Lady and a Woman," to be produced by OutProud Theatre this summer, concerns a love relationship between a Black woman and a white woman.

"I've always lived with women. Long before I was out as a lesbian, I was concerned with women's lives. I'm interested in how women are perceived and about how they use language.

"Women are central in my life. Part of living as I do (as a lesbian) allows me to celebrate women and women's lives."



**PAM PARKER**, resident playwright at Neighborhood Playhouse in Decatur, has written six or seven one-act plays and three full-length ones. Her new play "Special Pals" opens on May 20 at Mercer University, produced by Southern Fried Productions, the group that put on her play "Second Samuel" at Mercer last fall.

"I was working in theatres: the Academy, Seven Stages, and I saw a lot of plays. I said, I can write plays as good as these!

"As a woman, I feel I can see emotions clearly. I go for emotional things. There's an underlying message. I'm not political on purpose, but I like to make people feel things. I don't write gay or straight stuff, but I write from my point of view. For example, "Kissing Frogs" (her third full-length play) is a heterosexual story, but the characters aren't stereotypes.

"I'm working on a play now that has a touch of reincarnation and touch of lesbianism."

Pam is also writing, with Linda Morgan, a musical

based on Eudora Welty's short story "Why I Live At The P.O." It will open in September at Mercer University and will be produced by Southern Fried Productions.

**REBECCA RANSON** is perhaps best known as the director of SAME (Southeastern Arts, Media and Education Project), an umbrella arts organization for the gay and lesbian community that has been her major focus for many years. She is a prolific playwright, as well as a writer in other genres.

Plays Rebecca has written include "The Incarceration of Annie," "Desperados," "Warren," "Blood on Blood," and "Secrets." All have been produced in Atlanta.

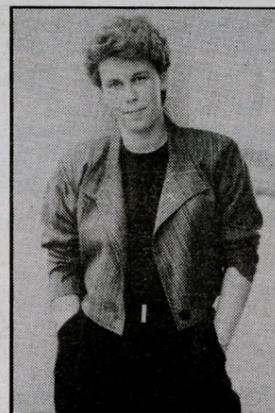
Was SAME's recent multi-media visual and performance project "As I See Myself Changing" inspired by the changes Rebecca herself is going through?

"Absolutely." One of Rebecca's changes is making a renewed commitment to her own writing: "I'm taking a week off to write!" she says in a tone of amazement. She intends to cut back on her work with SAME. "My plans with SAME include doing two shows a year now instead of three."

She has begun a new play based on her father's family in North Carolina. "It's about when people are 30, they tell one version of a story, and when they're 70, the story becomes distorted. It's about myth and aging."

She also intends to finish another project: "Years ago I started a book of interviews with people with AIDS. I never finished the book. I interviewed men who were dying, and I want to keep my promise to them to get their words out.

"I started a novel at the writers' colony last summer. I've always thought writers begin to come into their own in their 40s and 50s. The important things will come."

**AMANDA KYLE WILLIAMS**

has published her third book about espionage agent Madison McGuire, "A Singular Spy." Like Sandy Bayer, Amanda was first impelled to write because the books she wanted to read did not exist. "I was reading tons of spy novels, and there weren't very many by women, and none by lesbians." So she wrote the first espionage thriller featuring a lesbian hero.

Madison McGuire is a sort of lesbian Spy-That-Keeps-Trying-To-Come-In-From-The-Cold: beautiful, intelligent, sophisticated, cool-headed, and occasionally riddled with doubts about the moral ambiguities of her calling. The main quality that differs her from male secret agents is her more-or-less monogamous relationship with the tender-hearted Terry, who waits patiently for Maddie to return from London or the Middle East, hopefully in one piece.

Naiad Press published "Club Twelve" and its sequel, "The Providence File." Now Amanda is working on a fourth novel in the Madison McGuire series, to be titled "The Spy in Question."

She describes her books as honest entertainment: "They aren't books you read to have your consciousness raised; they're fast-paced, action-oriented. But they're fun little books, and I'm proud of them."

Amanda is aware of having broken ground in broaching the male-dominated world of spy fiction. "I've been very aware of being female and a lesbian because I'm the first one to write in the genre. I hope, being a woman, that I can bring a more humanistic touch."

"The Providence File," Amanda's second novel, has been nominated for a Lambda Literary Award in the lesbian mystery category.

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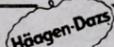
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The center of the recording industry universe was here on Peachtree Street at the Fox Theatre recently, as the first Coca-Cola Atlanta Music Awards were presented to a wide range of artists who live and/or work in the Atlanta area. Unfortunately, the most successful acts to hit the big time were missing: Elton John, who is finding his soul and coming out of his shell, shall we say, chose not to attend, as well as the Grammy-laden R.E.M., the Black Crowes, and the annoyingly over-exposed Amy Grant. The very absent R.E.M. won four of the five categories in which they were nominated, including act of the year, rock single, and rock video (both for "Losing My Religion").

