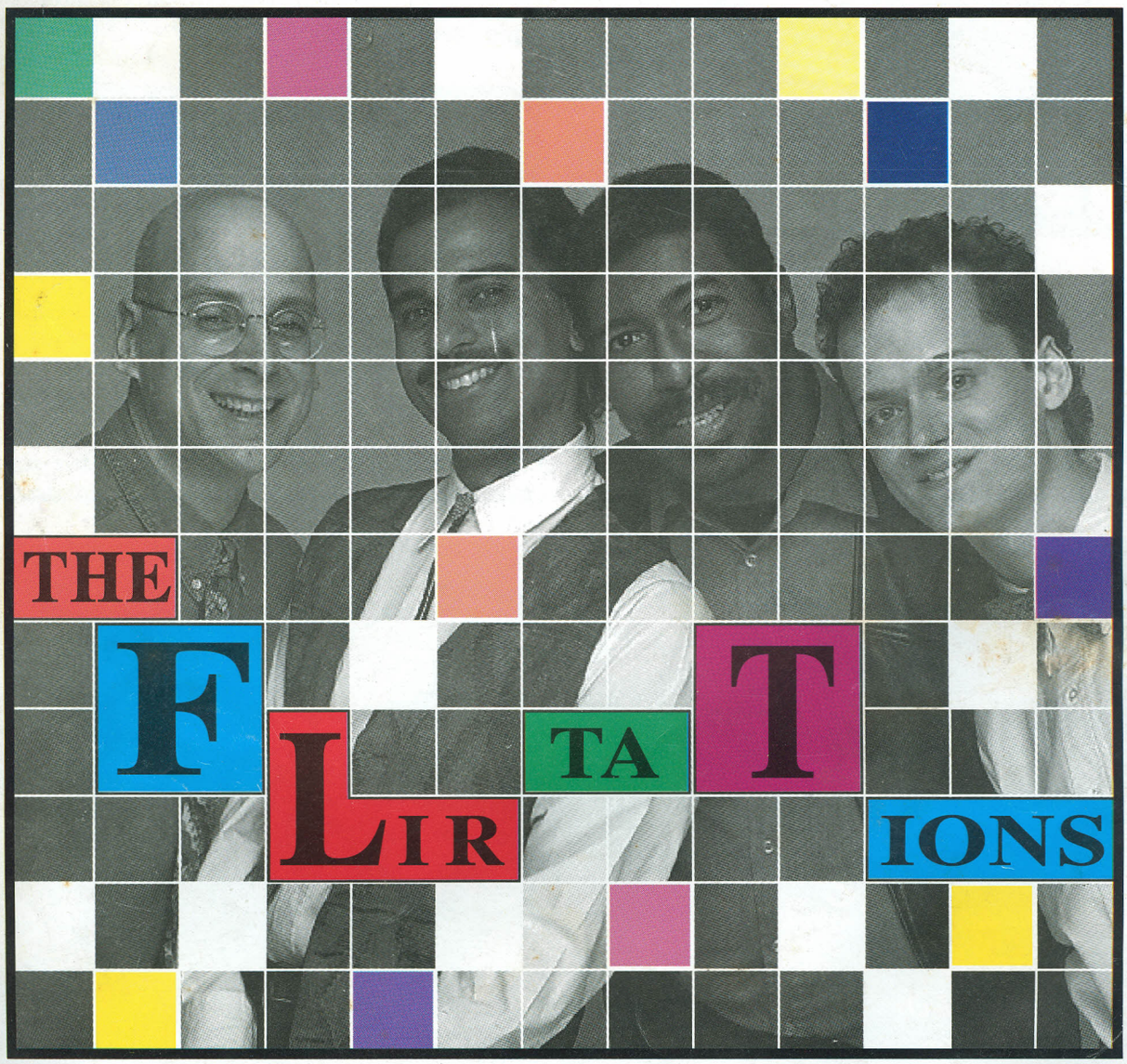
Volume 1▼ Issue 2 March 15 - April 14, 1994 Complimentary Copy

Out▼Smart

HOUSTON'S GAY & LESBIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE



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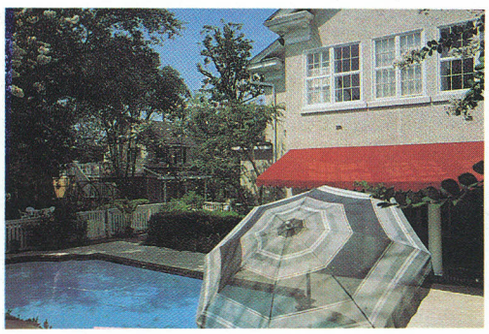
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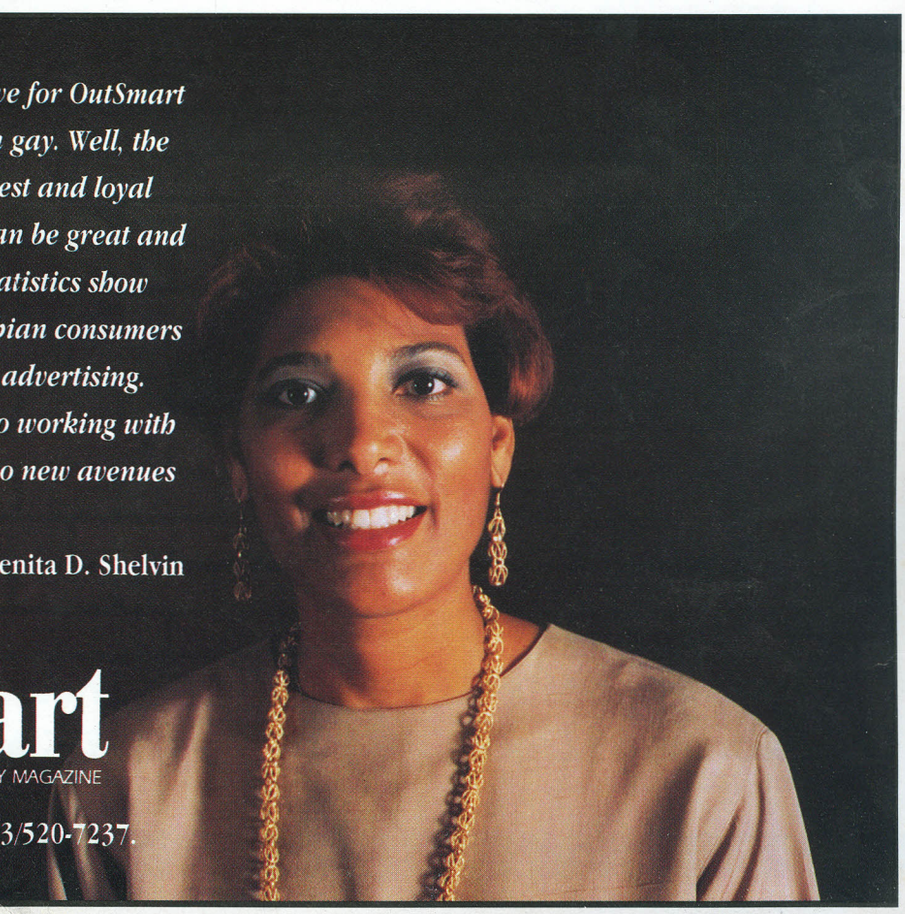


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—Glenita D. Shelvin



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CORRECTION: In last month's article entitled **Gay Travel in the 90's** (*OutSmart*, Vol. 1, Number 1), the price of the Italian Amalfi Coast Stroll and Roll Tour was erroneously listed as $11,980 per person. The cost is $1,980 per person. *OutSmart* regrets the error.

OutSmart

Houston's Gay & Lesbian Monthly Magazine

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

OutSmart provides positive information to gay men, lesbians and their associates to enhance and improve the quality of our lives. Our goal is to build a bridge of communication and understanding between cultural and social communities that are separated by traditions of ignorance and misinformation, thus creating a healthier community for us all.

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OutSmart is a member of GayNet,
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Letters

Congratulations on such an impressive and professional premiere issue! I have found the articles interesting and powerful. Most importantly, practical and applicable to everyday life in our community. Again, I congratulate your spirit for bringing such a publication to Houston and I wish you many years of success!

J.A.Villarreal

OutSmart, where have you been? It's great to see such a slick, upbeat and professional publication for our community, worthy of our pride. Congratulations on your arrival and welcome!

J.S. Pickett

It was a pleasant surprise to open the cover of your premiere issue of *OutSmart* with the beautiful slick cover. You have recognized a long-standing gap in material for the gay and lesbian community— presented in a format that goes beyond other local publications— with content that doesn't insult our intelligence (attempting to look editorially oriented, only under the guise of advertising bars). CONGRATULATIONS! I am looking forward to the future issues.

S. McMillan
Dreem Katz Theater

Just a note to make a point. Although I think your publication is a class act and certainly a much needed addition to Houston's large gay and lesbian community, I am bit concerned about the implications within the name of your new publication. In choosing a catchy phrase like "OutSmart" for your title, I hope you're not implying that those of us who are not out and "shouting about our homosexuality" (i.e. cramming it down everyone's throat) are not as intelligent or as worthy of respect and basic human rights as are those making all the fuss.

Not Out but certainly Smart,
name withheld by request

I have just received my first issue of *OutSmart* and I felt compelled to write and wish you every bit of success. I am very impressed with the presentation and format of your new publication. YOU HAVE A WINNER! We will definitely consider *OutSmart* in our advertising program. In closing, our very best wishes to the staff of *OutSmart* for your continued success, love, hope, happiness and most of all excellent health.

R. P. Latimer
The ROBERT Foundation

Just want to say I welcome the publication of your new magazine. It's timely, interesting and well-designed. I applaud the purpose of the publication and I support your goals. In a recent issue of OUT magazine, a writer stated that last year's March On Washington was a failure. Obviously, the fact that you founded *OutSmart* after attending the march, is just one of many success stories about the event. I'm glad someone with publishing expertise had decided to produce quality work for Houston. I hope your endeavor is both personally and financially rewarding. Thanks for coming out and for adding to the quality of life for Houston's gay and lesbian community.

S. Knight
Fem TV

Editors Note:

Thanks for all of your calls, letters, faxes and words of encouragement. We wish we could acknowledge them all in print. The staff of OutSmart *is excited to be welcomed by the community and honored to be added to the list of already esteemed Houston gay and lesbian publications.*

OUTSMART welcomes your letters. Please include your name and address and a telephone number for confirmation. Letters may be edited for length. OutSmart Magazine 2990 Ricmond #316, Houston, TX 77098 or FAX to: (713) 522-3275.

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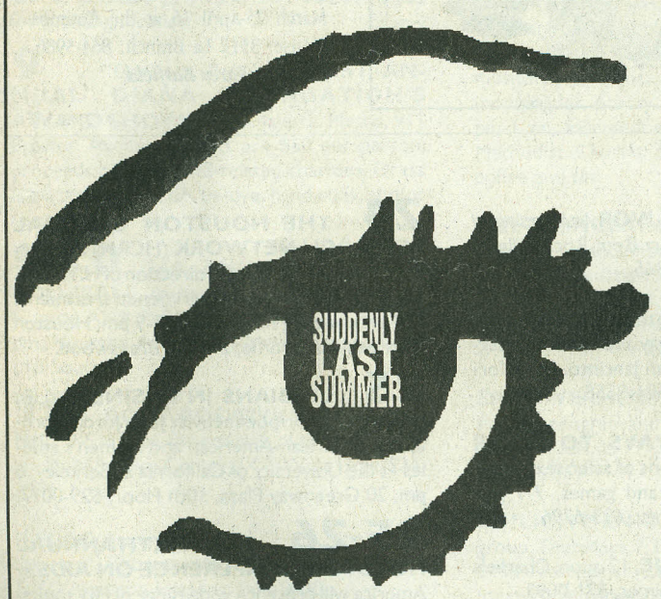
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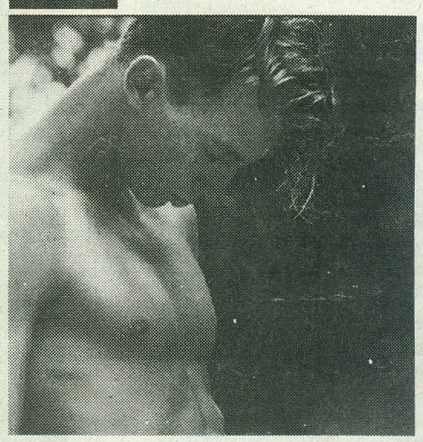
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CALENDAR

If you are part of a group or have a function that you would like listed in our calendar, please send announcement by the 1st of the month to: CALENDAR EDITOR, OutSmart Magazine, 2990 Richmond, Suite 316, Houston, TX 77098. Inclusion in the calendar is based upon general interest to our readers and space availability.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND MEETINGS

MARCH

16 **MEN'S NETWORK**—"Exploring the Barriers to Intimacy" will explore the challenges and issues of intimacy affecting gay and bisexual men, 7:15-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 529-0037.

