

Sidney Abbott, who is HIV-positive, won her 1998 Supreme Court case over her dentist's refusal to treat her, but AIDS advocates say that ruling is in jeopardy if the court turns down an appeal filed by Alabama inmates with HIV. **Page 2**



Highly lauded gay Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar talks little of his sexuality, but much about his new film 'All About Mother,' which is already garnering critical acclaim. **Page 15**



ISSUE 1002

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

JANUARY 7, 2000

Conservatives ask 'Who cries for Jesse?'

The rape and murder of a 13-year-old boy, allegedly by two gay Arkansas men, has anti-gay groups crying 'double standard'

by LAURA BROWN

Matthew Shepard, 21, was taken from a bar by two men, brutally beaten and left tied to a fence to die because he was gay, police say.

Jesse Dirkhising, 13, was tied up and brutally raped until he suffocated on his own underwear, police say by a gay couple engaging in a bondage-type sex act.

What's the difference between these two stories of tragic deaths? Nothing or everything, depending on whom you ask.

For numerous gay rights opponents—from the Family Research Council to Americans for Truth About Homosexuality to white supremacist David Duke—Dirkhising's death has become the new cause célèbre.

That Shepard's death drew far more national media attention than Dirkhising's, they claim, is proof positive that mainstream media is so beholden to gays, and so riddled with gay reporters, that it is afraid or unwilling to report on crimes committed by gays.

"The national media, following the lead of homosexual activists, made Matthew Shepard a household name for most Americans," said Peter LaBarbera, president of Americans For Truth About Homosexuality, an organization that believes gay people can change their sexual orientation.

"But what about young Jesse?" LaBarbera asked. "Is his death at the hands of two sadistic homosexuals less newsworthy than Shepard's at the hands of two cruel heterosexuals?"

Yet according to several national gay organizations, the outcry over Dirkhising's death has more to do with attempts to brand homosexuals as pedophiles, and link the issues in both the mainstream media and public opinion, than real concern over the child's murder.

"If the religious right wants to turn this into a referendum on whether gay people are sadistic murderers, the media should be commended on this particular case," said Wayne Besen, spokesman for the Human Rights Campaign, a Washington-based gay lobby.

"They didn't overreact, they saw through the attempt to demonize gay people, and this is actually one of those instances where they got it right," he said.

Gay groups blamed

LaBarbera could not be reached for further comment by press time. But in other press releases posted on his organization's web-site, he went even further, blaming HRC and another of the nation's largest gay rights groups for allegedly contributing to Dirkhising's death.

"There is a more plausible link between 'gay' advocacy institutions and Jesse's murder than between Shepard's murder and religious foes of homosexuality," the group claims, noting that "many reporters and pundits repeated the absurd claim by homosexual activists that the public discourse of pro-



Joshua Brown, 22, reportedly told police he and Jesse Dirkhising were 'just playing a game,' but when police arrived at Brown's apartment, they found the 13-year-old naked and not breathing.

family groups ... such as a series of ex-gay newspaper ads contributed to Shepard's murder by creating an environment that encourages anti-homosexual violence."

"All across America, gay newspapers and bars and organizations not only tolerate sadistic sex but promote it," LaBarbera said. "In fact, on the very day of Dirkhising's death, two leading homosexual groups, the Human Rights Campaign and the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, were manning booths at a sadistic sex fair in San Francisco that celebrated bondage, human floggings and the same 'S&M' techniques that led to the death of young Jesse."

Investigators say Dirkhising died of "positional asphyxia" after being bound, gagged, and repeatedly sodomized with objects including foods. (See story, Page 13)

> Continued on Page 12

Rallying against Exxon Mobil

Organizers of a rally against the Texas-based oil company want customers to destroy their credit cards in protest of a recent decision to end domestic partner benefits and policies specifically protecting its gay employees

by GIP PLASTER

Organizers hope hundreds of Houston gay men and lesbians will rally in a city park later this month to protest the employment policies of newly formed Exxon Mobil Corp.

The company, formed by the merger of Exxon and Mobil in November, retained Exxon's employment policies and benefits and in the process, dumped the policies of Mobil, which specifically protected gay men and lesbians from employment discrimination and provided domestic partner benefits.