Personal highlight for me was the rap artist of the year award to Kilo, a twenty-year-old man on the verge of going to the top of the national charts. He discussed his music, which he describes as very positive. One female reporter asked about his name. Was that positive for young people? He answered, "If you listen to my music, you will see that Kilo is positive. My name comes from the fact that the highest form of rap is 'dope' and kilo is the highest form of dope, so kilo is the highest form of rap."

"What about 'Kilo's Dingaling?'" I asked, referring to a song from his latest release. "I say dingaling. Most rappers wouldn't say that. I try never to cross the line. My music is rough but I try to stay in my boundaries. Most parents would rather have their kids listen to Kilo than somebody else."

If there had been an award for "Cutest Act" it would have gone to TLC, a trio of two singers and one rapper who are not only into selling cd's and tapes but sending a strong message of safe sex. Even their exaggerated street costumes of baggy trousers, t-shirts, suspenders, and larger than life hats, all in neon colors, are accessorized by condoms in every quantity and size. The rapper of the trio even takes her nickname, Left-Eye, from the fact that her eye glasses have a condom in place of the left lens. The group of twenty-year-olds took home the award for best local rhythm and blues act.

The trio got together at auditions here in Atlanta, and they are produced by the Atlanta team of L.A. and BabyFace. Their current video is a party on film called "Ain't too Proud to Beg." I predict many more awards to come for Chilli, T-

## AFTER HOURS

DANNY ROBLE



Boz and Left-Eye.

Other awards of note went to Indigo Girls for folk/acoustic artist, Drivin' and Cryin' for rock band, and Anne Richmond Boston for local vocalist.

The Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus presents "Gala IV" on Saturday, April 4, at the June Cofer Auditorium of the Southside High School at 801 Glenwood Avenue. The chorus is celebrating ten years of singing together as one of the largest feminist focused choral groups in the country. More than entertaining, the AFWC provides a cultural focus for the community, never failing to inspire and empower their audience.

The program will feature a wide range of musical styles, from classical to pop with a dash of feminism added for good measure. Selections include a Shubert solo, a song adapted from a poem by Holocaust survivor Pavel Friedman entitled, "The Butterfly," the dreamlike "When You Wish Upon a Star," "Perfect Night" by Holly Near, and the moving "Hold On" which has been adapted from "The Harvey Milk Show" by Dan Pruitt and Patrick Hutchinson.

Tickets for the concert are only \$8.00 in advance and \$10.00 at the door. They are available from Chris Books, Atlantis Connection, The Gallus, and The Boy Next Door. There will be two shows, one at 7:00 pm, the next at 9:00 pm.

And be sure not to miss "Mending Hearts" on Sunday, April 5 on local PBS stations. Hearts is the true story of four Atlantans living with AIDS. The four, from diverse backgrounds, were filmed over a two-year time period. Christopher Reeve narrates this 60-minute documentary which has won numerous awards. Atlanta photographer Scott Auerbach is producer/editor of Hearts and has spent the last three or four years working on and promoting this stunning tribute to people living with AIDS. Catch it on Channel 30 at 10 pm or Channel 8 at 11 pm on April 5. It will air once more, on Friday, April 10 at 1 pm on Channel 30.

For anyone even remotely familiar with Atlanta's entertainment scene during the past several years, the news of the apparent suicide of former Atlanta resident Vickie Lawrence comes as a painful blow. She had worked at the Copa in Key West, Florida for the past five years, keeping a rather low profile. The saddest part is that Vickie spoke frankly about her plans to end her life to several people but they did not take her seriously. After all, haven't we always heard that those who talk about suicide don't do it while those who do it don't talk about it?

Vickie was one of the most beautiful people to ever entertain an Atlanta audience. Her zenith came when she was crowned Miss Florida, but had she chosen to, she would have been a magnificent Miss Continental. Let us hope that Vickie has found the peace which eluded her.

Pictured: Danny Roble with Kilo

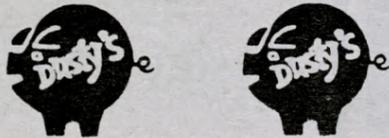
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**P**roof Positive: The world appears to be getting closer and closer to having its first openly queer Republican member of the Congress of the U.S. The Wisconsin Light has awarded its 1991 "Backbone Award" to Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-WI and *not* a sponsor of the federal lesbian/gay rights bill) for refusing to acknowledge that he's a homo. Gunderson was outed once before, last July when activist and outter Michael Petrellis threw a glass of Coke in his face in an Alexandria (VA) gay bar. Gunderson later told Wisconsin newspapers that he could not say whether he is gay or not, "because I can't prove it to you." Seems to Dish that what Gunderson will have trouble proving is that he's *not* gay.