THE GERMAN ANTI-NAZI RESISTANCE: The White Rose, a dialogue with Franz J. Muller and Professor Michael Wyschograd. A showing of the film "The White Rose" will precede the discussion, 7 pm, University of Houston School of Architecture, Main Theater Entrance 16 or 18 between Cullen and Calhoun.

17 St. Patrick's Day! Celebrate at the **MUSEUM RESTAURANT & BAR,** 1512 W. Alabama, with a happy hour honoring The Bering Care Center Kitchen Renovation Fund. Gift certificates, valid at lunch and dinner starting March 18, will be sold all day.

18 **"RIBBONS AND BOWS,"** a benefit fashion show to assist The Names Project/ Central Texas, will be held at the Waco Hippodrome Theatre, Waco, Texas, 8 pm, (817) 753-3695 or (817) 776-4250.

19 **AMFAR BENEFIT CONCERT** featuring Liza Minnelli, with Mistress of Ceremonies Angela Lansbury, 8 pm, Arena Theatre, 988-1020.

20 The Miss Camp America Foundation's **3RD ANNUAL DEB-U-NOT BALL** to introduce new members, 4:30-7 pm, Richs, 2401 San Jacinto. For further information call 520-STAR.

SPEAK OUT HOUSTON!
Gay Rights Forum to organize and strategize on how to get a local ordinance banning discrimination based on sexual orientation, sponsored by Gay & Lesbian Americans, 7:30 pm, Diverseworks, 1117 East Freeway, 802-0717.



Inside/Out Productions opens their season with *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* by Joe Orton, starring (L to R) Jacqueline Jasper, Travis Ammons and David Rigg. The classic black comedy runs Fridays and Saturdays, 8 pm, March 25-April 16 at the Kuumba House, 3512 La Branch. 864-5986. *Photo by Karen Barfield.*

20-21 **JANE OLIVOR,** lesbian singer/ songwriter, live in concert, 8 pm, Rockefeller's, 3620 Washington, 861-9365.

22 An introduction to the **LANDMARK FORUM** in the spirit of gay and lesbian leadership, 7 pm, Richs, 2401 San Jancinto. For information call Joel Dietz at 521-9555.

"SENSUAL PATHWAYS TO SAFER SEX" explores the options of safer sex/sensuality through discussion and games, 7-9 pm, AFH, 3202 Weslayan Annex, 623-6796.

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

23 Leadership workshop for HIV-infected individuals presented by **EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM,** 6-8 pm, 1115 S. Braeswood, Suite 210, 796-8123.

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

24 **THE HOUSTON CLINICAL RESEARCH NETWORK** (HCRN) and special guests will discuss the direction of HIV/AIDS research, focusing on experimental treatments and encouraging new results, 7-9 pm, Houston Marriott-Astrodome, 2100 S. Braeswood.

25 **LESBIANS IN BUSINESS** (LIB) presents author/poet/activist June Jordan, professor of African-American and women's studies at the University of California at Berkeley, 6 pm, 20 Greenway Plaza, 10th Floor, 529-0077.

25-26 **THE SIXTH ANNUAL HOUSTON CONFERENCE ON AIDS** in America will present a wide range of HIV topics. The two-day conference will be held at the Ramada Hotel Astrodome, 2100 Braeswood.

28 **THE AGORA** monthly meeting, 7:30 pm, Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, 729-4267.

REBIRTH: RENEWAL THRU BREATH WORKSHOP with Sandra Nicholas, 7-9:45

pm, $20 ($25 at the door), call 522-0990 to register.

LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS of Houston general meeting, call 681-2607 for meeting time and place.

29 **LAMBDA ROLLER SKATE CLUB**, 8-10 pm, Hobby Skate World, 6804 Easthaven (just outside the Loop, off I-45), admission is $5 which includes skates, 933-5818.

31 **THE HOUSTON CLINICAL RESEARCH NETWORK** (HCRN) Community Forum, 7-9 pm, Fellowship Hall, Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold.

APRIL

5 **LAMBDA ROLLER SKATE CLUB**, 8-10 pm, Hobby Skate World, 6804 Easthaven (just outside the Loop, off I-45), admission is $5 which includes skates, 933-5818.

6 **MEN'S NETWORK** for gay and bisexual men, 7-9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 529-0037. Topic to be announced.

NUTRITION WORKSHOP for HIV-infected individuals presented by Early Intervention Program, 6-8 pm, 1115 S. Braeswood, Suite 210, 796-8123.

8 **ASTRO RAINBOW ALLIANCE OF THE DEAF**, 7:30 pm, call 1-800-735-2988 for meeting location.

9 "Geriatric Park," the **41ST ANNUAL DIANA FOUNDATION'S AWARD SHOW**, 8 pm, Majestic Metro, 911 Preston Avenue. Tickets are $50 per person; proceeds benefit AIDS-related charities. Dress is black tie, white tie, tie-dye, hand cuffs, and/or tiara!

9-10 16th **ANNUAL BARGAIN BOOKSALE** to benefit the Houston Public Library, April 9: 9 am-5 pm, April 10: Noon-4 pm, Houston Astrohall, Kirby Drive and Loop 610 South.

10 **BODY POSITIVE SPRING PICNIC**, 3-5 pm, on the grounds of the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, 524-2374.

P-FLAG general meeting, 2 pm, St. Francis Episcopal Church, 345 Piney Point Road. P-FLAG Houston Helpline: 867-9020.

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

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

15 **LESBIANS IN BUSINESS** (LIB) presents Linda Villarosa, editor of Essence Magazine, 6 pm, 20 Greenway Plaza, 10th Floor, 529-0077.

16 **"IN GOD'S NAME: GOD, GAYS AND THE BIBLE,"** a workshop with Rev. Ralph C. Lasher, 10 am-4 pm, MCCR, 1919 Decatur, 861-9149.

Spring Festival—Bering Memorial United Methodist Church's **44TH ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST**, 7 am-2 pm, 1440 Harold. $5 all-you-can-eat breakfast, entertainment, rummage sale and car wash. 526-1017.

ON-GOING

ACT-UP GULF COAST, weekly meetings, Thursdays, 9:30 pm, 3400 Montrose, Suite 520, 523-9199.

AIDS ALLIANCE OF THE BAY AREA, support group for those infected and affected, Tuesdays, 7-8:30 pm, 17511 El Camino Real, #106, 488-4492.

AIDS FOUNDATION HOUSTON, free creative writing workshop for anyone affected by AIDS with free-lance writer Gregg Rodriguez. Mondays, 3-6 pm. Call 623-6796 or 868-0008 for more information.

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

DAS KAFFEEHAUS is a new entertainment spot for young people to meet for fun, conversation, dancing and artistic expression such as musical performances, dance programs, comedy monologues, poetry readings, etc. Saturdays 7 pm-1 am, basement of Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, $1 cover charge includes coffee and tea.

THE DIZINGER FOUNDATION offers free classes in art and photography to HIV+ individuals. The Foundation also gives grants to people for their completed works. Please feel free to visit the foundation office at 3701 Montrose to view the many works on display. 522-8660.

EMPOWERMENT FOR LIVING, a weekly support program and pot luck supper, Tuesdays, 6 pm, MCCR, 1919 Decatur. For more information call 861-9149.

EN*LIGHT*EN UP, a gay men's spirituality group, Thursdays, 7:30 pm, The Center for Light, 3408 West Lamar. Call Michael Coll at 520-6996 for more information.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS SUPPORT GROUP for partners, family, friends and caregivers of persons with HIV disease, facilitated by Jim Anderson, LMSW and Harry Livesay, MSW(c), New Counseling Center, 3415 Graustark, 529-1913.



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The DIZINGER Foundation is a non-profit organization created to directly assist those people living with HIV/AIDS. Accomplishments include the opening of a local food-pantry, educational outreach through HISD, hospital visits, and most recently:
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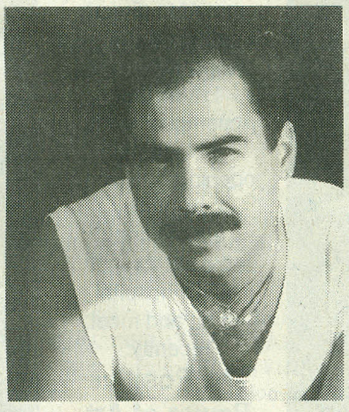
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In Montrose Area - In And Out Calls

KOLBE PROJECT: HIV/AIDS support group, Tuesdays, 10 am; **Gay issues support group**, Wednesdays, 6:15 pm; **HIV negative survivors support group**, Thursdays, 8 pm. 522-8182.

THE HOMELESS PET PLACEMENT LEAGUE is a non-profit animal welfare organization that rescues and rehabilitates stray and abandoned cats and dogs. To inquire about volunteering, foster care, or adopting call 862-PETS.

Q-PATROL is an organization dedicated to the prevention of hate crimes against lesbians and gay men. We patrol the bar areas in Montrose and are always on the lookout for volunteers. If you have at least one Friday or Saturday night per month you can donate to the protection of gay men and lesbians, please call 871-8519.

STONEWALL 94 Houston Chapter meets every Wednesday, 7 pm, 3223 Smith, Suite 100, 528-6835.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

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

LESBIAN & GAY VOICES: (Radio) Fridays, 6-8 pm. Features news, music, interviews, reviews and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM.

OUT! IN HOUSTON: (TV) presented by The Agora on Public Access Cable. Showtimes are March 17, 10:30 pm; March 19, 10:30 am; March 21, 7 am; March 23, 10:30 pm, March 26, 10 am.

AIDS TALK HOUSTON: (TV) Public Access Cable. Showtimes are March 16. 2:30 pm; March 17, 6 am; March 19, midnight; March 25, 9:30 pm; March 26, 8 pm, March 27, 9:30 pm; March 28, 7 pm. Check local newspaper under daily television listings for showtimes in April.

LIFE. . . TODAY: (TV) Public Access Cable. Showtimes are March 29, 10 am; March 30, noon; March 31, 3 pm; April 1, 8:30 am; April 5, 11 am; April 7, 11:30 am; April 8, 8 pm; April 9, 7:30 pm; April 10, 9:30 pm; April 11, 9 pm.

MONTROSE CLINIC: (TV) Public Access Cable. March 16, 3 pm; March 17, midnight and 7:30 am; March 19, 6 pm; March 20, 7:30 pm; March 21, 7:30 pm, March 23, 9 pm. Check local newspaper under daily television listings for showtimes in April.

FEM TV: Public Access Cable. March 19; 6:30 pm; March 22, 10:30 pm; March 24, 7 pm; March 27, 4 pm; April, 7 pm.

