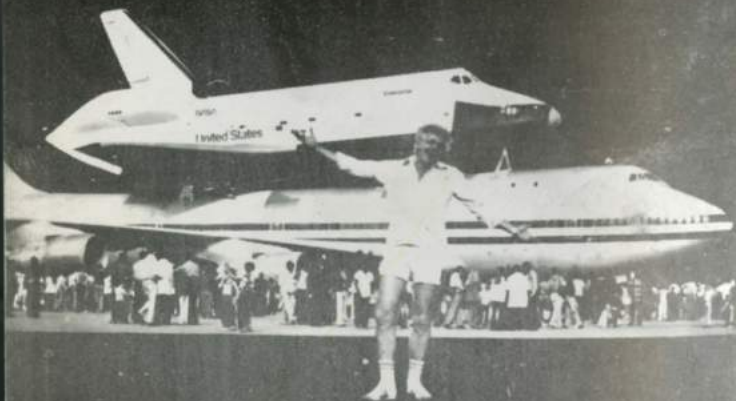


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LXIX 

Volume 1 No. 15

May 11-18



Violence in the Community
See page 18



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Houston, Texas

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On The Cover: Sharon McNight

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From the Editor

Coming Out: It Ain't Easy

There is no more intense experience that a Gay person goes through in a lifetime than Coming Out. In most usage, this idea refers to the act of admitting ones preference to loved ones, or to the public. This often means destroying many well-meant but misunderstanding illusions and in some cases, losing one or several of these loved ones simply because you must be yourself. But this is also a very limiting definition, because "Coming Out" can mean so many other things...to so many different kinds of people.


For it is not only Gayness that Gay people--or any people for that matter--constantly hide. There are other things, too, that many people fear the confusion of admitting, or relating, or showing. One's religious or political beliefs, one's preference for certain varieties of sexual activity, one's love for a specific person...all of these can be important enough to keep under cover at some time. And, if it works efficiently, there is nothing wrong with pretending, for the time being. I say, "for the time being" because the situation is usually temporary, or at least terminal; there comes a point when even the greatest pretender can no longer hold the charade.

Yes, we can be clever...we can hide behind idealized personalities assigned to us by others' dreams. We can just as easily even hide behind other people's faces, or other names, or...both...to mask ourselves, to avoid confusion by ducking behind blatant insecurity. And we can spend each day wondering if we are still safe...and each night pretending to be thankful that we are...until the point

when we do catch up to ourselves. That's beautiful...sometimes...but it ain't easy.

Coming Out is knowing you are ready to be yourself, and as such to meet the world head-on, armed only with what you know about yourself. When that time comes, you'll know it, and nothing will stop you. It's a time of reckoning, of honest admissions and sometimes shocking revelations...with no one but yourself. Coming Out is merely knowing who you are well enough to present it. It ain't easy. It ain't fast. But it's worth it.

Shari Cohen



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Note: We are sorry that we do not have a short story for you in this issue. There were too many news items of too immediate concern to stand a delay. Next week we will have more pages in LXIX and will include a story by either David or Sofy as well as our usual news, features, and guide.

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"Victory Party" Held Sunday

The Houston Gay Political Caucus hosted a post-election celebration at Dirty Sally's (220 Avondale) Sunday, May 7th. GPC's endorsement and support of pro-human rights candidates like Mickey Leland and Ron Waters helped put (or keep) these people in office.

The party at Dirty Sally's attracted quite a crowd to the popular new bar, decked out Sunday in patriotic red, white and blue for the political celebration. GPC members were also busy at the door taking signatures for the petition to help the bar keep its liquor license. A neighboring non-Gay bar recently filed a petition to have Dirty Sally's alcoholic beverage permit revoked, supposedly for reasons concerning "public morality and decency."

There was a general atmosphere of heartfelt community spirit at the victory celebration, even among those people who have never been particularly politically inclined. The celebration which was scheduled for 2-6 lasted most of Sunday evening.



That's Entertainment!

California Singer Plays 6015

Houston is getting some fine "imported" entertainment through the efforts of **Soixante Quinze**, the only membership club in town for Gay people. The club (located at 6015 Westheimer, just a short drive away from the central Gay community) is featuring a refreshing act which won over audiences in Los Angeles in San Francisco this month (May 28, 29, and 30.)