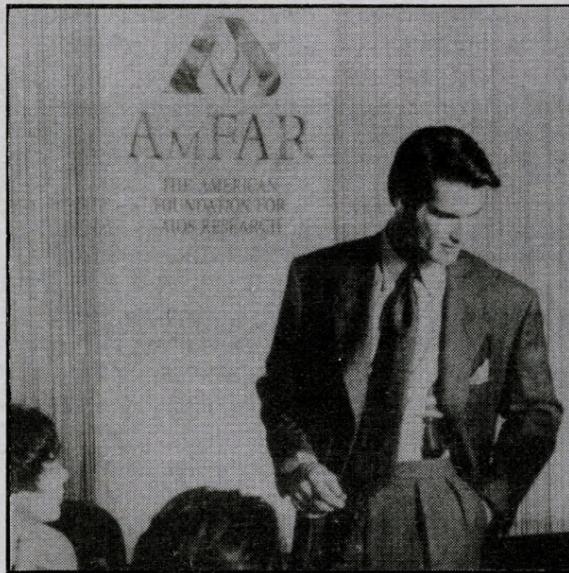
**Subliminal Messages:** It had to happen sooner or later, but we honestly thought that pressure for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco to do away with its "Old Joe" cartoon character would come from a different direction. Seems the surgeon general and the AMA want Joe sent off to camel heaven because he encourages kids to smoke. Makes sense, but we've been waiting for the religious right to bring to everyone's attention that Joe's snout and jaw are ringers for certain parts of the (male) anatomy. Hadn't noticed? Take a look next time you pass one of the billboards.

**Not So Subliminal Messages:** "Cheap & Easy" claims the headline—flanked by line drawings of a curvaceous woman in a leopard skin bathing suit and high heels. An ad for the newest hetero 900 line? A promo for one of those naughty negligee places? Guess again, boys and girls. It's a solicitation for subscriptions to Creative Loafing. And the gang over there on Willoughby Way must be might proud of it, because it's smack in the middle of the contents page, not buried back in the classifieds!

**Better Blatant Than Latent:** Twice a year the folks at the New York Times put together magazine advertising supplements (one for women, one for men) to herald the arrival of the season's latest fashions. The layouts are, of course, colorful. The models fetching, and the fashions expensive—well, at least not cheap. Advertisers include names like Givenchy, Bally, Boss and Alan Flusser. Usually the ads are even slicker and

# Dish

THERE'S A FINE LINE BETWEEN TELLING THE TRUTH AND TALKING TRASH



sexier than the editorial content. Not so with Flusser's ad this year—a simple black & white image of four men and a woman holding a meeting in front of a banner that says "AmFAR, The American Foundation for AIDS Research." The headline on the ad reads "Who says America has lost its way?" Dish will probably never buy an \$800 suit, but if we do you can bet it will be a Flusser.

**To Boldly Go?** A recent episode of "Star Trek: The Next Generation" featured a gender neutral society that didn't allow its citizens to exhibit any tendencies toward gender. Seems they used to be that way, but "evolved into a higher form," and

now they try to cure anyone who thinks they're female attracted to male or male attracted to female. Sorrell, who fell in love with the Enterprise's Commander Riker, delivered a stirring speech about being "normal," "born this way," and "not sick." Sound familiar? Dish gives two and a half quasars to this episode, reserving a full round of applause because the whole episode was done in an *entirely* heterosexual context. The gender-neutral folks ended up the bad guys, by altering the First Officer's squeeze into a "normal" person. Riker didn't even mention how homosexuals were treated "in our own history," a time-honored *Trek* tradition of showing how the human condition has changed through the centuries. We guess that maybe the 24th century hasn't brought as much change in attitudes toward sexuality as we'd hoped.

**Tennis Anyone?** The March issue of *Tennis* magazine contains a good interview with Martina Navratilova. There's much candid talk about women's tennis, Judy Nelson and Martina's (homo)sexuality. It's uncommon for persons in the public eye to be so honest about how they think, feel and operate in the world. Congrats to all. Speaking of honesty, Elton John is now "quite comfortable about being gay" (he used to say that he was bi) according to an article in *Rolling Stone*. We wish we could be as enthusiastic about the March issue of *The Hudspeth Report*. Columnist Jim Huber rants on for some time about the reason why Magic Johnson should not be allowed to play basketball (in the all-star game and the Olympics). Get a grip Huber, and get yourself some education while you're at it.

**A School For Us:** Simon LeVay (who discovered that gay men have smaller hypothalami than do their hetero brothers) has announced that he will soon open the West Hollywood Institute of Gay and Lesbian Education. WHIGLE (which sounds like some sort of helicopter toy to Dish) will offer adult education night classes taught by a faculty of about 40 from LA-area institutions of higher learning. Plans call for the school to eventually become an accredited, degree granting, university. May Dish suggest a name change at that point? How about Homo 2 U? Or La College aux Folles? Or Invert Institute?