THEATER

A. D. PLAYERS Through March 20: *Lettice and Lovage*. 2710 Alabama. 526-2721.

ACTORS WORKSHOP March 4-April 10: *Breaking Legs*. 1009 Chartres. 236-1844.

ALLEY THEATRE Through March 27: *Tartuffe*. 615 Texas Ave. 228-8421.

CURTAINS THEATER Through April 30: *Suddenly Last Summer*. 3722 Washington Ave. 862-5548.

COMPANY ONSTAGE March 18-April 23: *A Piece of My Heart*. 536 Westbury Square. 726-1219.

HITS UNICORN THEATRE March 31, April 1, 2, 7-9: *Anything Goes*. Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park. 861-7408.

HOUSTON SKYLINE THEATRE Through Mar. 26: *The Lady's Not For Burning*. 1617 Fannin. 759-0701.

MAIN STREET THEATRE March 3-27: *La Nonna (The Granny)*. 2540 Times Blvd. 524-6706.

NATIONSBANK HOUSTON BROADWAY SERIES March 22-27: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Wortham Center, 500 Texas. 629-3700.

STAGES March 23-April 24: *Hotel Oubliette*. 3201 Allen Parkway. 527-8243.

THEATER LaB HOUSTON March 31-April 23: *My Children! My Africa!* 706 Alamo. 868-7516.

THEATRE SUBURBIA Through March 26: *The Black Duck*. 1410 W. 43rd at Oak Forest. 682-3525.

MUSIC

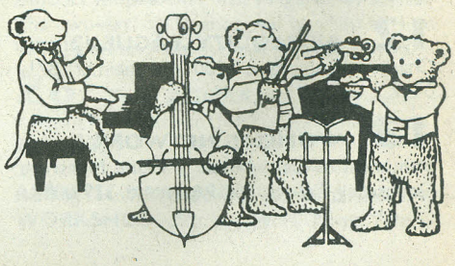
DA CAMERA March 25: *Ragtime*. Wortham Center, 500 Texas. March 26: *Da Camera Goes to the Zoo!* George R. Brown Education Center at Houston Zoological Gardens. 524-5050.

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER March 24: *Classical Guitarist Robert Bluestone*. 5601 S. Braeswood. 551-7255.

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE March 27: *Chamber Ensemble Workshop Concert*. March 30: *JazzFest II*. 3517 Austin. 630-1138.

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA March 18 & 20: *The Dracula Diary*. Wortham Center, 500 Texas.

HOUSTON SYMPHONY March 26: *Open Rehearsal*. March 26-28: *Program of Strauss, Cooper & Tchaikovsky*. Jones Hall, 227-ARTS.



WHY OUT IS RIGHT



by Dale Carpenter

The most persistent fashion in gay politics these days is the concept of being "out." The word itself is everywhere in gay culture: from *Out* magazine, to *OutSmart*, to the numerous editorial columns that derive their names from some play on the word. A couple of years ago we were embroiled in a bitter controversy over "outing," the practice of revealing the latent homosexuality of public figures deemed hostile, or insufficiently attentive to, the outers' political agenda. Just last year Torrie Osborn, then executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, lectured the members of the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus on the importance of being open about their sexuality. Nearly all our visible public leaders emphasize coming out as critical to the achievement of full citizenship for gay men and women. Are they right?

The answer starts with a recognition of the enemy. Two kinds of people oppose civil rights for, and social acceptance of, gay men and women. First, there are those who do so out of some deep, sincerely held, usually religious, impulse or principle. I am not sure what can be done about these people. It is hard to reason with faith. Fortunately, these True Believers are few in number and they have never been able to stand in the way of an idea, like the abolition of slavery, whose time has come.

The second group, by its sheer numbers, presents a more serious obstacle to full liberty for gay men and women. These are the people who don't personally know anyone gay, or say they don't, and never hear about gay people unless the subject is AIDS or outlandish costumes and behavior at the last gay pride parade. Let's call them the Truly Uninformed. They grow up accepting the usual judgments about us—we're dirty, unnatural, immoral—and never have reason to question those judgments. They don't see us as doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, taxpayers, sisters, brothers, mothers, or fathers. The overwhelming majority of the American people fit in this second category. The True Believers spew the propaganda and the venomous lies about us; they draft the anti-gay-rights initiatives. The Truly Uninformed just vote for them. The Truly Uninformed don't usually gay bash; they're just not outraged when they hear about it.

In surveys, people who say they don't know a gay person overwhelmingly oppose equal civil rights for gays. (Of course, almost everyone knows a person who is gay but they don't realize it.) Those who say they do know a gay person tend to support our civil rights, including gay marriage, the adoption of children by gay couples, and an end to the ban on gays in the military. It's easy to explain this disparity: by nature, we distrust and fear the things we don't understand or don't know. "Gays" as a televised, abstracted collection of sex-crazed perverts can be reviled; a gay family member, friend, or co-worker can be understood or even loved.

To increase support for our cause, we must expand the group of people who personally know a gay person. We must make the world unsafe for ignorance. That's where coming out comes in. Every time you come out to a family member, friend, or co-worker you contribute to the movement for our civil rights. As an out gay person, you march on prejudice with your every step, your every word, your every deed. The person to whom you come out must incorporate her knowledge of you into her definition of what it means to be "gay." Some part of that definition will change forever, even if only subtly, and some greater understanding of us and our diversity will result. Too, you'll likely feel better about yourself for having done it. At the very least you'll no longer have to carry out the daily acts of deception we so often feel obliged to perform in our lives.

Some of us retreat behind the old canard that our private lives are nobody's business. Straight people don't tell us they're straight, after all, right? Of course, straight people tell us everyday they're straight: by wearing wedding bands, kissing or holding hands in public, putting a lover's picture conspicuously on their desk at work, talking about weekend dates, commenting on that secretary's curves, and so forth. Like it or not, the world presumes you're straight. So if you're not out as a gay person, you're out as a straight person. You're passively complicit in the big lie that we're a bunch of misfits. The details of our private lives are indeed nobody's business, but in a world where some make it their business to hate us it is our business to let them know where we stand. Unlike any other disfavored minority group in the long struggle for civil rights, we must prove we exist before we can prove we deserve common decency.

I am not saying that we must be aggressively out to everyone at all times and under all circumstances. The particular timing and manner of coming out to others call for individual judgments that each of us must make. For example, it's probably not a good idea to dance into a group of drooling neo-nazi skinheads and proclaim one's sexuality. If you come out to an employer, you could lose your job. Coming out sometimes requires great courage and always involves some risk, as all life does. On the other hand, we usually exaggerate the consequences of coming out to others, conjuring improbable nightmares of rejection and humiliation that keep us in hiding. We should lead our lives determined to rebut the pervasive and ultimately damaging presumption that we're straight. And we should have very good reasons in isolated cases to keep lying about who we are.

I don't say the sky will open up and the glorious light of God will radiate evermore upon your angelic face if you come out. I don't say that the bigots will wilt before your eyes. I do say that there will be no equality for us in the law or in our lives if we do not make coming out our First Commandment. All the domestic partners' ordinances, all the federal civil rights bills, and all the protest marches in the world will not free us if we do not wrest bigotry from its grip on the hearts of the ignorant.

Dale Carpenter is a lawyer in Houston. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus. The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily endorsed by the HGLPC or any of its members.

OUT in our world

Police Criticized for HIV-Positive List

BILOXI, Miss. (GayNet) — According to the "Gulfport (Miss.) Sun-Herald," Tommy Moffet, police chief in Biloxi acknowledged that city police kept a list of residents infected with HIV, in what he said was an effort to protect paramedics, police and other emergency personnel who "frequently come into contact with the virus." Local activists are demanding that the list be destroyed.

French Condom Campaign Almost Too Successful

PARIS (GayNet) — Condom sales have skyrocketed at least 13% in France since last summer, when the government began underwriting universal low-cost sales of condoms which now cost 1 franc, or about 17 cents each because of the government subsidy to the manufacturers. But according to French Health Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy, the anti-HIV campaign has been so successful that "there are stock shortages" now throughout the country.

Part of '96 Olympics to be Held in Cobb County, Ga.

ATLANTA (GayNet) — Rights groups have asked the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games to move the site of the volleyball matches at the 1996 Summer Olympics out of nearby Cobb County. Last year the Cobb County Commissioners approved a resolution condemning the "gay lifestyle" and cut all county arts funding because of a play which included references to homosexuality. So far Atlanta Olympic organizers have refused to do anything, saying the games are "not about politics." Activists have asked people to contact the Olympic Committee organizers to protest locating any of the events in Cobb County. You can contact: Billy Paine, President, Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, PO Box 1996, Atlanta GA 30301, or phone (404) 224-1996, or FAX (404) 224-1997.



Gay Long Distance Carrier Controversy

CHICAGO (GayNet) — After CommunitySpirit, the long-distance phone carrier aimed at gays and lesbians, dropped its customer billing service, Trans National Communications, customers began complaining of receiving calls from TNC saying that CommunitySpirit is not donating the portion of customers' bills that is earmarked to gay and AIDS organizations. Jeffrey Vitale, president of CommunitySpirit, said, "This accusation is a complete falsehood" and called it a "smear campaign" on the part of TNC because of its lost contract with the carrier. Vitale noted that CommunitySpirit's first year of donations, which are based on customers' long-distance charges through the carrier, couldn't even be computed until April 1 since customers have up to 90 days to pay their phone charges. "As soon as the books can be closed for 1993," Vitale said, "approximately $80,000 will be distributed to approximately 600 different lesbian and gay supportive organizations." He said the payments are scheduled to go out in May.

CDC Working on New HIV-Infection Count

WASHINGTON (GayNet) — The *New York Times* reports that federal health officials at the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention are once again tackling the formidable task of trying to determine how many Americans are infected with HIV, and that the CDC's often criticized current estimate of 1 million will drop. The CDC plans to make a new estimate in July and, in preparation, the agency invited independent experts to review data. Most other estimates ranged from 600,000 to 800,000. The new estimate could have critical health, political, and economic ramifications. Identifying the national trend in HIV infection and pinpointing geographic areas where the virus is concentrated is crucial to preparing budgets, developing public health policy, evaluating the success of prevention programs, and identifying research needs and priorities. While CDC officials say the new estimate will be based on the best available scientific data, an estimate lower than 1 million will surely spark more criticism. Some fear that the public and government will view the epidemic as less of a threat and reduce financing for education and prevention.

Criticism Grows of New York Official's Remarks

NEW YORK (GayNet) — Responding to growing criticism of one of its members, New York City's Civilian Complaint Review Board has voted to repudiate comments made by the Rev. Ruben Diaz that the upcoming Gay Games IV, slated to be held in the city this June, would encourage homosexuality among young people and cause the number of people infected with HIV to increase. Diaz made the comments in late February in a column published in a number of Spanish-language papers. The board's resolution declared that his comments had not been made on behalf of the board, and that "neither Rev. Diaz nor any other member of the Civilian Complaint Review Board may speak on behalf of the board." Although gay rights organizations have criticized him and three City Council members have called for his resignation, there are no provisions to remove Diaz from the board. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, while emphasizing his disagreement with Diaz's statements, said the minister had a right to express his "religious and moral views."

Ugly Child Custody Fight in North Carolina

LEXINGTON, N.C. (GayNet) — In what rights activists say is a child custody battle between a lesbian mom and her own mother, two lesbians have been charged with

sexually abusing one of the women's 2-year-old daughter. Shirley Edwards, 25, and Donna Madren, 34, were arrested January 11 on felony child sexual abuse charges in a complaint filed by a friend of Edwards' own mother, Elaine van Zant. According to Madren, after Edwards told van Zant last year that she is a lesbian, van Zant began demanding that she be given custody of the woman's infant daughter and the two women began receiving menacing phone calls, had car windows smashed, and were beaten up in a parking lot. "This all stems from her mother not liking the relationship," Madren said. "When she [Edwards] came out she said that Shirley had a choice of either giving her her child or going to a 'normal' lifestyle."