Sharon McNight got fantastic reviews for her performances in L.A. and S.F. *Databoy* magazine wrote that "Live Cabaret with Sharon McNight is bringing down the walls with laughter and music." The *San Francisco Chronicle* called her "awe-inspiring;" *Playboy* referred to her as a "college-bred wonder girl." Her booking agent, **Bill West**, manager of the **After Dark** bookstore at 3400 Travis, describes her as "a cross between Bette Midler and Marilyn Monroe."

McNight writes most of her own music and is talented in other areas as well (she has recently directed an X-rated film, *The Anatomy of a Flea*.) LXIX is arranging an interview with McNight prior to her appearance at Soixante Quinze. By the way, that's her on the cover...off stage.

Lesberadas Hold Open Meeting

The Lesberadas, lesbian-feminist gay rights organization, held their first open (to men) meeting Tuesday, May 9th, at the Unitarian Church on Fannin. Astonishingly, there were more men at the meeting than women.

The main problem discussed was that of dialogue between Lesbians and Gay men. There was much discussion and debate. The large group broke up into smaller groups of 20 or 30 people and issues concerning both Gay men and women were addressed. There was an air of warmth, a feeling of true brotherly and sisterly love at the meeting. Jeff Stephensen of the **Gay Political Caucus** commented that "this (night) is the first word of a long-needed speech."

One of the things discussed was the problem of women not feeling comfortable working with the predominantly male organizations and why. A weekend retreat for everyone (men and women) was suggested.

Gay Organization Rights Violated

Juneau, Alaska- (AP)— The Alaska Supreme Court ruled that the city of **Anchorage** violated the rights of a Gay organization by excluding it from a city guide of services and organizations. The unanimous decision struck down a lower court ruling and ended a long, bitter battle between the Alaska Gay Coalition and Anchorage Mayor George Sullivan.

The Early Homosexual Rights Movement (1864-1935) by John Lauritsen and David Thorstad, 1974, Times Change Press, New York, N.Y., \$2.75. (Available at Wilde 'N' Stein Books, 819 Richmond, Houston, (713)529-7014.

While many of us have long believed that the Gay Rights movement began that hot, muggy June night in 1969 in front of Stonewall Inn on Christopher St. in New York City, it was not.

When New York Gay bar-goers, transvestites, hustlers and other street people finally said "Enough!", and began three days of riots in response to police oppression, this was the beginning of the *second wave* of Gay Liberation and marked the 100th anniversary of the fight to achieve equal rights for homosexuals.

It was in 1869 that a homosexual, a Hungarian doctor named Benkert, really began the fight when he, using the pseudonym K.M. Kertbeny, wrote an open letter to the minister of justice of Germany's Second Reich tracing the history of the rational approach to homosexuality and arguing ineluctably that the State had absolutely no right to stick its nose into bedrooms.

His letter was prompted by a proposed new anti-homosexual penal code (which would be passed without debate two years later) for the Reichstag...the infamous Paragraph 175 which was to plague the German homosexual peoples for well over a century in varying forms. His rational and ethically legally sound approach fell on deaf ears then, even as it often does today...for most of his

reasoning was, and still is, valid. Benkert coined the word "homosexuality," which became the standard term for sex between two people of the same sex. He advanced the already accepted (in many parts of the world) theory that homosexuality was inborn, not acquired or a preference. He pointed out that honest historians would be placed in awkward positions for, indeed, if homosexuality was a prison offense, then such personages as Charles IX, Henry II, Catherine the Great, James I, Pope Julius II, Queen Christina, Napoleon I, Shakespeare, Newton, Michelangelo, Byron and many, many more would all be likely candidates for jail terms. If such persons belong in jail, Benkert concluded, then "everything we have been taught about our history is nothing but lies and embellishment."

Benkert also put his finger directly on the reason for persecuting homosexuals - to create social scapegoats for any and all ills within the larger society (are you listening Dade County and St. Paul?), even as other minorities and underprivileged peoples have been and still are, used as whipping boys. He also made the claim that homosexuality is a natural phenomenon in cross-cultural and cross-species studies and, as such, would have to be classified as "normal" as heterosexuality...therefore not subject to any punitive actions.

His impassioned plea(s), though unheeded legislatively, nevertheless sparked more impetus to scientific interest in homosexual behavior and the early 1860's saw a dramatic increase in its study which was to last until such totalitarian regimes as Nazism and Stalinism almost completely destroyed all social, scientific, and historic evidence which had been painstakingly accumulated.