April 2–April 8, 1992

The New Moon is on the 3rd, Daylight Savings Time begins on the 5th, so remember to set your clocks ahead one hour and don't feel too bad about losing an hour of sleep. We'll get it back in the fall. If you are going to the April 5th March in Washington, take your raincoat and umbrella and keep your feet dry. "Tis the season" for unpredictable weather.

Happy Birthday, **ARIES**, Spring is here at last and you may need to wander the world a little bit, just to ease your restlessness. Also a very good time for love, romance and, perhaps some new clothes. Dear Patient **TAURUS**, did I say "happy birthday" last week? Well, that was a little premature, wasn't it? Please write it off to Mercury retrograde and start making definite plans for celebrating your birthday when it does arrive. **GEMINI**, network, network, network! Renew old acquaintances and contacts, check in with long-distance friends. Someone needs your skills and abilities, but they may not know it yet, so reach out.

Dear **CANCER**, your health may be an issue, if you are not

## STAR SIGNS

taking time to be playful and creative. Do whatever is necessary to have time for fun, creative projects and even a little day dreaming. Where is a **LEO** when you really need one? Why, center stage, of course. If you have been considering a business of your own, this may be a good time to move ahead on your idea. Workaholic **VIRGOs** absolutely must get outside at least 30 minutes every day. You can spare 30 minutes for a walk in the park or sitting time beneath a tree. Your health and sanity depend on it!

**LIBRANS**, you may notice some new and interesting people moving gracefully through your life. If someone is attractive to you, be sure to get their phone number and "do lunch." They

could turn out to be a very important person. **SCORPIO**, if you are feeling boxed in right now, it could be that you have made up your mind too soon about a crucial situation. Take a deep breath and check around for new or uncovered information. **SAGITTARIUS**, you need to get out of the house and have some fun. Also you may enjoy an artistic or creative class that would give you an outlet for your boundless energy.

**CAPRICORN**, if you are feeling confused and out-of-sorts, you may need to sit down and redefine your priorities as clearly as possible. Your interests may have shifted some in the last several months. **AQUARIUS**, if you are having difficulty in a personal relationship, it may be helpful to find someone to mediate the situation. And, you may need someone who can just listen to you. **PISCES**, your 12th house of dreams, visions and the unknown is very active right now, so consider keeping a dream log and pay close attention to your intuition.

MARY BAILEY RULE is a professional astrologer who specializes in personal, relationship and career interpretation. She can be reached at 264-6219.

### Dykes To Watch Out For





hat can we do about the toxic shock of monthly throwaways?

Disconnected from the natural world, patriarchy fears and loathes that which is not immediately controllable, especially if it's connected with Womyn. And according to this ideology, what is more horrifying and "dirty" than menstrual blood?

Of course, menses (mensa, moon, mother, matter, month, me, Medea, Medusa, Maat, Demeter, etc. all derive from the same root) were regarded quite differently during the matriarchies.

Moon blood was considered an agricultural necessity, useful and sacred. These days, though, we furtively absorb it in wood cellulose/polymer/cotton/dioxin-contaminated pads and plugs, and throw it 'away.'

"14.5 billion menstrual products per year" wind up in the waste stream. And Womyn "expend 40 billion dollars (per year) on throw away tampons and pads," according to the Menstrual Health Foundation.

Thank Goddess I came out in 1972, when there was such a great ferment in the "Women's Movement." Menstrual reclamation was quite in vogue. We created menstrual huts, pits, offerings, paintings. We encouraged each other to appreciate the power inherent in the blood.

So, as I've evolved into a more ecoethical life, throwing all this away seemed... shamefully wasteful. But what can I do, straddling the modern world?

Well, for the past year, I've been testing alternative menstrual products. There are two main approaches: cups and pads.

For those who liked diaphragms, how about "The Keeper"? —shaped like a rounded, miniature witch



hat, this latex cone (with a tail, for easier pull-out) holds "one full ounce at a time" — two to four ounces being 'average' flow. Just empty, and reuse.

The Keeper Co., Inc., Box 20023, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45220 provides realistic instructions. And "our registered nurse... will be delighted to answer your questions... all letters confidential, of course."

Rather a pad? How about pads produced by "Lesbians, living on the land"? The Red River pad gals produce a white, 100% cotton flannel "inside a soft cotton knit sleeve and hand-quilted to retain their shape." I wear mine beltless, and have been surprised at how absorbent it is.

It passed the dreaded 'first night' test — no pool of blood in the morning. Order a super for \$4.50 (+ \$2 s&h); smaller sizes a little less. They claim a two year or greater life expectancy. Red River, PO Box 130, Serafina, NM, 87569. (I think 4-5 should suffice to keep you dry; a reasonable investment, compared to the price of throwaways).