4th US Airman Court Martialled in Germany

BONN, Germany (GayNet) — Air Force Sgt. Mark Rayford has been sentenced to 60 days in the brig for engaging in homosexual acts at the Ramstein air base in Germany. As part of Rayford's court martial, he was stripped of his rank and fined $1,000 in addition to the jail sentence. He is the forth airman, including 1 high-ranking officer, discharged following a military investigation of homosexuality at the base last year. A fifth airman awaits trial on similar charges and three others are still under investigation.

Biotech Firm Seeks 'Orphan Drug' Status

NEW ORLEANS (GayNet) — The New Orleans-based biotech company, Imreg Inc., has applied to the Food & Drug Administration for Orphan Drug status for its experimental drug IMREG-1 and synthetic counterparts. IMREG-1 is being tested with HIV-infected patients who cannot tolerate other antiviral medications. Under the Orphan Drug Act, the maker of an approved orphan drug enjoys exclusive approval for that drug for 7 years after the drug's approval for marketing by the FDA.

Florida Anti-Gay Measure Can't Go on Ballot

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (GayNet) — A proposed state constitutional amendment that would bar gay civil rights in Florida was ruled unconstitutional Thursday, March 4, by the state Supreme Court and blocked from appearing on a statewide ballot this November. The justices ruled the ballot measure was flawed because it did not advise voters of its true meaning and consequences and because it would conflict with basic civil liberties, such as the right of employees to bargain collectively without fear of discrimination. The ballot initiative was backed by the American Family Association, which led a successful campaign to strike down a gay rights ordinance in the city of Tampa in 1992. The wording of the now-dead measure banned new laws and repealed all existing ones granting protections on the basis of any "characteristic, trait, status or condition other than race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, ethnic background, marital status or familial status." "The Florida Supreme Court's ruling is a critical national precedent," said Suzanne Goldberg, who argued against the measure on behalf of the Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund. "It makes clear that civil rights are not special rights—and it deals a powerful blow to the national radical right attack on lesbians and gay men and civil rights generally."

Governor Fears Housing Loans Might Encourage Gays

RICHMOND, Va. (GayNet) — Virginia Gov. George Allen is opposing a plan to make it easier for low-income Virginians to get state housing loans because he says the changes would encourage homosexual and unmarried couples to live together. In a letter Allen argued that the plan would change "long-standing policy in Virginia as it relates to the definition of 'family.'" According to a spokesman for the governor, "Allen doesn't agree with these relationships and is not going to be advocating these relationships in his administration.... This could establish a precedent that could lead to a redefinition of what family is." The spokesman added that homosexuality "is basically viewed by the governor as an unnatural relationship."

The Difference Between 'Them' and 'Us'

SAN FRANCISCO (GayNet) — *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Herb Caen relates a recent anecdote about a gathering of straight and gay men who were watching the Winter Olympic Games together. "I kinda feel sorry for you gays," one of the hetero men commented. "You'll never experience the male bonding that comes from sports." Following a brief, uneasy silence, one of the gay men replied, "Oh, I don't know. Sometimes we sit around in our T-shirts, drinking beer and eating Fritos. Only "we" do it for the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts."

Justice Dept. to Intervene at Camp Sister Spirit

WASHINGTON (GayNet) — Invoking powers under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno has ordered the Justice Department's Community Relations Service (CRS) to intervene in the increasingly tense confrontation between anti-gay residents in Ovett, Miss., and Camp Sister Spirit, a feminist retreat operated by two lesbians. In a letter to the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, Reno wrote, "I am deeply troubled by the harassment and intimidation of Brenda and Wanda Henson ... of Camp Sister Spirit. The intolerance and bigotry demonstrated by some of the people of Ovett has no place in this country. Noting that "sexual orientation is not a protected status under the federal civil rights law," Reno nevertheless said the threat of violence in Ovett is significant enough to issue a Justice Department order authorizing CRS mediators to intercede. The order represents the first time the Justice Department has undertaken to intervene in a case involving threats against gays or lesbians in spite of a decade of escalating anti-gay violence around the country. Gay rights advocates were clearly heartened by Reno's response to their request for government aid in the case. "It's the strongest letter I've seen," said NGLTF spokesman David Smith of the attorney general's reply to the Task Force request for Justice Department intervention. "She just shoots the 'special rights' argument all to hell. It's our hope that this case and other cases like this will serve to educate the public on the fact that this isn't a matter of special rights—which don't exist—it's a matter of not even having civil rights."



Delta Airlines Hit with HIV Discrimination Suit

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. (GayNet) — Joseph A. Sullivan, a 38-year-old former manager at the Delta Airlines office at San Francisco International Airport, has filed a lawsuit charging he was fired from his job because he is infected with HIV and that the air carrier compiled and maintained lists of local workers who were believed infected. Sullivan charged he was harassed on the job and that his privacy was invaded because of his illness. He also claimed in his suit that Delta's airport office manager Donna O'Leary talked about employees she knew or believed were HIV-positive at a management meeting in 1991 and that she drew up a list of names of some 13 workers which she forwarded to Delta's headquarters in Atlanta. A Delta spokesman denied the charges that Sullivan had been fired because of his medical condition and said the 13-year Delta employee has been terminated because of unreliability and excessive work absences. He also said the AIDS list didn't constitute a violation of privacy. "This is a manager communicating critical information to another manager," Delta spokesman Bill Berry said.

Minister 'Outs' AIDS Czar Kristine Gebbie

CONCORD, Calif. (GayNet) — A California televangelist, apparently unable to find anything bad enough to complain about President Clinton's AIDS policy coordinator, Kristine Gebbie, decided to declare her—incorrectly—a lesbian. Ronn Haus, speaking on his Family Christian Broadcast Network (FCBN) based in Concord, Calif., and broadcast throughout the state with additional syndication on Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network, spent part of his "Coast to Coast" program broadcast bemoaning what he sees as the sad state of morality in America. After dolefully ticking off such things as Clinton's announcement of his intention to end the Pentagon ban on gays and lesbians in the military, lifting the ban on fetal tissue research, and ending restrictions on HIV-positive immigrants to the U.S., Haus lamented: "Well, it seemed to be non-stop, ladies and gentlemen. I think of, for example, on June 26 when our president named Kristine Gebbie, a lesbian, as the new 'AIDS czar' in America." Haus offered nothing to back up his statement and made no further reference to Gebbie in the broadcast. Despite the statement by Haus, Gebbie, 49, is a single mother of three children, and there has never been any suggestion from any source that she is homosexual.

Congress Bars Anti-Gay Bias in L.A. Quake Aid

WASHINGTON (GayNet) — Almost unnoticed, Congress has for the first time in U.S. history passed legislation that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in a federal program of any type—a landmark in the gay rights struggle in this country. Rep. Julian Dixon (D-Calif.), whose district includes areas that were badly damaged in the Jan. 17 earthquake that devastated the Los Angeles area, quietly added "sexual orientation" to the $8.6 billion federal disaster relief bill passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton earlier in February. Dixon added the unprecedented anti-bias provision during the Senate-House conference that hammered out a number of minor differences between the two legislative bodies' versions of the disaster relief measure. If anyone noticed Dixon's addition to the lengthy legislation, no one in Congress objected and the Senate-House revised bill passed comfortably. Dixon himself told the *Washington Post*, "I don't think it opens the door for anything else," playing down the importance of the proviso as precedent for future legislation. He acknowledged, however, that it may "set a precedent for any other disaster of this type." Gay rights advocates were as caught off guard as everyone else on Capitol Hill by the unexpected addition of the sexual orientation protections, but were cautious about whether future congressional measures could include sexual orientation protections without a heated debate. "I would like to think that it would be ignored in the future," said David Smith of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "But my hunch is that there is a minority in both the House and the Senate that are rabidly anti-gay and would probably throw out some objections if it were more publicized."

One-Week Orange Juice Boycott Called

TUCSON, Ariz. (GayNet) — The Arizona chapter of Gay and Lesbian Americans, the newly formed national grassroots organization, has called for a one-week national boycott of Florida oranges and orange juice March 12-19 because of the recent appointment of Rush Limbaugh as spokesman for the Florida Citrus Commission. Jonathan Bauer of GLA in Tucson is coordinating the week-long boycott which he says has the support of GLA chapters in North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and California so far. Shortly after the Florida citrus growers named Limbaugh as its high-profile national orange juice spokesman, Pat Robertson on his "700 Club" told his audience to start buying Florida orange juice because of the appointment of the abrasive talk show host to the post "if you call yourself a good Christian." Bauer said he thought the boycott was the only response open to gays and lesbians to register their displeasure over Limbaugh's new post touting orange juice in America. "I think basically they're looking for someone to represent their own views," Bauer said. "Limbaugh fits their red-neck requirements. There's hardly anyone he hasn't attacked." Bauer said there might be "further action" against the Florida orange growers in the future, depending on what they do about the negative reaction to the controversial appointment.

Pope Again Attacks Same-Sex Marriage Resolution

VATICAN CITY (GayNet) — For the 2nd time in 2 weeks, Pope John Paul has urged the rejection of a Feb. 8 resolution by the European Parliament calling on member nations to extend legal marriage rights to same-sex couples and allow them to adopt children. During an address at St. Peter's Square, the pope told pilgrims that the parliament "is asking that a moral disorder be legitimized" and was "inappropriately conferring an institutional value on deviant behavior." While addressing a meeting of bishops at the Vatican on Feb. 10, the pope had made similar remarks denouncing the European Parliament resolution. Two members of the European Parliament, Claudia Roth of Germany and Nel van Dijk of The Netherlands, denounced the pope's sermon as "demonizing gays and lesbians" and compared the church's positions to "the medieval level that had its worst period in the Inquisition."

Anti-Gay Fundies Force Gay Programs Off TV

KEY WEST, Fla. (GayNet) — Florida activists are fuming over a decision by David Drucker, a Denver businessman who owns a half dozen TV stations around the country, over his decision to cancel what is believed to be the only gay and lesbian programming on a commercial station—WEYS-TV in Key West, Fla.—under pressure from the Dallas-based Trinity Broadcasting Network, a conservative religious TV network. Trinity officials reportedly threatened to cancel the several-hours-per-day airtime it purchases on various TV stations owned by Drucker unless he canceled "Network Q," the national gay videomagazine program, and "The Open Closet," a 3-month-old local program. When WEYS manager David Solomon objected to dropping the gay programming at the station, he was also fired. David Drucker can be contacted by writing to him in care of WEYS Channel 22, 527 Southard St., Key West FL 33040 or by phoning (305) 296-4969 or faxing (305) 296-1669.

One-Minute Protest at Shilts Memorial Service

SAN FRANCISCO (GayNet) — A small group of anti-gay fundamentalists, led by Fred Phelps Sr., a disbarred attorney and pastor of the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan., showed up to picket outside funeral services for author and journalist Randy Shilts, who died earlier in February of AIDS. Reportedly delayed by bomb threats at the Topeka airport, Phelps and his dozen or so followers carried signs reading "God Hates Fags" across from Glide Memorial Church here and were met with a fusillade of eggs and ripe fruit tossed from the hundreds of lesbians and gays who formed a human barricade around the church to prevent the memorial services from being disrupted as Phelps had threatened. But after less than 60 seconds of showing their signs and being pelted with eggs and squishy bananas, the Phelps group retreated behind the police lines, returned to the airport and boarded a flight back to Topeka. At San Francisco International Airport, Phelps displayed a bulletproof vest he says he wears at such protests, although he declined to comment on why he and his followers had traveled some 1,500 miles for a protest lasting less than 1 minute. He promised, however, to show up with similar funeral pickets "anywhere a famous fag dies of AIDS" in the country.