(-Continued on page 13)

Ask Auntie

Dear Auntie,

Recently I was beat up by a bunch of rednecks. What can I do to protect myself?

-Assaulted

Dear Assaulted,

Carry a brick in your purse.

Dear Auntie,

I think you are a vicious, catty, depraved, dirty old rumormonger. If I were a judge I'd put you away for years.



-Disgusted

Dear Disgusted,

How about Gatesville?

Dear Auntie,

I read about the riot in Moody Park. Doesn't anything like that ever happen in Montrose?

-Bored

Dear Bored,

Try the O.P. on Tuesday night.

Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, a German homosexual who knew Benkert, accumulated and wrote the largest volume of literature on homosexuality by this time. His works, though perhaps somewhat antiquated by today's knowledge (his theory saw homosexuals as a "third sex"), and Benkert's make them the unquestioned founders of the Gay movement.

In 1897 the first Gay Liberation organization, the Scientific Humanitarian Committee, was founded by Magnus Hirschfeld who was to be its guiding star throughout most of its 35 years of existence. Its basic goals were: (1) to convince legislative bodies to abolish the anti-Gay paragraph from its penal code, (2) to enlighten public opinion on homosexuality and (3) "interesting the homosexual himself in the struggle for his rights."

By the 1920's it appeared as if much progress lay immediately ahead. The German government and scientific community were making approval noises. And in Russia, following its revolution (just as in France following its early 1800's revolution), all homosexual laws were abolished. Then there reared the ugly heads of Hitler and Stalin, both of whom used homosexuality once again as one of the several scapegoats for arousing the wrath of the majority. We know a minimum of 250,000 accused homosexuals died in the ovens of Buchwald, Auschwitz, and other German concentration camps...and perhaps as many as a million. Most of the records were burned; so we shall probably never know. In Russia, the continuing Soviet regime makes it impossible to estimate how many Gays were killed directly or sent to die slowly in the Siberian wastes; we do know there were hundreds of thousands!

As early as 1911 embryonic women's rights groups began to realize that the objects of the Gay movement and their own were very similar and closely intertwined. Their support was sought but since the laws of Germany were directed at male homosexuals (who really cared whether women had sex together? They weren't worth worrying about.) Lesbians then, as now, put their main efforts strictly into the women's movement and their impact was small.

The parallels running through **The Early Homosexual Rights Movement** with today's second wave of Gay Liberation are truly remarkable, especially considering the conscious efforts of not only totalitarian governments but our own historians to erase all mention of either homosexual groups or individuals. Authors Lauritsen and Thorstad, with so little left to work with historically, have packed their work with enough material and food for thought to make even the densest of us realize that when there's that much smoke, then the fire itself must be something absolutely fantastic!

In England where Victoria reigned in all of her pristine prudishness, homosexuals were beginning to make some headway also...until the infamous trials of Oscar Wilde sent trainloads and boatloads of Gays scurrying to the relative safety of the Continent. It wouldn't be until the prestigious Wolfendon Report in the 1960's urged the Parliament to revamp their laws on homosexuality (which they did) that Gays have once more begun to be first class citizens in that island country.

In the United States, heir to the Judeo-Christian imperatives and their European forebears' homosexual prejudices, as well as a pioneering

country's preoccupation with building itself, the call for homosexual rights was a long time in coming; today it leads the way in Gay Liberation.

The fight goes on...with the ballot, with knowledge, in the courts, on the streets, in education and wherever we can make leeway. We have the inspiration of our Gay forebears and their courage, and their endurance.

This time we shall prevail.

-Hank Bonney

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Businesses Support Gay Pride Week

A meeting of potential significance for the Gay community in Houston took place in the upstairs patio bar of the **Inside/Outside** at 2 p.m. last Monday. Owners and managers of the traditional social institutions gathered for a common purpose. They responded to a call to consider how their mutual interests and the welfare of the community might be served.

The topics were Gay Pride Week in general and Town Meeting in particular. The person who requested the discussion was Ray Hill and the institutions represented were: Adonis Book Store, Club Houston Baths, Dirty Sally's, The Exile, French Quarter Adult Cinema, Inside/Outside, Just Marion and Lynn's, Midnite Sun, Midtowne Spa, Silver Bullet Saloon, and Soixante Quinze. Other institutions expressed interest and/or support by phone, and will also plan special attractions for patrons following the Town Meeting which climaxes Gay Pride Week, June 25th at the Astroarena.