An organizer of the rally hopes the event, planned for Jan. 28, will send a strong message to the company, despite the fact that Exxon Mobil's headquarters are more than 250 miles away.

"We do not appreciate that the company took something away that was already in existence," said Dan DiDonato, one of the gay activists organizing the rally.

DiDonato wants consumers to publicly destroy their Exxon and Mobil credit cards and provide rally organizers with receipts showing that they purchase products from Exxon Mobil competitors because of the company's change in policies.

The former Exxon Corp. has long maintained that it does not discriminate based on sexual orientation. But the company has refused efforts to include sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination policy.

The company instead includes only the categories required by federal law.

But Mobil, before the merger, included sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination policy and offered domestic partner benefits.

The two companies merged as a result of Exxon acquiring Mobil, and the new company is governed by Exxon's rules.

Former Mobil employees who already receive

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Clinton opposes inmate suit claiming AIDS bias

WASHINGTON—The Clinton administration has asked the U.S. Supreme Court not to hear the appeal of an AIDS discrimination case involving HIV-positive inmates in the Alabama prison system, the New York Times reported Jan. 3.

The ruling in the case, *Davis v. Hopper*, by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals approves a prison policy that denies prisoners with HIV access to more than 70 educational, recreational and religious services and programs.

The lower court decision found the "significant risk" that the HIV-positive prisoners present to the general prison population overrode the provisions of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which requires a "reasonable accommodation" for HIV-positive prisoners.

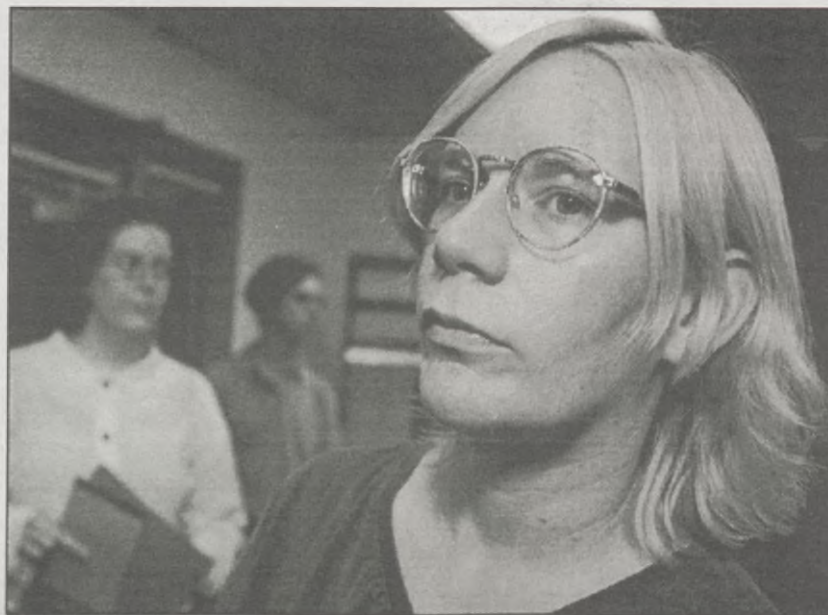
The decision, if left intact, would affect hundreds of prisoners in the Alabama prison system, denying them access to work-release programs that can shorten their prison sentence. The justices will decide this month whether to hear the appeal on the case, which has been in the court system for almost 15 years.

A coalition made up of public health organizations and AIDS specialists is supporting the appeal by the Alabama prisoners, arguing that prison officials relied on "subjective fear and stigma" rather than an objective assessment of the scientific risk involved in the level of exposure the prisoners would have with each other.

They pointed out that the Supreme Court insisted in its first look at AIDS discrimination, in the 1998 case of *Brogdon v. Abbott*, that fear and stigma did not override a person's rights under federal disability law.

In that case, a suit by an HIV-positive woman against a dentist who refused to treat her in his office, the court said the assessment of "significant risk" should be made in light of the views of public health authorities, based on "objective, scientific information."

A brief supporting the inmates filed by the Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund argued that the appeals courts ignored the 1998 ruling by relying on a theoretical risk of transmission without regard to the particular circumstances. That approach, the brief said, "threatens to justify



Sidney Abbott, who is HIV-positive, won her 1998 Supreme Court case over her dentist's refusal to treat her, but AIDS advocates say that ruling is in jeopardy if the court takes the Clinton administration's advice and turns down an appeal filed by Alabama inmates with HIV.

fy virtually any discrimination against persons with HIV in employment, health care, education, and every other aspect of community life."