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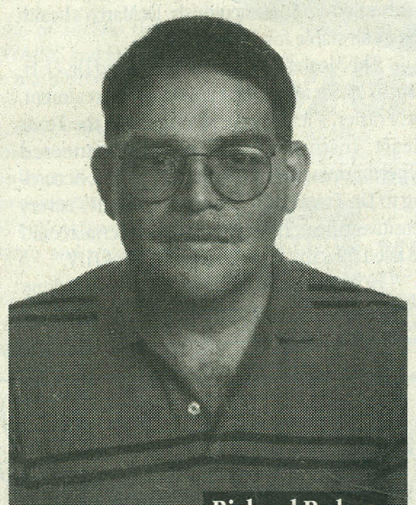
I decided I couldn't wait any longer. I had to have cash fast, and selling my life insurance policy seemed the most effective way of solving my cash crunch.

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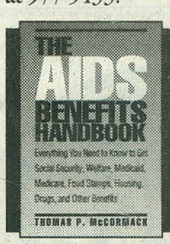
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HYPERTHERMIA TREATMENT RESEARCH MAY OFFER NEW HOPE FOR AIDS CURE

by Alan Davidson

A new foundation has been established in Houston to fund HIV/AIDS research. The Michael L. Mosley Foundation For Living is dedicated to financing natural and non-toxic treatment protocols for HIV. The first research project is a promising hyperthermia treatment.

Hyperthermia treatment is used everyday in America for melanoma cancer treatments and in heart surgeries, but has not yet been approved by the Food and Drug Administration or the American Medical Association in the treatment of AIDS. Paradoxically, recent studies by the Italian medical community at the European Hospital in Rome, show hyperthermia treatment of HIV having amazing effects.

An article in the *Physician's Financial News* cites the case of New Jersey AIDS patient Chuck DeMarco. DeMarco was diagnosed with AIDS in 1988. By 1991 Karposi Sarcoma, a persistent cough and low white blood cell counts left DeMarco dangerously ill. He was told he had less than a year to live. DeMarco flew to Italy and received the full body hyperthermia treatment. In that process blood was removed from his body, heated to 116 degrees and returned to his body, bringing his temperature to 112 degrees for 15 minutes. DeMarco says this process destroyed the AIDS virus in his system.

Since this treatment in 1991 DeMarco's cough and lesions have disappeared. He now tests negative for HIV antibodies in his bloodstream. His T-cell count has returned to the 700-900 range. According to the National Institutes of Health the normal, healthy T-cell range of an adult is 800-1200. Miraculously, DeMarco's health has been stable for 31 months.

The Mosley Foundation contacted Dr. O. H. (Bud) Frazier about the hyperthermia treatment. Dr. Frazier, a leading heart surgeon at the Texas Heart Institute in Houston, pioneered hyperthermia research in the late 1970's. According to Dr. Frazier, "We know that the HIV is very sensitive to heat. Theoretically hyperthermia could be used effectively in the treatment of HIV."

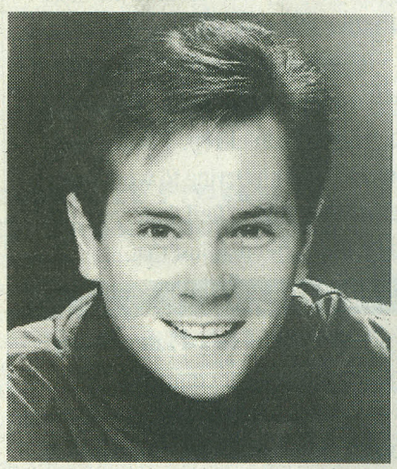
However, solid research has not been done on the effect of hyperthermia and the virus. The Italians are showing promising effects with this treatment, but no substantial research has been done on which to base those conclusions. Dr. Frazier went on to say that grant money has not been available for this research in this country.

The Mosley Foundation asked Dr. Frazier if he would conduct such a research project if it could be privately funded. He replied positively that he and a colleague would be very interested. It would take several weeks to define the parameters of the experiment, but serious research could begin soon. A very rough estimate of cost would be approximately $200,000. If research went well, clinical trials with PWA's could begin as soon as from six months to one year.

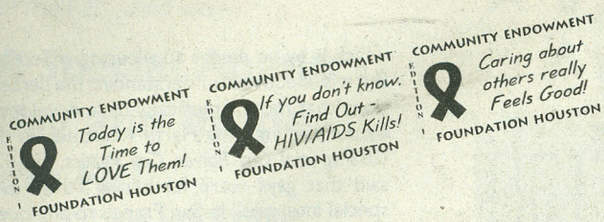
The Mosley Foundation considers this hyperthermia treatment to have great potential in relieving the suffering of AIDS. Action has been taken to fund this project. Interested sponsors may contact Alan Davidson, director of The Mosley Foundation, at 3100 Richmond, Suite 204, Houston TX 77098, or call (713) 942-0924. ▼

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Stamp Out AIDS with Care Images:

Community Endowment Foundation Puts Their Heart in Housing

Community Endowment Foundation, a non-profit organization formed in December 1991, has recently introduced "Care Images," small stamps that are intended, like Easter Seals, to be used on your correspondence and envelopes.

Each stamp pictures a red ribbon along with one of several short messages to encourage compassion for those with HIV/AIDS and increase awareness of the deadly disease. A sheet of 70 stamps is available for a $5 donation with the proceeds benefiting CEF.

This fund-raising project is one way for CEF to accomplish their goal of providing an affordable housing project for persons with HIV/AIDS. Currently CEF is working to develop the former Holiday Inn at Blodgett and Main Streets into a community facility to not only provide single-room housing for up to 280 individuals, but also provide a 24-hour restaurant and lounge, a central clearinghouse of services without charge, and a place for educational and community meetings.

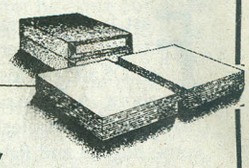
As part of the facility's services, early intervention nutritional programs will be provided to promote longer periods of wellness between incidents of illness. Furthermore, it will offer innovative work schedules of 40 to 50 hours per month at $5 per hour to residents. Income from these jobs will help to supplement resources for dining room credits, as well as provide a sense of usefulness and self-esteem for the worker/resident.

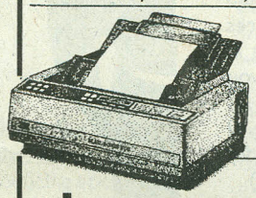
In continuing to develop, CEF needs to expand its Board of Directors and is in need of professional members in the areas of legal, accounting, real estate and fundraising. The Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 6 pm at 3406 Audubon Place.

Care Images can be purchased through the CEF at their office or at the following stores: Basic Brothers, Lobo's, The Tire Store, Leather by Boots, Crossroads Market and The Bird Shop & Pet Clinic. For more information, to volunteer or to participate in selling Care Images, call 713/528-0037.

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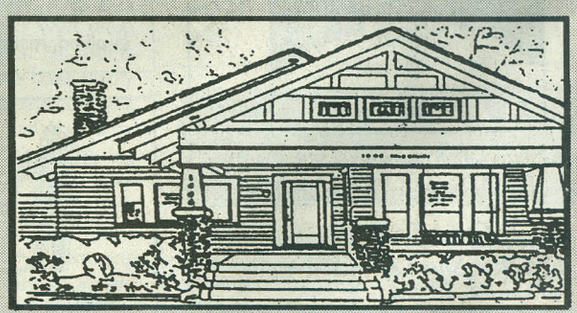
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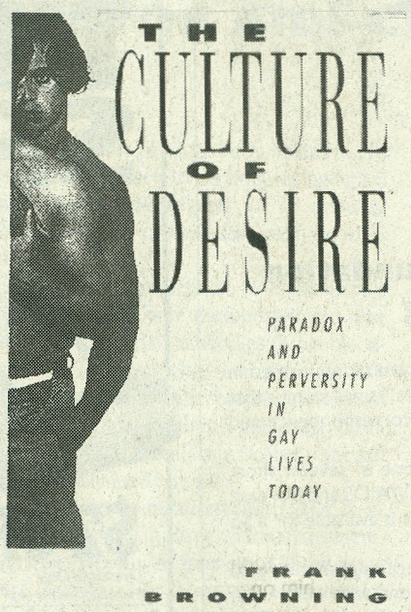
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The Culture of Desire: Paradox and Diversity in Gay Lives Today

by Frank Browning

Reviewed by Bruce Graugnard



Fast forward, starting in the '80s up to today. Gay men coming to terms with AIDS and the loss of those they love and care about. Add the political and social forces that gay men and lesbians are embracing in some degree and fighting in others and you have a taste of the issues Frank Browning tries to sort through in his book *The Culture of Desire: Paradox and Perversity in Gay Lives Today* (Crown Publishers, Inc. New York, 1993.)

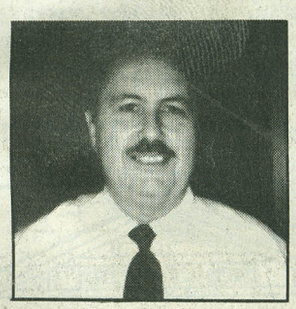
Browning, who has reported for National Public Radio since 1983, brings stories of gay sex and relationships to his book through interviews as well as some of his own experiences and observations regarding gay life and the politics that engulfs it. *The Culture of Desire*, Browning's third book after *The American Way of Crime* and *The Vanishing Land*, goes back further in gay lives for historical reference, but focuses mostly on those aspects of life that affect gay men (mostly) and women today. This bias towards gay men comes from his two years with National Public Radio as their AIDS reporter. That, he readily admits, was the foundation for most of the book. Still, a generation has grown up since Stonewall, and the gay culture has grown and evolved with it. It is the question over what "gay culture" is that intrigues Browning most. By its dissection and evaluation of its pieces, he guides the reader through this question, his concerns about the desire to form a community, and the efforts for true social equality which have the potential to sever the sexual link from the gay political and social movements.

Browning looks back at how gay life has evolved mainly through his media mirror, which is by no means an accurate reflection. But it is effective in understanding the perceptions that most Americans have developed, by mentioning how Harry Reasoner, in the CBS special *Gay Power, Gay Politics*, in 1979 said that gays were furthering "their own special interests" in San Francisco and questioned the institutionalization of S & M in gay life which is not an institution in the straight world. While Browning points out the media bias of CBS, he agrees, to some extent, with the report. Sexuality defines being gay, and while gays strive to fight to be recognized as people independent of their sexual variation they lose that aspect of their lives which keep them together. There lies the paradox.

The author discusses more philosophically the sexual roles of heterosexuals, as well as gay men and lesbians, and the psychological aspects of penetration and domination. For the average gay reader, who have come to terms about what they enjoy and who they are, this pseudo-psych is hardly important, and for the straight reader or those trying to understand their own sexuality it would be taken as a much-too-definitive answer to the question that shouldn't need to be asked. Or for that matter answered.

His discussion covers the near hero-like work that has been done by HIV-positive individuals and the drug underground that had responded faster than the media or, certainly, most government officials. He sights the inequities in society that are becoming more and more common in the struggle for rights. ("Why are gay men expected to understand straight families and lifestyles, while straight men don't want to understand or accept gay lifestyles?) But overall he questions what has been shaped to become "gay culture." Particularly (again through his media mirror) by the focus on young, hairless, white men and the images we have of politically active and socially outspoken gay men to the exclusion of a large portion of the gay population.