Conversations following the meeting took note of the fact that economic rivalry between the persons who assembled took second place to the concept of uniting to promote a significant idea. Each of the institutions will profit from the fact of G.P.W. The Community will profit when this group decides to overcome differences and establish a framework for a mutual association that promotes legitimate political goals in the interest of their patrons. Those were the sentiments of many of those

present. Perhaps "The Time is Right" and Town Meeting will provide a focal point for constructive achievement, regardless of personalities and profits of individuals. Every Gay man and woman will benefit from the process of being involved, and perhaps the result will be worth the risk of stepping out of the closet of self-interest and egotism.

Town Meeting Update: Issues workshops for **Town Meeting I** will be conducted at Wilde 'N' Stein Books, 819 Richmond, at 7:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, May 15-17. Charles Gillis invites those who care enough to get involved in solving problems and identifying the priorities for political and social action objectives relevant to Lesbians and Gay men.

Charles Law of the Houston Committee will conduct a Town Meeting Issues Workshop dealing with Gay perspectives in the Black Community, at the Club Supreme, 4423 Dowling, Monday, May 15, at 7:30 p.m.

Gay Politica! Caucus will conduct a brief business meeting at 7:30 Wednesday, May 17, prior to an Issues Workshop for Town Meeting. The site is the Memorial Plaza Holiday Inn, 2100 Memorial. The Gay public is invited to participate in the workshop and meet other brothers and sisters who want to do something about solving the human rights problems of special concern to Gay Houstonians, says Steve Shiflett, G.P.C. President.

Violence in the Community

(Documentary/Commentary)

Dennis L. had just left the studios of KPFT Radio, where he did volunteer work. It was after 2:00 and there was no one on the streets; Dennis walked calmly down Whitney St. between Lovett and Westheimer toward an all-night Stop 'N' Go store. It was a familiar scene for him; he was used to these roads, used to the loud silence of after-hours Montrose, used to getting from place to place under these same circumstances *comme d'habitude*...for he was young, and Gay, and street-wary...and conditioned to the darkness in Houston, in Montrose.

Walking through the parking lot of KILT, Dennis became aware of the fact that he was not alone. As three figures approached, seemingly walking toward Lovett, he began to feel uneasy, but because there was no visible reason for fear he kept walking in the same direction. As they came closer, Dennis saw that they were red-neck, "macho" types, more than likely straight. All three were husky, well built, with longish dark hair. One was about 6 feet tall and must have weighed at least 180 pounds. Still, Dennis kept walking toward them until they were about 10 feet away...and it was too late.

"Do you wanna suck my dick?"

Those were the words that signalled what was about to happen; immediately after which one of the three men grabbed Dennis around the waist and held him while the other two worked him over. Dennis half-instinctively pulled off his glasses and held them in his clenched hand. "Don't take your glasses off!" It seemed that only one of the men was doing all the talking for the three. And when they let the Gay

youth go, after about four minutes, they called after him as he ran down Whitney St., "Wait! Don't go! Come back!" -and laughed.

This was Friday night, May 5. When Dennis came to the LXIX office Saturday to tell his story, his face, neck and body were bruised, but it seemed, luckily, that it was an amateur attempt.

Last year, a wave of such incidents caused unrest in the Montrose area, particularly the dark side-roads just north of Westheimer (Hyde Park area.) The whispered word quickly spread; patrons of the local bars parked their cars on well-lighted spots of Westheimer and walked only on that street as the the warnings about a gang in a pickup truck, a man in a white Montego, a man with a blond ponytail, etc. increased in number and news of several beatings and at least one murder were reported fact.

Gary V. was one of the luckier casualties of that wave; he got into a car with two men he had met in one of the bars and was taken to an apartment, beaten, and threatened with death. He claimed afterwards that he didn't remember how he got away.

(-Continued on page 20)

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One of the problems of prosecuting assaults on Gay individuals by homophobes is the fear of public exposure. The individuals would involved in such occurrences would often rather not report them than risk family, friends, employers or others finding out the circumstances surrounding the incident. There are many instances wherein which the victims also conceal information which could lead to the apprehension of their attackers, and prevent others from being harmed by that particular individual or group.

LXIX will continue investigating the cases we know of now. Anyone who has information which might be helpful in this investigation please call 521-0100. LXIX will give a \$100.00 reward to anyone who can provide information leading to the *arrest and conviction* of the individuals involved in the ident May 5th.