Consider too the widening web of The Menstrual Health Foundation. They feature some great publications ("The Ecology of Being Female: Reclaiming Our Menstrual Flow and Wisdom" and "Scarlet Moon: A Journal of the New Feminine").

These folks are into "menstrual lingerie," featuring cotton flannel squares (which you fold); available in festive floral prints, solids, and plaids.

Write for the Menstrual Wealth catalog, PO Box

3248, Santa Rosa, CA, 95402. Their maxi can be had for \$5.95 (+ \$3.50 s&h).

Like the Red River pads, they are durable, more comfortable, and more absorbent than throwaways. Just soak used pads in a covered container, rinse, and hang to dry. I must say, the *best* part is using the rinse water on your plants, especially the potted indoor ones. They absolutely LOVE it! (No, there's no malodorous trace when I finish watering).

And, lest we ethnocentrically think that only USA Womyn have these concerns, you should see a copy of "The Rag: The Official Moonwit Newsletter," from sisters up north. This compendium of announcements, articles, poems, and lore is great. You can subscribe for \$8 a year.

And, you can order their Moonwit Pads. Since they didn't provide samples, I can't comment on the overall quality. But, the New Moon pack (one regular, one Goddess size) is \$8.50 (Canadian), (+ \$3 s&h), and this includes a plastic zip-lock bag for stashing a used pad until you can get home to your soaking jar.

Write to them at Moonwit Alternatives, Saltspring Island, RR #4, Lang's Road, C-21, Ganges, BC, VOS1EO, Canada.

Now, you have *no excuses*, girlfriends. Sure, some might whine, "But I FEEL that I can't wash out a rag!" Honey, Feminism 101 taught us that 'feelings are socially constructed.'

We learned to overcome this culture's claim that Womyn's genitals are dirty — we put our nose and mouth there, now don't we? I assure you, we can overcome that socially-induced aversion to our life's blood, too, and use it as it was meant to be used: as a part of the whole, returned to the natural world of plants, instead of the unnatural world of landfills.

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AIDS HOTLINE FOR WOMEN- 888-9991 - new project of the Feminist Women's Health Ctr. Learn how HIV is transmitted, testing locations, how to clean your "works," how to use condoms, dental dams or anything about HIV and AIDS.

Two weekly HIV support groups based on 12-step (but NOT recovery programs) available at First Metropolitan Community Church, 800 N. Highland Ave., NE, Tues. and Thurs. at 8:00pm.

AID Atlanta: the Southeast's largest non-profit AIDS service agency. Services include education, case management, transportation, housing, buddy program, practical support, homeless services, pediatric services, support groups, AIDS Information Line. Call 872-0600 for more information.

HIV+ Narcotics Anonymous (NA) for African Am. Wed. eve., transportation avail; Family support group for loved ones of HIV+ African Am.; "Latex Lovers" sex-pos. HIV prevention prog. for GBM (need volunteers also); FREE ANONYMOUS HIV TESTS, counselling, referral (minority cultural sensitivity) begins mid Feb. For confidential info call OUTREACH, INC. 346-3922.

AIDS Information Line / GA Toll-Free AIDS Hotline Free, anonymous information and referral services. In Atlanta: 876-9944; Toll-free: 1-800-551-2728 (voice/TTY)

HIV HEALING & SUPPORT GROUP. Facilitated group for HIV+ persons wishing to explore emotional and spiritual therapies in warm, safe environment. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm. Unity-Midtown Church Activity Center, 1065 Spring. 874-1937.

AIDSCHAIM: Congregation Bet Haverim sponsors a support group for those affected by the AIDS crisis. Meets the 1st & 3rd Thurs. at 7:30pm, Friends Meeting House, 701 W. Howard St., Decatur. Info/Directions? Edie, 642-3467.

P.A.L.S. Pets Are Loving Support - Providing P.W.A.s with information on obtaining canine and feline companions, free pet food and reduced vet care. WE NEED YOUR HELP! Donations for pet supplies and food. Transportation of food and pets. Foster homes. Donate. Volunteer. 255-7461. Leave message.

P.O.O.H. - Positive Outlook On Health is a supportive network of HIV+ persons who share positive health attitudes and want to meet similarly oriented people for social and emotional interaction. Call 872-9954.

THE ATLANTA BUYERS CLUB (ABC) has expanded its hours to better serve the Community. We are now open from 12-5PM Tues-Fri, and 10AM to 1PM on Sat. (closed Mon.). ABC provides access to alternate treatment for the HIV community in the Southeast, and we are located at 44 Twelfth St, NW, two blocks west of Peachtree.

Want to meet new friends and have community? Enjoy new activities? Join the day program at Common Ground for people living with HIV/AIDS. Mon-Fri, 10:30-3:30. Call 874-6425 for information. Atlanta Interfaith AIDS Network.