There are many anecdotes from gay men throughout the country and from the author's own experience which are as candid as Madonna's *Truth or Dare*. While his Fire Island antics hardly provide a unique perspective on gay life, they do go to show that Browning has lived much of his privileged life the way many would like, and he still questions if gay culture exists. Maybe Browning's reflection on philosophy and psychological theory do help to put some of the last decade or more in perspective. It has at least given him a chance to review his life, and maybe the reader can use that as a mirror for his own. In its lack of answers this book provides the question as to what shape the "Gay Culture" will take as it is molded by the diversity of gay groups and media interests, if in fact it exists at all. ▼

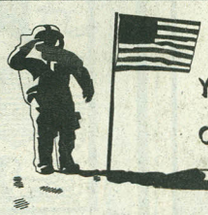


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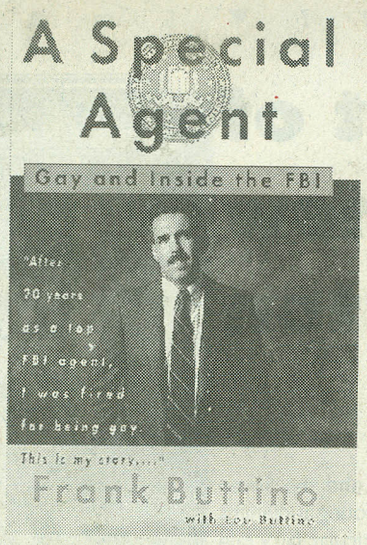
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The man who took on the FBI... and won

A Special Agent: Gay and Inside the FBI

by Frank and Lou Buttino

Reviewed by Susan Mortell
GayNet News Service



Frank Buttino is, as his brother once called him, "a reluctant hero." Buttino, who challenged the FBI's policy on lesbians and gays and won his job back last year after being fired because he was gay, never chose to be a gay activist. Prior to initiating permanent change in the FBI's anti-gay policy, Buttino had lived a very private, conservative, and closeted gay life. Buttino never volunteered the information to the FBI that he was gay and, when he was first confronted with this allegation, he denied it. Buttino was not proud of this lie, but he had no desire to be a test case for gay rights. He was not out to his Italian-Catholic family, who lived in a small town in New York, and he had no intention of coming out to America.

Initially, Buttino only wanted to keep his job. He loved his job and, after 20 years of exemplary service, he wanted to hold onto his pension. However, what became clear to Buttino over time was that these 20 years of work, often in life-threatening situations, meant zip to the FBI.

In the Bureau's eyes, the worst thing an agent could possibly do was even look gay. The Bureau was investigating at least one case a week of suspected homosexual employees. Agents were being fired on evidence as minuscule as having a roommate of the same sex. In time, the evidence against Buttino weighed too heavily, and for his own peace of mind, he could no longer lie under oath. Buttino decided to tell the truth. But throughout his ordeal, the FBI held on tight to the one lie he told. Eventually they claimed that they weren't firing him because he was gay, but because he lied. The hypocrisy of this allegation is disturbing, in that many heterosexual agents were caught lying to the bureau and their punishments were much less severe. Agents had been caught lying about driving Bureau cars while intoxicated, falsifying government documents, and disclosing unauthorized information. None of these agents were ever fired.

The Bureau began to harass Buttino and tell lie on top of lie, in a viscous attempt to get him out. Backed into a corner, Buttino finally filed a lawsuit against the FBI and came out publicly, simply to keep his job. But as the case evolved, Buttino found that he was not only saving his job, he was introducing a permanent change in FBI policy toward the hiring of all lesbians and gays.

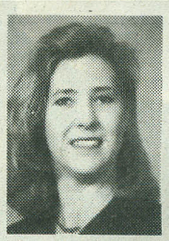
This realization, and the journey that the case took him on, proved to be a profound personal awakening for Buttino. After being closeted for 17 years, and never so much as attending a gay pride parade, he became a welcomed and honored member of the gay community. In one of the many speeches he gave to the community, he publicly thanked the FBI for helping him come out. This book is not only a fascinating story of a legal battle; it is a lasting historical document of our times. In the years between 1984 and 1993, Buttino observes America and the gay movement. He talks of AIDS, hate crimes, the religious right, the Clinton election and many other events. This is a rich time in history for gays and lesbians, and it was a ripe time for Buttino to stand up to the FBI. How this journey touched Buttino's personal life is especially moving. A good Italian son, Buttino speaks with deep love and respect for his parents. He claims that if he wasn't gay, he would have gladly spent his life teaching high school and coaching football in his home town. He had not come out to his parents because he feared losing their love, and, because they were elderly, he feared it would kill them. When he did come out, they were so in the dark that they didn't even know what a lesbian was. From listening to television evangelists, his mother believed that homosexuality was the work of Satan. But after some patient explanations by Buttino, they slowly came around. They stood behind him 100% in his lawsuit, and they assured him that they loved and accepted him more than ever.

Also heartwarming is the story of how Buttino's brother, Lou, came to help Buttino write the book. The two brothers had been partially estranged ever since the Vietnam War. They differed in their views on the war, as Lou was a conscientious objector and Frank was a strong patriot. To prove his patriotism, Frank joined the FBI; in Lou's eyes, Frank became a cop and a part of the establishment. When Buttino came out to Lou, the two brothers were reunited as close friends, and together they co-created the book. It was not only Buttino's family who stood behind him in his struggle. After he came out, co-worker after co-worker came forward to voice their support.

His experience was not unlike Keith Meinhold's in the military. Meinhold also claimed that his fellow sailors shook his hand and wished him luck after he came out, while the bureaucrats on top proceeded to make his life difficult. Buttino mentions only a few assaults of homophobia after he came out, and these he handled well. When one co-worker told Buttino that he didn't approve of his lifestyle, Buttino told the man that he didn't need his approval in order to live his life. When another agent warned Buttino never to make a pass at him, Buttino assured the man that he preferred younger guys who were in better shape. Some of the assaults came from gays themselves, who criticized Buttino for ever belonging to the FBI. At one gay rally he was shouted at for participating in what some viewed as a homophobic organization. Buttino's therapist encouraged Buttino to respond briefly to this type of criticism and then disengage. The therapist commented, "People who confront others by shouting aren't interested in discussing an issue. They're more interested in attracting attention."

Buttino is not the only hero in this book. He mentions many, and among them are San Francisco lawyer Richard Gayer. Gayer was Buttino's attorney, and the details of how Gayer took on the FBI and caught them with their pants down is nothing less than awesome. This is a story about gays and the FBI, which the media neglected to tell us. Well researched and beautifully written, it is a vital part of our history that no gay person should miss. ▼

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The Art of Matthew Remington

by Eric L. Roland



Walt Disney's animated version of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" was colorful, enchanting and has delighted young audiences for years. Matthew Remington's version of this particular fairy tale is slightly different and tailored to a more "queer" audience.

His pen and ink drawing of Snow Dwight [sic] and the Seven Dwarfs features the members of the Village People and Valerie Perrine as the endearing little people, an allusion to the '70s disco flick *Can't Stop the Music.*

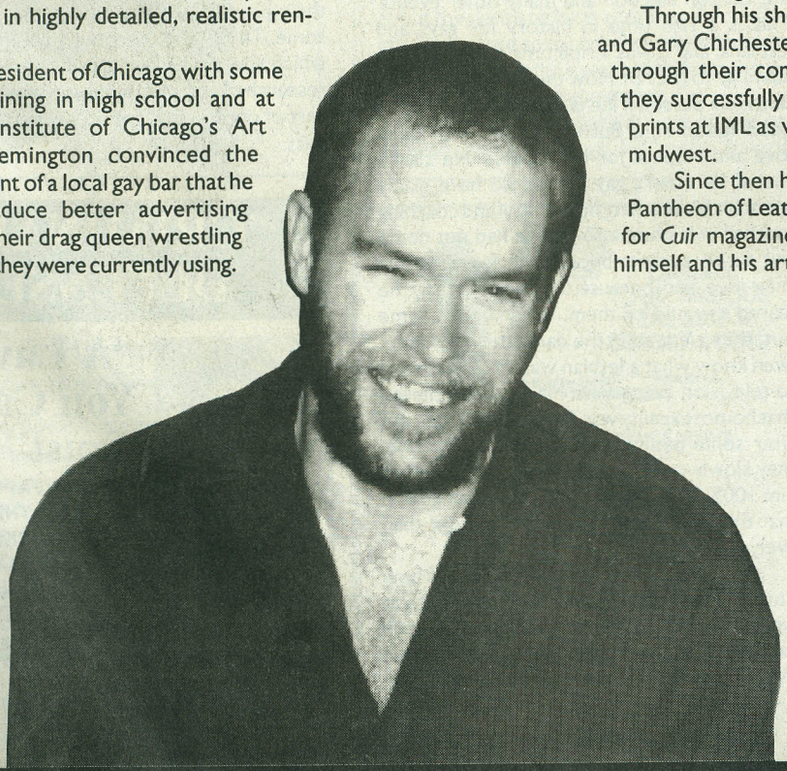
Tailoring famous fairy tales to the infamous "fairy" culture is something that Remington has toyed with but would like to do more of in the future.

"I like pop culture, and I've always loved the original Grimm tales," says Remington, 27. "It's just a matter of adapting the tales to a gay lifestyle."

His work is almost always interrelated to the gay community, however, his pen-and-ink drawings are certainly not exclusive to humorous caricatures of people—real or imagined.

Remington, who moved to Houston eight months ago from Chicago and currently tends bar at Montrose Mining Company, also draws homoerotic images of the male body. These drawings often entail his caricature style with exaggerated body parts, but not always. Some of his best work captures the male form in highly detailed, realistic rendering.

As a resident of Chicago with some artistic training in high school and at The Art Institute of Chicago's Art School, Remington convinced the management of a local gay bar that he could produce better advertising flyers for their drag queen wrestling than what they were currently using.



"That led to doing murals in that bar and displaying my work in other bars," Remington recalls. "I started doing art shows in bars and sold everything I displayed."

Through his shows at various Chicago bars he met R.J. Chaffin and Gary Chichester, producers of International Mr. Leather (IML) through their company, Back Door Promotions. Consequently, they successfully helped Remington put together shows and sell prints at IML as well as other gay-related productions across the midwest.

Since then he has been commissioned to design the logo for Pantheon of Leather, a T-shirt for Pacific Street, and an illustration for *Cuir* magazine. He has currently been working to establish himself and his art work in the Houston gay community, with his





goal being to have enough pieces to do a local show. However, that is not his only goal for the future.

"I really want to do animation," says Remington, "but that requires a whole lot of schooling or a lot of training, and school is too expensive for me to afford right now."

Furthermore, Remington would like to develop a comic strip for a gay publication and to publish adult picture books. Currently he has three prints for sale on display at Leather Forever, 704 Fairview. Matthew Remington can also be seen at the patio bar at Montrose Mining Company doodling on his sketch pad as he waits for customers. ▼

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An Extraordinary Sound Sampler: Houston Symphony Orchestra

by Lawrence P. Hampton

Three talented conductors and three centuries of repertoire made for a remarkably pleasing trio of recent Houston Symphony Orchestra concerts. The extraordinarily diverse palette of music-making on the weekends of February 12, 19 and 26 gave Houston audiences everything from overture to tone poem, chamber orchestra to huge romantic sonorities, and concerto to ballet score.

Weekend of February 12:
An Early Masterpiece From the Ballets Russes

We live in a time in which the romantic century lies at the absolute center of gravity of music heard in the concert hall. The program for the weekend of February 12 is an indication that this powerful grip of 19th century repertoire may be waning as pieces of our own century performed more frequently.

Guest conductor Lawrence Foster opened the program with the lively Berlioz Overture to Benvenuto Cellini. Written in 1838, the piece is full of the orchestrational wizardry for which this French composer is noted. Two twentieth-century works made up the balance of the program, Samuel Barber's poignant Violin Concerto, and Igor Stravinsky's ballet score, Petrouchka.

Petrouchka is an interesting choice for the closing work on a concert. Commissioned by Russian impresario Sergei Diaghilev for his Ballet Russes, it is the second great Stravinski ballet score in a trilogy. Over the course of two decades Diaghilev's Ballets Russes gave the world an entire family of musical masterpieces by many great early-twentieth-century composers.