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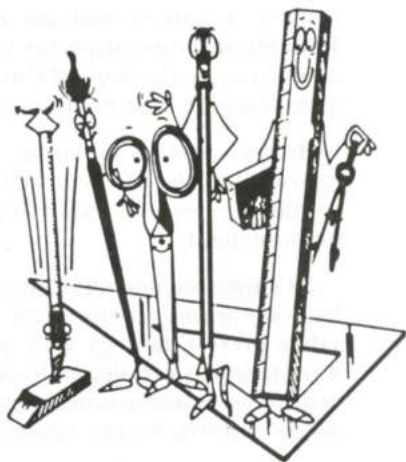
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LXIX publications

California Senator Files Anti-Gay Initiative

California state senator **John Briggs** has filed an initiative measure that could remove homosexual teachers from public schools in that state.

Although most of the 500,000 signatures were filed in Los Angeles, Briggs chose San Francisco as the place to file the first 1,000 names because, he said, "it is the moral garbage dump of homosexuality in this country."

The ultra-conservative senator from Orange county, who has said he hopes the publicity and support generated by his anti-Gay and pro-death penalty initiatives will aid his campaign for the Republican nomination for Governor, held a press conference on the steps of City Hall in **San Francisco** after filing his first petitions there.

Briggs said his initiative, if it qualifies and is approved by the voters, would prohibit schools from employing persons exhibiting "open and blatant" homosexuality.

"It's time we got rid of those people who want to lead an openly immoral life and expect a 21-gun salute every time they walk past," he said. "If they want to lead quiet, decent lives, playing cards in their bedrooms or doing other things quietly, they would not be effected by this initiative."

As the site for his filing press conference, Briggs chose the same steps where nearly a year ago, he had a widely publicized confrontation with several hundred Gay demonstrators.

About 40 demonstrators appeared yesterday, but they marched and chanted well away from him.

In order to qualify for the November ballot, his initiative petitions must contain at least 312,404 valid signatures of registered voters in the state.

Jan Zobel, a member of a group called Lesbian Schoolworkers, said the Briggs initiative would create "an atmosphere of fear and untruth in the school system" and would lead to "a repeat of the McCarthy witch hunts of the 1950's."

She charged that the initiative would allow local school boards to use homosexual conduct as an excuse to fire any employee.

Late breaking note: A group is organizing in San Francisco, the purpose of which is to fight and defeat the Briggs initiative. The group is calling itself the **Bay Area Committee Against the Briggs Initiative** and is planning a rally for Friday, May 12th and an organizing conference for Saturday, May 13th. Donations to the BACABI fund may be sent to: 330 Grove St., San Francisco, California 94102. The organization can be reached by phone at (415) 648-6006, 621-6246, 776-3769, or 922-2837.



Women's Concert to be Held in Houston

Meg Christian and Teresa Trull will appear in concert in Houston Friday, May 19th, at 8 p.m. at Agnes Arnold Hall (at the **University of Houston**.) Christian and Trull are two of the women singers who record on the popular **Olivia** label. Tickets are \$4.50 and are available in advance at **Wilde 'N' Stein Books** (819 Richmond), **"Just" Marion and Lynn's** (817 Fairview), **The Bookstore** (1728 Bissonet), **Women Rising Center** (1737 Indiana), **My Sisters** (2414 49th in Galveston) and **Common Woman Bookstore** (1510 San Antonio in Austin. Mail orders or child care reservations may be sent to **Out and Out Productions**, P.O. Box 66815, Houston, Tx. 77006.

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| Dirty Sally's | 220 Avondale | 529-7525 |
| The Exile | 1011 Bell | 659-0453 |
| The Galleon | 2303 Richmond Ave | 522-7616 |
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| Dignity | P.O. Box 66821/77006 | 528-7644 |
| Episcopal Integrity | | 526-0555 |
| Gay Resource Services | Box 441 U. C., U of H/77004749-3489 | 453-1143 |
| Integrity/Houston | P.O. Box 3942/77001 | 529-7014 |
| Lambda | 5210 Fannin | 433-8380 |
| Lutherans Concerned | 729 Manor | 453-1143 |
| Montrose Activities Center | 815 Hawthorne | 526-2668 |
| Wilde & Stein Collective | KPFT, Wed 11-12 P.M. | 526-4000 |

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|----------|---------------|----------|
| The 2306 | 2306 Genessee | 528-6235 |
|----------|---------------|----------|