Tuesday Night at The Shrine - A weekly dinner open to ALL individuals with HIV. Tuesday at 6pm. Come and have some fun, laughs and great food. The Shrine is located at 48 MLK Jr. Dr., Atlanta on the corner of Central Ave. FREE. For information call Alan Dillmann, 521-1866.

Atlanta Gay Center - Plus groups for HIV-affected people. Fridays, 8:00pm and Sundays, 6:00pm. 63 12th Street. Call 876-5372 for more info. Helpline, 892-0661, for info, counseling and referral. 6:00-11:00pm 365 days a year.

ACT UP/Atlanta: (404) 605-7458 (info), 874-6782 (office)

Announcements

LULLWATER SCHOOL - Model Demonstration School. Daily observation 9am-2pm thru March, April. Confluent Education in action. Lullwater's program is providing for the child's mind while attending to his emotional needs in harmony with her environment and life skills.

PAGEANTS FOR SALE/LEASE Seeking out of town interest for the following pageants; MISS SOUTHCOAST U.S.A. MR. GAY ATLANTA MISS GEORGIA MISS GAY ATLANTA MISS GEORGIA UNIVERSE Terms negotiable. Contact for information: 404-874-7104

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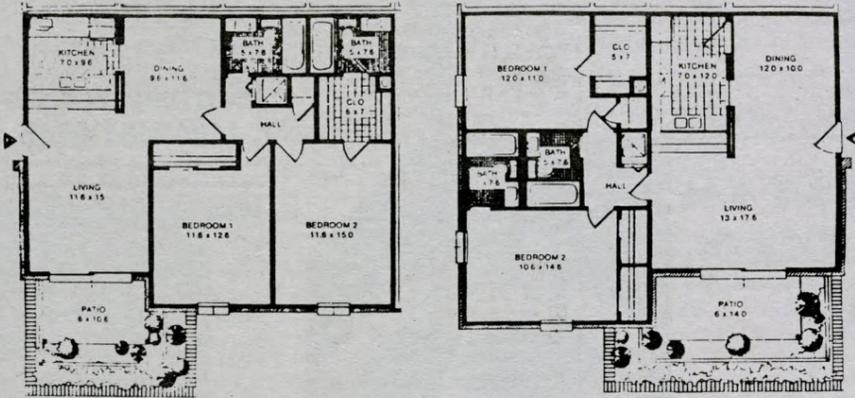
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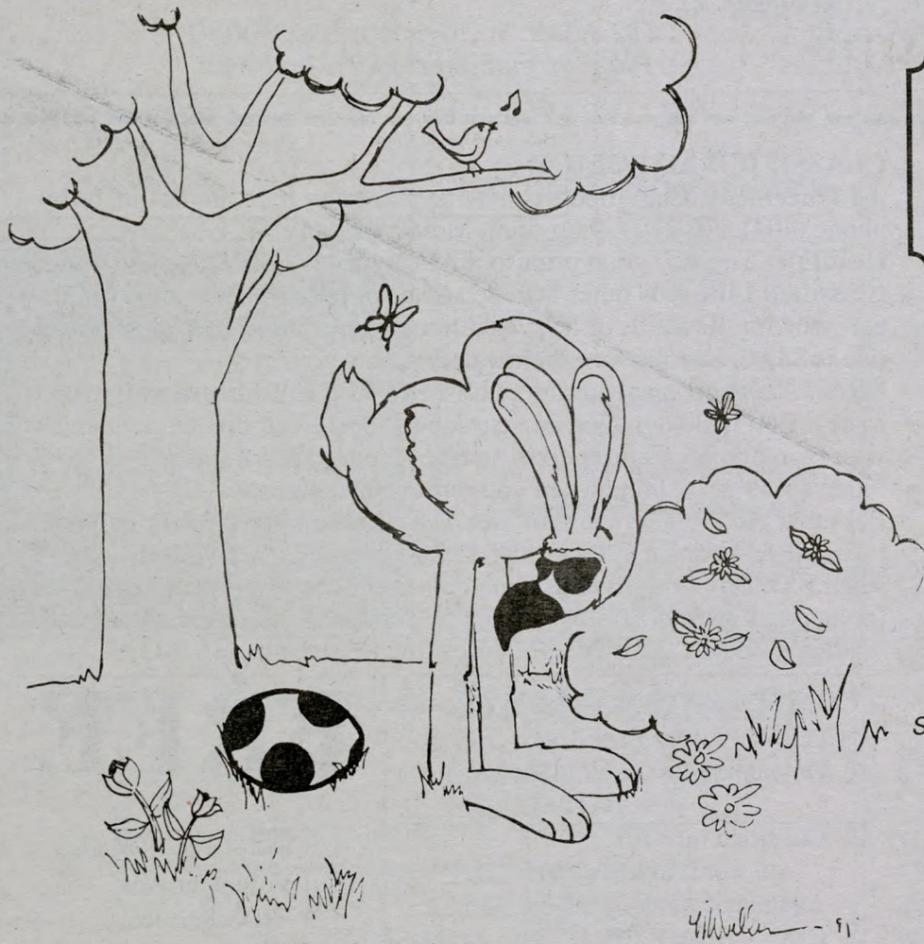
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Candler Park GWM seeking responsible, considerate GWM to share furnished 2 BR house with W/D, AC, cable, fireplace. No pets. \$250 + 1/2 util/mo. Serious inquiries only, please. 373-0257. (5.6)