Stravinsky's intriguing score is a musically radical setting of the Russian tale of a doomed puppet with human emotions at a carnival in St. Petersburg. The striking main musical motif probably shocked the audience when it premiered in Paris on June 13, 1911.

The motif splits the octave literally in half, playing an identical melody in the musical key based on the octave tones and simultaneously in the key whose beginning tone lies at the center of the octave.

Throughout the score Stravinsky contrasts dark musical moments with the brilliant, busy street-fair songs and sounds. The resulting bittersweet dissonance evokes the story of Petrouchka perfectly.

Most pieces end with a thunderous series of final chords, sending the audience to its feet. Petrouchka defies this formula and ends with a barely audible whisper of a melody, intoning in a manner almost ghostly.

Weekend of February 19: Cossack Bloodshed and Old-World Artistry

Russian pianist Bella Davidovich performed the Mendelssohn Piano Concerto No. 1 under the baton of Czech-born conductor Zdenek Macal. One senses in her masterful touch the accumulated experience and musical wisdom of her 28 seasons of concert performances in Leningrad.

Since emigrating in 1978, Davidovich has mesmerized audiences in the West with her flawless technical prowess and what appears to be a deeply felt artistic sense. She is an absolute pleasure to hear.

Concluding this concert was the tone poem, *Taras Bulba*, by the Czech master Leos Janacek. The tone poem describes a grizzly conflict between Ukranian Cossack warriors and their Polish invaders. It chronicles, musically, Nikolai Gogul's short story of a heroic Cossack leader's tragic loss of first one son, then the other, before his own death at the hands of the Polish oppressors.

Composed just before the end of World War I, *Taras Bulba* presents the listener with sharp, rich orchestral textures and a vivid impression of the soulful—yet ghastly—action being portrayed.

The intense effect is all the more remarkable because it translates into symphonic terms the language of jazz—years before jazz would be otherwise significantly integrated into "concert" music.

Weekend of February 26:
Contrasting Concerti and Brahmsian Revelry

Maestro Eschenbach led the Symphony the weekend of February 26 in a program that contrasted the lean chamber orchestra of the 18th-century playing a Bach keyboard concerto with the expansive 19th century orchestra for which Brahms scored his impressive First Symphony. The 18th-century orchestra did double duty in a second piece for keyboard by 20th-century Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich — his Piano Concerto No. 1 in C minor.

Pianist Olli Mustonen of Finland performed both concerti, with differing results. The Bach Concerto showed Mr. Mustonen to be a proficient and gifted interpreter of the baroque master on piano. Mr. Mustonen has a remarkable ability to convey the light texture of harpsichord flourishes on the rich sonorous modern concert grand piano.

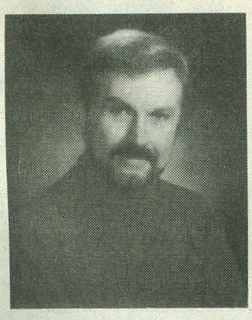
Brahms' Symphony No. 1 in C minor is a piece with something for everyone. Its spine-tingling, titanic opening chords drive a chromatic wedge through something akin to Phil Spector's wall of sound. Lush dolce passages walk a marvelously fine line between child-like innocence and vaguely romantic impulses. Tight structuralists (and those who are generally bored by the "wanderings" of French and other non-Germanic music of the same era) can appreciate the composition's classical order and the symmetry of its musical design.

Sturm und drang enthusiasts have plenty of intensity to feast upon in this work as well. The romantic, yet classical, forces that Brahms weaves together so successfully in his compositions are evident in this masterpiece of symphonic writing. The orchestra under Eschenbach gave an appealing interpretation and the piece proved a satisfying conclusion to this series of three diverse symphonic programs. ▼

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Acknowledgments on the Open Road

by Tim Lynch

I took a break from my usual habit of riding our local public transportation and borrowed my mom's car for the week. There I was driving along minding my own business when the toot of the horn from several passing cars began to get my attention. Car after car began to pass, first tooting their horns and, as they skirted past, proceeding to give me the "thumbs up" or just a big, broad smile.

At first I thought the tedious months of working out had really paid off. But then, again, I remembered I was in a car and that my newly toned buttocks and pecks would all but be invisible except to maybe a passing semi. So what the hell was going on?

I was positive that my gas tank wasn't open or that my muffler wasn't raking down the street—I would have heard that. In a last neurotic introspection, I checked to be sure that my seat buckle or coattail wasn't hanging outside the car door. Nope, everything seemed in order. So what was going on?

I knew they weren't mocking my driving or calling me a bad driver—that would have required the use of different fingers. And I was fairly sure they weren't trying to pick me up since not much conversation can happen at 50 miles per hour in separate vehicles. It had to be something else.

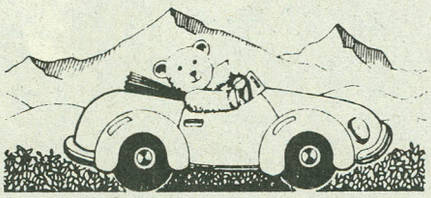
Then it began to dawn on me, after a sporty blue car came from behind and started to pass me. It was impeccably clean for a city car. Emanating from the left hand corner of the bumper was a small patch of bright colors—a rainbow flag decal, just like the one I gave my mother and sister a year ago after the March on Washington.

And then it hit me. It was simply acknowledgment. Beyond all the social class economic muckety muck they were just saying "Hi! Me too!"

• • •

Now that I know, I drive around in my Mom's Gay Car racing up to other cars with the gay pride symbols. It's almost a game on the open road. *Find the homosexual, look, search and wait. Faggot alert! Full steam ahead—double toot-toot. Dyke on the right! Double toot-toot. Closet case, follow me—double toot-toot, vvvrrroooom, and away we go!*

It's a wild feeling of power one feels as two rainbow-stickered cars drive down the road together. Kinda like the March on Washington, but on a smaller scale. Instead of being surrounded by a million fags, dykes, lesbians, homosexuals, 'mos, gays, queers and queens, it's just you and some queer driving next to you. In a crowd of cars all



going straight, two cars swerve to the left, then right, in unison, like a water ballet.

In a way it's romantic. The symbols of our culture, like the Rainbow Freedom Flag or pink triangle, allows us to acknowledge ourselves and others around us. It happens at unforeseen times. Just when you think that the game has been all but played out it takes a different twist.

Just the other day while playing Gay Tag (or "Gay Toot,"as I like to call it) a car pulls up alongside me. There, gridlocked in a traffic jam, I thought nothing of the other car. As I sat waiting out a traffic light, I got the feeling that I was being watched. Immediately my Gaydar went off. Ding! Ding! Ding! Ding!

I nonchalantly looked over my shoulder, pretending to read the address of the building on the street. The other driver and I locked eyes, then immediately looked away, shyly.

Moments later, it happened again. Even without talking, important communication was taking place. I took one last look at him, just has he looked up at me. We both smiled and I flipped up the collar of my jacket to reveal my pink triangle. This got a prideful response from my new cohort, and, as always, the broad smile and "thumbs up." When the light changed we were all smiles and on our way. *Vvrrrooooom.* Commitment, disclosure and risk being gay on the open road. Oh well, all in a day's work.

Not only did we make ourselves known to our brethren, but to the public at large. Many in our culture, because of family, money or for other reasons beyond them and us, are unable to just come out and say, "Hey, I'm gay" to total strangers. But the power we emanate through our display of gay symbols helps our closeted brothers and sisters who want OUT, but haven't found the courage or inner strength. We who stand proudly and assert ourselves are heroes to those who cannot. Being out and showing it is true heroism. That button, patch or sticker is our badge of honor.

Wear it proudly. ▼

Editor's Note: OutSmart bumperstickers, (black with a little pink triangle) are available for 50¢. Send your requests with check or money order to: OutSmart Magazine 2990 Richmond #316, Houston, TX 77098. Call 713/520-7237 for more information.



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THE FLIRTATIONS: HARMONIC CONVERGENCE THE *Gay* WAY

by Nancy Ford

What? You've never heard of The Flirtations? Where've you been? Hiding under a rock in Ovette, Mississippi? The Flirtations, recording artists, musicians, comedians, screen stars, and all-around good looking guys are a 4-man (now), 8-year-old a cappella singing group, but with a twist. Their weave of classics, rock, do-wop and lullabies render The Flirtations not easily categorized, but extremely addictive.

Founded by the late Michael Callan, The Flirtations consists of Jon Atherton, Aurelio Font, Cliff Townsend and newest member Jimmy Rutland, "the young one," who spoke with us from his waterfront home in Provincetown, Massachusetts.

Jimmy Rutland stresses that The Flirtation's goal goes far beyond musical perfection. "Building bridges is important to us as a group. It's part of our mission.

The group recently appeared at a venue here in Houston known mostly for showcasing up-and-coming or down-and-going rock bands. My gay male friend and I took our seats at a table with a straight, married couple who appeared to have no reason to be there other than to enjoy the good music and message. This did not surprise Rutland in the least. "It's very gratifying to me that our audiences are so mixed and not specialized."

For the as-yet unindoctrinated, The Flirtations always introduce/expose themselves at the beginning of the show, divulging bits and pieces of their highly diverse backgrounds (and foregrounds) in a rapid, single-sentence design. *One of us attempted suicide as a teen. One of us is* ____. *One of us is* ____. It's a very effective method of preparing for the evening of intimacy that inevitably follows.

"The introduction is a very important part of the show," Jimmy elaborates. "It's a way to sort of put our diversity out there and get a lot of information across in a very short amount of time. It works beautifully. We are all so very different. There are many different aspects of our personality which people can identify with."

Despite the nearly-perfect harmonic blend presented on stage, Rutland stresses that each Flirt has an identity of his own. "I guess we are [a family]. We definitely fight like a family. We're very different people. I think that makes us strong. Maybe we're sort of a microcosm of how our communities can progress. We manage to come together even with all our differences."

Jimmy Rutland on...

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

"On the one hand, I'm glad we're making the small strides that we are making. He is acknowledging that there are actually gay people in this country. He's doing some good things. On the other hand, he's a schmoozer. He's a people pleaser. You can't really believe anything he says. Like a lot of the men I've dated."

ON MICHAEL CALLAN (FOUNDER OF THE FLIRTATIONS, RECENTLY SUCCUMBED TO AIDS):

"All of us were so moved by him, impressed by him, in awe of him so much that there's a piece of him in what we do. Each of us have taken little different parts, I think. Michael's passing was different. [Callan's death] began years ago. He insisted that people discuss their feelings about it. There was nothing abrupt about it, there was nothing surprising about it. When he died we all knew it was coming. He always said quality was more important than quantity. At the very end the quality of his life went down precipitously. In the last couple weeks he went off all his medication, and he basically just willed himself away."

ON CHILDREN:

"[The dearth of gay-parenting is] one of the most devastating things about homophobia—internalized homophobia in particular. The whole 'stay away from kids—lesbians and gays have no business around children' is something we need to overcome. If homosexuality is genetic, as I believe it is, it's almost a political obligation we have—to have children. Create those little queers!"

ON COMING OUT:

"Give people the same freedom to be as irritated as you were when you realized. It took us how many years to figure out what was going on? I'm still battling my own inner homophobia, and I've known I was gay forever."

While most people work to live, the fortunate among us live to work. Rutland classifies himself in the latter category. "I love what The Flirtations are doing. It's meaningful. The response we get from audiences is so huge and warm. I don't mean to sound self-congratulatory, but it feels like we're touching people in a way other than just singing a song. Our goal is to change the world, and it feels like that's possible [when on stage]. It's absolutely the most honest and wonderful performing I've ever done."