Currently, Alabama, Mississippi and South Carolina segregate HIV-positive inmates. The federal prison system, on the other hand, evaluates inmates individually and decides, on the basis of their history and psychological profile, whether to exclude them from particular activities, as do most other states.

The Clinton Justice Department filed its brief in response to a request from the Supreme Court. The appeals court's ruling "may well be overbroad," Seth P. Waxman, Clinton's solicitor general, told the justices, because "the court should have carefully examined the circumstances and effect" of participation of inmates in the programs.

Such an examination, Waxman's filing acknowledges, might have shown that there was no danger in permitting HIV-positive inmates participate in activities like religious services, data processing

classes, and testing for high school equivalency diplomas.

Nonetheless, the administration argued, there was no need for the court to take the case because the appeals court's opinion, even if questionable in the particulars, was generally correct in deferring to Alabama prison officials the assessment of the risk presented by "the violence that is an inescapable part of prison life."

In defending its policy, Alabama points to a much lower rate of HIV transmission in its prison population than in states that do not segregate infected inmates, the Times reported. The state told the court that over eight years, out of 30,000 inmates who did not have HIV when they entered prison, only two became infected while in prison.

The Supreme Court's decision on whether to take this case may depend on whether the justices see implications beyond the prison context and on the extent of their concern about whether their prior ruling in the 1998 dental patient case has provided sufficient guidance to the lower courts.

In other AIDS-related news:

- The Fulton County, Ga. Commission agreed Wednesday to improve the medical care given to county jail inmates who have the virus that causes AIDS. A federal judge in April ordered the Fulton County Jail to provide adequate health care to the inmates after eight HIV-positive prisoners filed a lawsuit claiming they received substandard care. Sheriff Jacquelyn Barrett said it will cost the county an additional \$250,000 a year to implement the settlement agreement.

- U.S. District Court Judge Marvin Shoob must approve the agreement, which calls for the county to hire an on-site doctor and nurse to provide care to inmates with AIDS; continue providing needed medicine

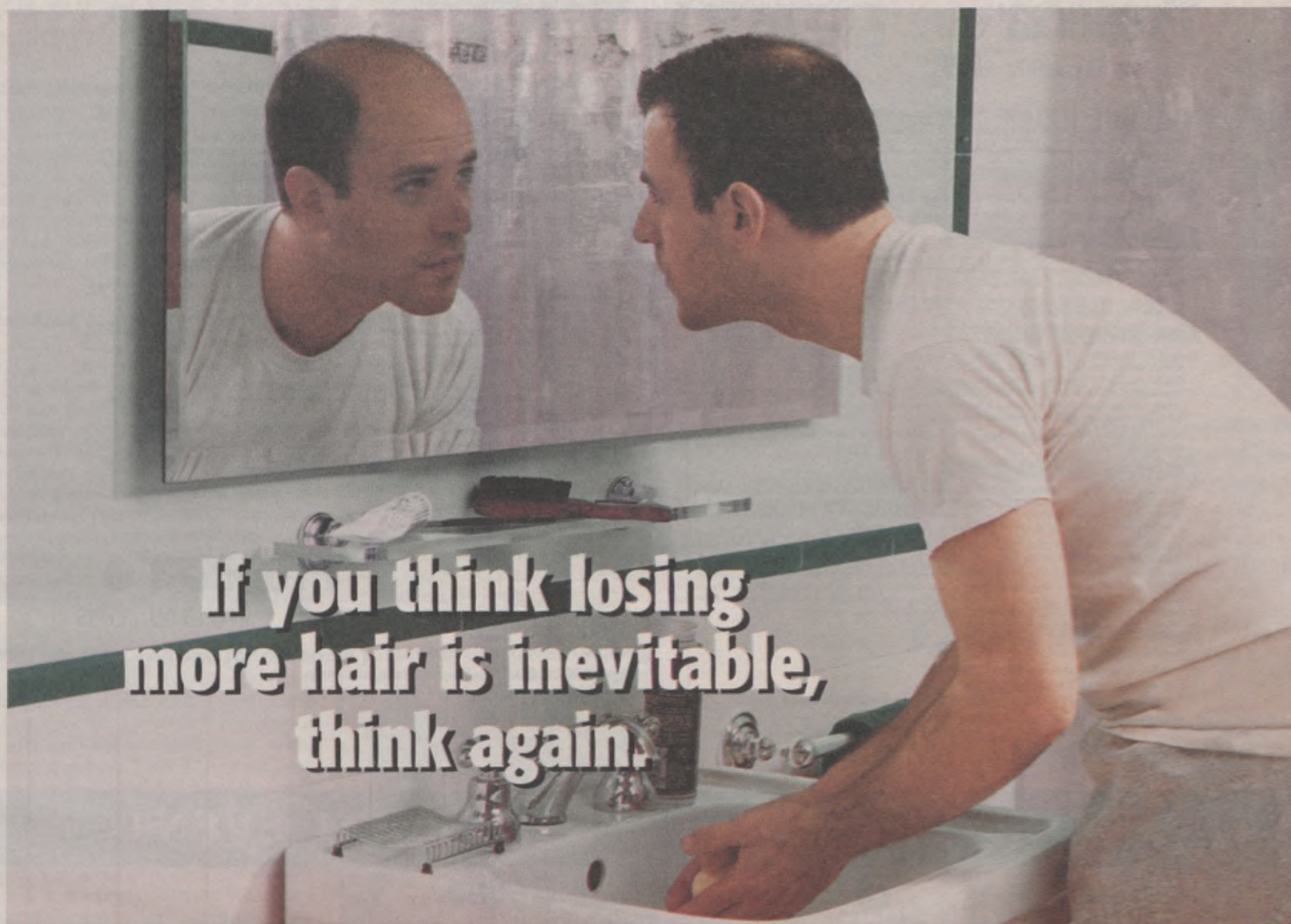
to inmates who were receiving treatment before they were jailed; develop a discharge plan to ensure inmates get continued care following their release.