Housemate wanted. Quiet Stone Mountain home. Own master bedroom with private bath. Central A/C, 2 car garage, W/D, fruit trees & garden plot on 1/3 acre. Non-smoker, pets negotiable. \$320 + 1/2 util. 498-8843 and lv. message. (5.9)

Inman Park: Professional gay female to share 2 BR, 1 BA home. Turn of the century, hardwood floors, front and back porches. Non-smoker. Must like pets. Furnished. \$300/mo. + 1/2 util. 577-0644. Available 5/1. (5.7)

Housemate wanted: Decatur area. Professional gay female to share townhome. Fireplace, deck, privacy fenced yard, ample space. No drugs, pet negotiable, no smoking. \$300/mo. + 1/2 util. 292-2791. (5.9)

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GW couple seeking roommate to share large 3 BR, 2 BA House with W/D, fireplace, maid, security, pool room, indoor garden, large yard. No pets, drugs. \$350/mo. total, 955-5611 - serious only. (5.6)

Roommate to share house in Norcross - 4 BR, 2 BA - lots of extras - \$375 + 1/2 util - GWF, no drugs, animal lover. Sharon 279-1152. (5.6)

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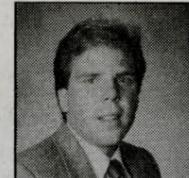