His parents are supportive of Jimmy's career with The Flirtations, each in his or her own special way. His Georgia-based mother attends their concerts in Atlanta, always surrounded by a host of friends. His father, who has never seen Jimmy perform with the group is "a recently re-born, charismatic fundamentalist, which put up a whole new set of walls for us. You know—'I love you, but you're going to hell.'"

Before they go to hell, The Flirtations embark on a nine-city/twelve-day tour that includes Germany. On April 15 The Flirtations perform in concert here in Houston, benefiting The Assistance Fund and Northern Lights Alterntatives/AIDS Mastery Workshop at the Wyndham Warwick Ballroom, 5701 Main. Opening the show is comedian Nancy Ford. The $35 ticket includes the concert followed by a cocktail party in the Penthouse Ballroom with cash bar and hors d'oeuvres. Tickets are available through ADVANTIX. Call 1-800-766-6048.

Nancy Ford is a Houston-based comedian and writer, proud to currently be in possession of Jimmy Rutland's personal address and home phone number.

TAF TESTIMONIAL

Dear Sean and The Assistance Fund,

It has taken me a long time to get a letter written and sent to you. However, I realized that I needed to let all of you know what you did for me and how much I appreciate it.

On July 28 I mailed an application to you for assistance with my health insurance premiums. I wasn't sure how long it would take to hear from you, but I figured at least a week—maybe two. Three days later on July 31, a day that I was feeling very bad, I went to my mailbox. Among the letters I received was one from TAF.

I can remember how nervous I was. I thought it might be a request for more information, or a denial of assistance. When I opened the envelope and saw the copy of the check that was issued to my insurance company, I was overcome with happiness and relief. As bad as I had been feeling that day, I felt pretty good at that moment, thanks to you.

When I looked at the date the check was issued, I couldn't believe it. It was July 29th, the day after I mailed the application. I cannot believe how quickly it was processed. If only I could be that efficient.

I could go on and on, but I just wanted you to know that you brought a smile to a person that was not feeling well, and you gave me peace of mind in knowing that I would have insurance for at least three more months. It's a wonderful feeling to know that there are caring, compassionate people out here who are willing to help those in need in this way.

Thanks Sean, for answering my many questions over the phone. God bless you, the staff and all those who support the organization.

Sincerely,

Name and Address Withheld

THE ASSISTANCE FUND:

What You Need, When You Need It...

The goal of The Assistance Fund, a two-year-old Houston service organization, is to provide people with HIV/AIDS the ability to receive uninterrupted medical care. Its services are efficient, effective and simple: TAF gives people with HIV/AIDS the means to receive the most promising treatment options, and provides people without insurance their life-saving prescriptions.

The affect of adequate health insurance—or lack of it—on people challenged with HIV/AIDS is dramatic. It provides not only health care, but peace of mind and security. It is estimated that one in every 90 residents of the Houston Metropolitan area are currently infected with HIV. This disease most often hits people of working age between 25 to 39 who are unprepared for catastrophic illness.

People with no insurance are less likely to be tested and receive early treatment if necessary, even though early diagnosis is a critical factor in increasing the individual's odds of long-term survival. Those who lack insurance or are poorly insured are discharged from hospitals sooner, and receive fewer services while they are there. The quality of care cannot be

Continued on page 45

Ask the Dentist

Dear Dr. Smith,

I have recently noticed that my breath has gotten really bad, my gums are sore and bleed really easily. I have also noticed the gums receding between the teeth. Is this an infection or just God's way of telling me I need to weed out my circle of friends?

Signed Dragon Breath

Dear D.B.,

If this condition appeared relatively suddenly, with foul breath odor, bleeding, sore or painful gums and receding of the gum points between the teeth, you may have an infection called Necrotizing Gingivitis. During World War I, this was called Trench Mouth because the troops in the trenches had this infection in epidemic numbers. It is a bacterial infection caused by a combination of plaque buildup, high stress, poor nutrition and lack of sleep. These factors combine to cause a temporary immune dysfunction which allows an opportunistic infection of the gums. Treatment traditionally involves a thorough cleaning by your dentist, sometimes accompanied by antibiotics. Several antibiotics work well, but in my experience, the tetracyclines work best. Following grandmother's advice is very important too; cut out the partying, try to lower your stress levels where possible, improve your nutrition and get adequate sleep. You probably need to do more in the oral hygiene department with thorough brushing, flossing and water picking. Mouth washes are not enough because they will not penetrate below the gumline where the bacteria build up. If your gums bleed profusely when you try to brush them, soften a new soft bristle toothbrush under hot tap water and gradually increase the vigor of your brushing over a two-week period. Think of this as gum aerobics. Your gums will be sore until they get "buffed" just as your body will be sore if you start a new exercise program.

Dear Dr. Smith,

My mouth is so dry all the time that I wake up with cotton mouth at night and have to sip water constantly. There is a burning sensation in my tongue and inside the lips, and I can't eat my favorite spicy foods any more. I'm dating the assistant manager at my favorite Mexican restaurant, so I need help FAST!

Signed Richard G.

Dear Richard,

Your dry mouth may be caused by a number of things, but the most common is dry mouth (xerostomia) from prescription or over-the-counter medication. In some cases, it is caused by cancer therapy like radiation to the head and neck areas that can damage the saliva glands. Another cause, while rare, is a hereditary condition called Sjogren's Syndrome. Your physician can check for these various causes. Because the underlying cause may not be treatable or if you are on medication that cannot be discontinued, I will talk about treating the symptoms. Simple things you can do might include chewing sugar-free mint gum, sucking on sugar-free hard candies (sweetened with xylitol, sorbitol or mannitol), artificial saliva substitutes or sugar-free peppermint Certs. VERY IMPORTANT—stay away from gum or candy that has regular sugar (sucrose). This will cause terrible decay problems very rapidly because the normal protective saliva is diminished. Recent studies at the University of Louisville Health Science Center have found that the drug pilocarpine in small doses relieved dry mouth in 54% of patients, with the best results generally occurring at 12 weeks (*Dentistry Today*, Dec. 1993). Inquire with your physician to see if this is appropriate, because pilocarpine can interfere with other medication and can have undesirable side effects. Your burning sensation and sensitivity to spicy foods may be from a fungal infection called atrophic candidiasis. While candidiasis normally causes white patches that rub off, the atrophic form causes a general redness and burning of the tongue and skin lining of the mouth. In my practice, a four-part solution of liquid tetracycline, benadryl, nystatin and the steroid dexamethasone works well as a rinse and spit treatment.

Got a question for Dr. Bruce Smith? Address your letters to the good doctor at 1006 Missouri Street, Houston, TX 77006 or call him at (713) 529-4364.

CONFLICTING IDEAS ABOUT GUM DISEASE

The Roper Report on Oral Health surveyed over 1,000 American adults over age 18 and found that 80% thought they did not have any periodontal (gum) disease. When asked if they had any of the following symptoms—bleeding gums, swelling, pain, receding gums, shift in the bite or loose teeth—70% reported at least one of the symptoms. 77% know that brushing alone will not prevent gum disease, 58% know that plaque is the main cause of gum disease, 41% said that losing their teeth is their number one fear regarding oral health and only 7% say cavities are their main oral health problems. This report shows that cavities are no longer the main oral health concern for Americans, because dentists have worked long and hard to educate people about good oral hygiene and decay prevention. The next task is to raise awareness about gum disease.



Calif. Marijuana Initiative Campaign Begins

SAN FRANCISCO (GayNet) — Kicking off this year's campaign, backers of the proposed California Hemp Initiative are counting on several recent high-profile legal cases in the state involving the use of marijuana to alleviate suffering among people with AIDS. Lynette Shaw, a noted national advocate of the medical use of marijuana, hopes cases like Mary Rathbun, a 69-year-old grandmother arrested for making pot-laced brownies for people with AIDS, Sam Skipper, a 39-year-old man with AIDS who successfully argued a medical necessity defense on recent drug possession charges, only to be jailed for violating his parole on an earlier pot charge, and the recent public campaign by 2 medical marijuana activists in Santa Cruz, may turn the tide in favor of the Hemp Initiative this year. Shaw said the campaign has already gathered 100,000 of the some 385,000 voter signatures needed to put the initiative on the November ballot. If approved by voters, the measure would regulate marijuana production, sales and use of the drug, which would be restricted to adults 21 years of age or older.

Reno Waives HIV Ban for Gay Games

WASHINGTON (GayNet) — U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, for the second time in as many weeks, has stunned rights activists by agreeing to waive the federal ban on foreign visitors infected with HIV who are coming to this country to attend Gay Games IV this summer. The administration failed last year to convince Congress to repeal the Bush administration restriction prohibiting foreigners infected with the virus from entering the country. Reno earlier in February gave special authorization to Justice Department Community Relations Service agents to intervene in the growing conflict in Ovett, Mississippi, where residents are trying to shut down Camp Sister Spirit because the two women operating it are lesbians. Invoking similar broad powers at the discretion of the attorney general, Reno issued a "blanket waiver" for HIV-positive visitors seeking visas to attend the games, which will take place in New York June 18-25. Organizers of the event say they would expect 10,000 or more foreign visitors to attend the event now that getting a U.S. visa will no longer be an obstacle.

Lutheran Gay Pastor Ordered Defrocked

OAKLAND, Calif. (GayNet) — To almost no one's surprise, a disciplinary committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has ordered the Rev. Ross Merkel, the openly gay pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church "removed from the ordained ministry" of the denomination because of his sexual orientation. Merkel declared his sexual orientation 2 years ago in commemorating the 15th anniversary of his ordination. But members of the congregation at St. Paul's are expected to defy the defrocking order. If they do in fact continue to recognize Merkel as their pastor, the church itself could be suspended from the 5.2 million-member denomination. Two Lutheran parishes in San Francisco were suspended 2 years ago for accepting a gay and 2 lesbian pastors.

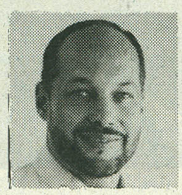
Lesbian/Gay University Scholarship Fund Established

SAN JOSE, Calif. (GayNet) — Members of the Gay and Lesbian Faculty and Staff Association and the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Student Alliance at San Jose State University have launched a fund-raising drive to endow the Wiggsy Sivertsen Scholarship Fund, the first lesbian/gay scholarship at the school and possibly the first in the country sponsored at a university. Sivertsen is a long-time rights activist who has worked as a counselor at San Jose State since 1968. She co-founded the political action committee BAYMEC (Bay Area Municipal Elections Committee) and is California president of the Academic Professionals of California, an association of non-faculty employees in the state university system. Sivertsen said, "I am truly touched by it. It is a way of saying to me that the work that I have done, pretty much often times alone on this campus, has paid off, has worked. And that's a great honor." The first scholarships are expected to be awarded this fall.

Lesbian/Gay Marchers in Chinese New Year Parade

SAN FRANCISCO (GayNet) — Maybe the Irish in New York and Boston's St. Patrick's Day parades can't easily cope with gays and lesbians joining in their

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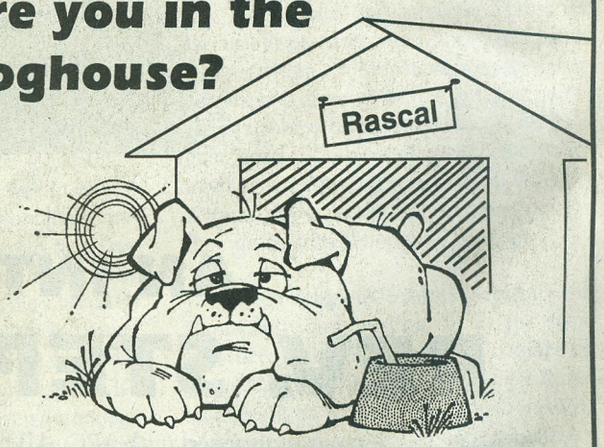
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