PET SHOPS:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Butler's Pets | 1838 Westheimer | 522-8832 |
| Pet Shop, Bird Clinic | 3118 Smith | 629-7266 |

PLANTS AND FLOWERS:

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Guenther Flowers | 2030 W. Alabama | 523-2828 |
| House of Plants | 1634 Westheimer | 528-1901 |
| Pampered Plant | 1225 Campbell | 932-7505 |

PRIVATE CLUB:

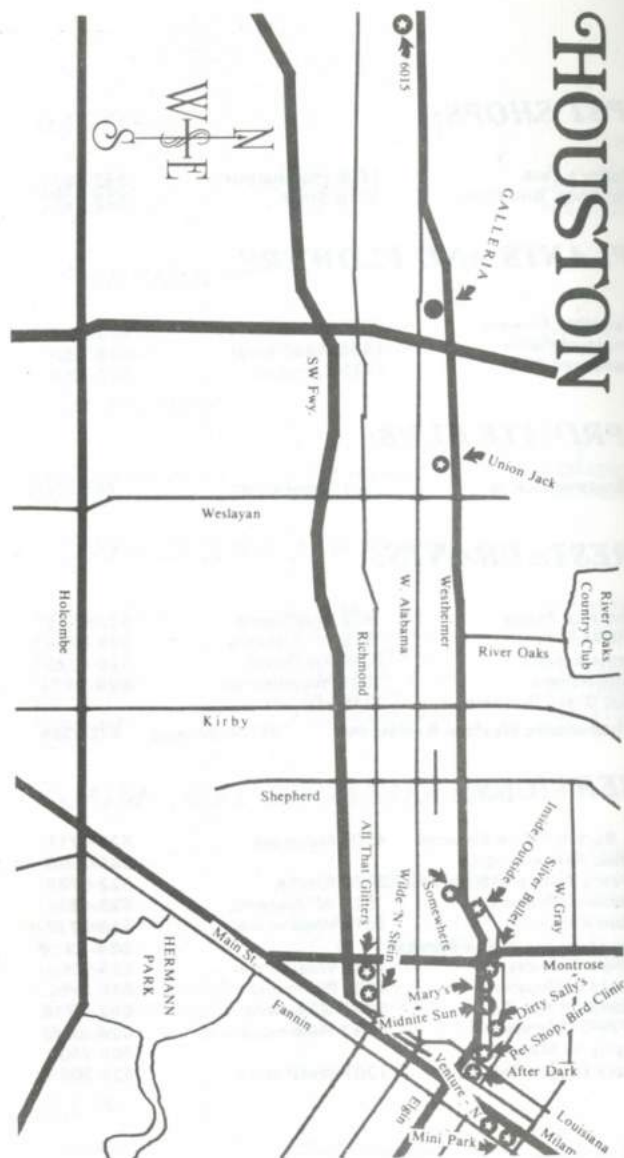
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| Soixante Quinze | 6015 Westheimer | 783-7002 |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------|

RESTAURANTS:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Don's Le Patois | 428 Westheimer | 523-5595 |
| The Mug | 515 W. Alabama | 528-8744 |
| Petite Europe | 2049 Richmond | 526-6020 |
| Somewhere | 1525 Westheimer | 528-7173 |
| Two Greek Brothers | 3215 Main St. | |
| Chapultepec Mexican Restaurant | 813 Richmond | 522-2365 |

SERVICES:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| A. Burton Phone Services | 4506 Montrose | 526-6711 |
| Aztec Remodeling Co | | 529-7556 |
| Brazos Paint and Body Shop | 2599 Brazos | 522-0722 |
| Garners Cleaners | 521 W. Alabama | 523-4256 |
| Reed Keys | 1612 Westheimer | 523-2927 |
| Bookkeeping & Tax Service | | 864-1308 |
| Single Services | 1621 Westheimer | 524-9560 |
| Specs of Houston | 4709 Richmond | 626-1161 |
| Standard Key Co. | 1616 Shepherd | 862-2715 |
| C. & C. Furniture | 1613 Richmond | 529-8469 |
| Lights by Marsha | | 665-7400 |
| Black Dragon Tattoo | 1207 Westheimer | 529-9059 |



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SUPER DISCO ★ 534 Westheimer
Where Midnite begins at 7 a.m.

Happy Hour Prices all day

'Til 7 p.m. Monday thru Friday

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