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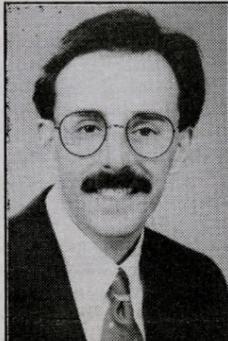
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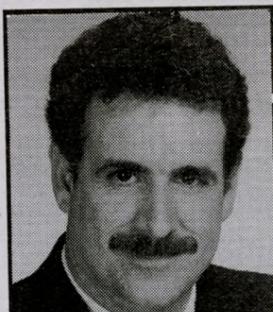
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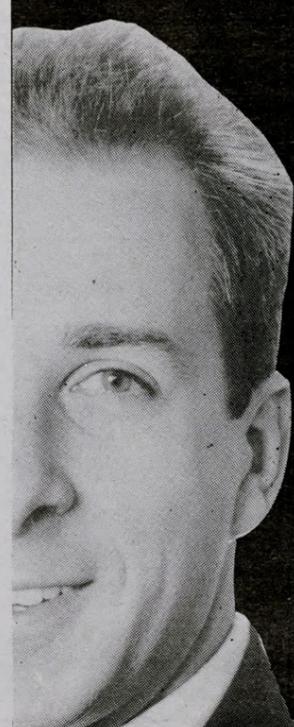
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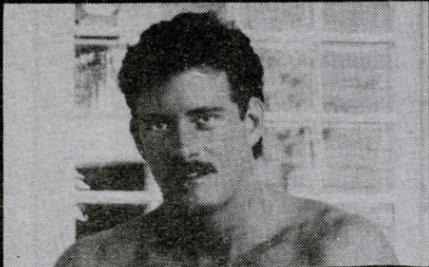
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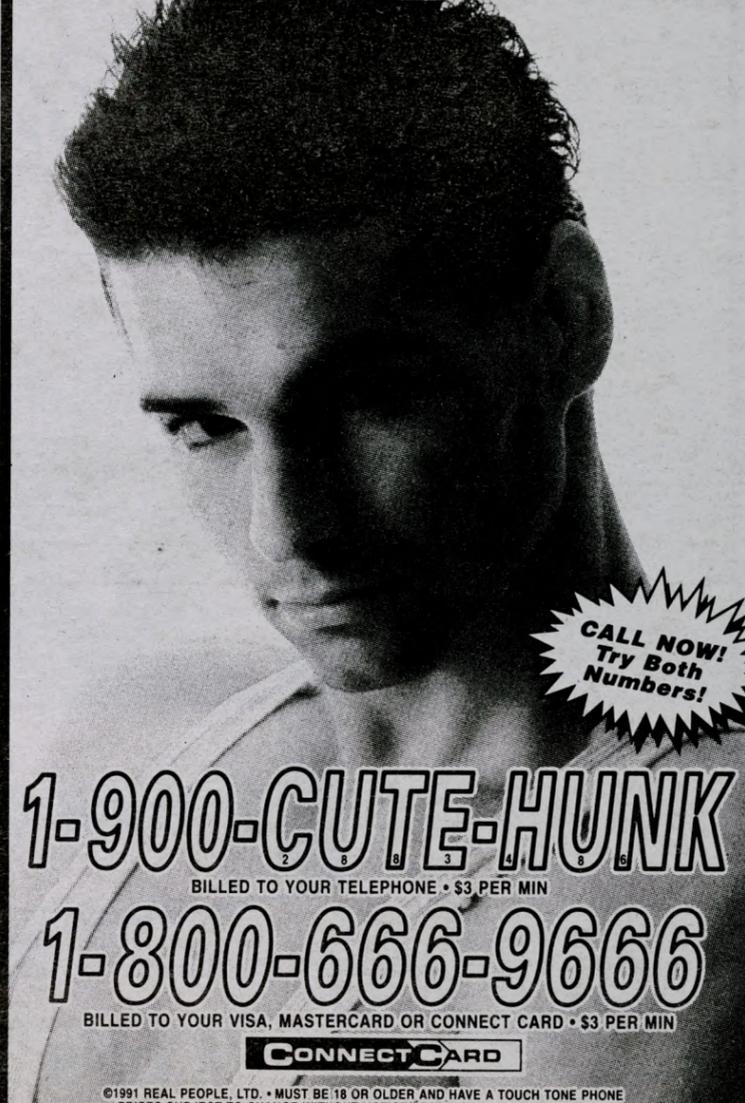
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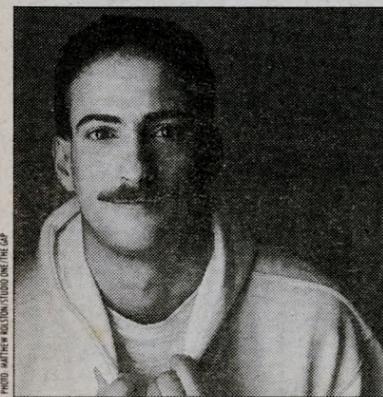
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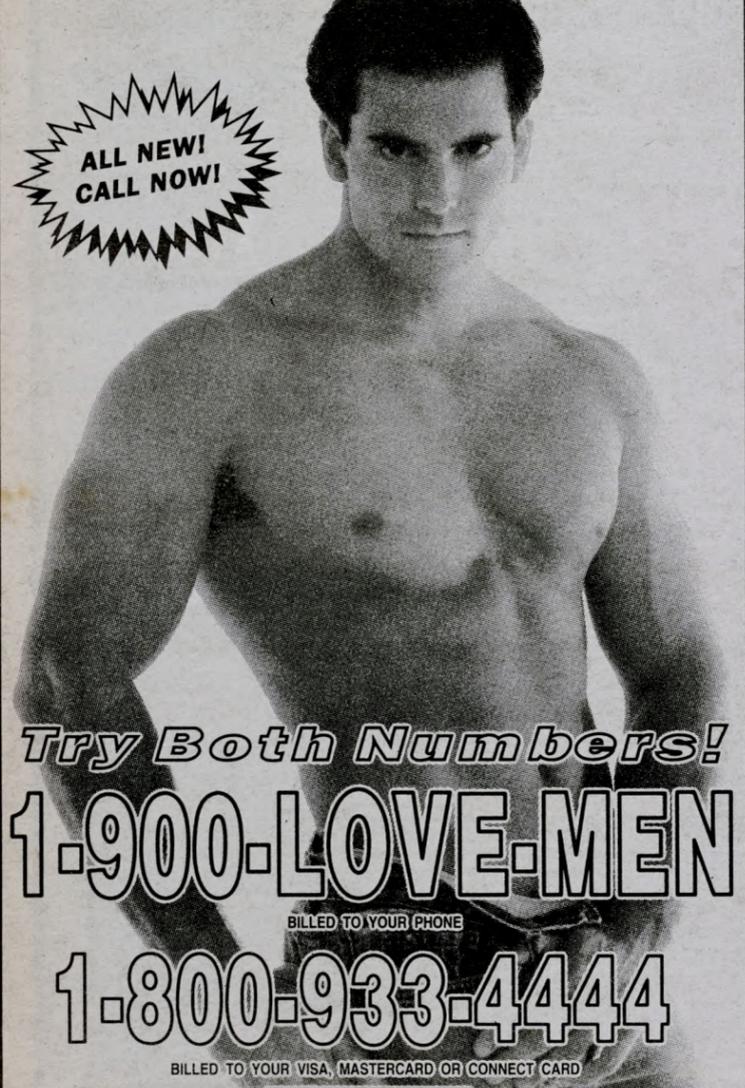
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