- The American Civil Liberties Union must respond to allegations its attorneys may have rewarded inmates who sided with them in an escalating dispute over who should represent HIV-infected inmates at the state penitentiary in Aberdeen, Miss. U.S. Magistrate Jerry A. Davis issued the order Wednesday after prison rights lawyer Ron Welch, who has represented the inmates at the Parchman prison, claimed in documents that ACLU/Mississippi officials had deposited funds in an inmate's account shortly after

the prisoner signed a petition to have Welch removed as his lawyer.

Welch had denied claims that he provided inadequate counsel. He said he reached an agreement with prison officials to provide appropriate treatment for inmates. In July, Davis ruled in favor of Welch, who has represented the HIV-infected class of prisoners since 1990. The issue is pending before a federal appeals court in New Orleans. Davis agreed with the ACLU that the Department of Corrections was providing inadequate, outdated treatment for the HIV-infected inmates. He ordered improved medical treatment and frequent status reports to the court.

—The Associated Press



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PROPECIA is a medical breakthrough—the first pill that effectively treats male pattern hair loss on the vertex (at top of head) and anterior mid-scalp area.

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- 80% were rated as improved by clinical doctors (vs. 47% with placebo).
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*Based on vertex studies at 24 months of men 18 to 41 with mild to moderate hair loss.

Scientists have recently discovered that men with male pattern hair loss have an increased level of DHT in their scalps. PROPECIA blocks the formation of DHT and, in this way, appears to interrupt a key factor in the development of inherited male pattern hair loss in men.

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Only a doctor can determine if PROPECIA is right for you. PROPECIA is for **men only**. Further, women who are or may potentially be pregnant must not use PROPECIA and should not handle crushed or broken tablets because of the risk of a specific kind of birth defect. (See accompanying Patient Information for details.) PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling.

You may need to take PROPECIA daily for three months or more to see visible results. PROPECIA may not regrow all your hair. And if you stop using this product, you will gradually lose the hair you have gained. There is not sufficient evidence that PROPECIA works for recession at the temporal areas. If you haven't seen results after 12 months of using PROPECIA, further treatment is unlikely to be of benefit.

Like all prescription products, PROPECIA may cause side effects. A very small number of men experienced certain side effects, such as: less desire for sex, difficulty in achieving an erection, and a decrease in the amount of semen. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 2% of men. These side effects were reversible and went away in men who stopped taking PROPECIA.

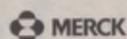
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PROPECIA® is for use by MEN ONLY.

Please read this leaflet before you start taking PROPECIA. Also, read the information included with PROPECIA each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss PROPECIA when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups.

What is PROPECIA used for?

PROPECIA is used for the treatment of male pattern hair loss on the vertex and the anterior mid-scalp area. PROPECIA is for use by **MEN ONLY** and should **NOT** be used by women or children.

What is male pattern hair loss?

Male pattern hair loss is a common condition in which men experience thinning of the hair on the scalp. Often, this results in a receding hairline and/or balding on the top of the head. These changes typically begin gradually in men in their 20s.

Doctors believe male pattern hair loss is due to heredity and is dependent on hormonal effects. Doctors refer to this type of hair loss as androgenetic alopecia.

Results of clinical studies:

For 12 months, doctors studied over 1800 men aged 18 to 41 with mild to moderate amounts of ongoing hair loss. All men, whether receiving PROPECIA or placebo (a pill containing no medication) were given a medicated shampoo (Neutrogena T/Gel® Shampoo). Of these men, approximately 1200 with hair loss at the top of the head were studied for an additional 12 months. In general, men who took PROPECIA maintained or increased the number of visible scalp hairs and noticed improvement in their hair in the first year, with the effect maintained in the second year. Hair counts in men who did not take PROPECIA continued to decrease.

In one study, patients were questioned on the growth of body hair. PROPECIA did not appear to affect hair in places other than the scalp.

Will PROPECIA work for me?

For most men, PROPECIA increases the number of scalp hairs, helping to fill in thin or balding areas of the scalp. Men taking PROPECIA noted a slowing of hair loss during two years of use. Although results will vary, generally you will not be able to grow back all of the hair you have lost. There is not sufficient evidence that PROPECIA works in the treatment of receding hairline in the temporal area on both sides of the head.

Male pattern hair loss occurs gradually over time. On average, healthy hair grows only about half an inch each month. Therefore, it will take time to see any effect.

You may need to take PROPECIA daily for three months or more before you see a benefit from taking PROPECIA. PROPECIA can only work over the long term if you continue taking it. If the drug has not worked for you in twelve months, further treatment is unlikely to be of benefit. If you stop taking PROPECIA, you will likely lose the hair you have gained within 12 months of stopping treatment. You should discuss this with your doctor.

How should I take PROPECIA?

Follow your doctor's instructions.

- Take one tablet by mouth each day.
- You may take PROPECIA with or without food.
- If you forget to take PROPECIA, do **not** take an extra tablet. Just take the next tablet as usual.

PROPECIA will **not** work faster or better if you take it more than once a day.

Who should **NOT** take PROPECIA?

- PROPECIA is for the treatment of male pattern hair loss in **MEN ONLY** and should not be taken by women or children.
- Anyone allergic to any of the ingredients.

A warning about PROPECIA and pregnancy.

- Women who are or may potentially be pregnant:
– must not use PROPECIA
– should not handle crushed or broken tablets of PROPECIA.

If a woman who is pregnant with a male baby absorbs the active ingredient in PROPECIA, either by swallowing or through the skin, it may cause abnormalities of a male baby's sex organs. If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROPECIA, a doctor should be consulted. PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling, provided that the tablets are not broken or crushed.

What are the possible side effects of PROPECIA?

Like all prescription products, PROPECIA may cause side effects. In clinical studies, side effects from PROPECIA were uncommon and did not affect most men. A small number of men experienced certain sexual side effects. These men reported one or more of the following: less desire for sex; difficulty in achieving an erection; and, a decrease in the amount of semen. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 2% of men. These side effects went away in men who stopped taking PROPECIA. They also disappeared in most men who continued taking PROPECIA.

In general use, the following have been reported infrequently: allergic reactions including rash, itching, hives and swelling of the lips and face; problems with ejaculation; breast tenderness and enlargement; and testicular pain.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual side effects.

- PROPECIA can affect a blood test called PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) for the screening of prostate cancer. If you have a PSA test done, you should tell your doctor that you are taking PROPECIA.

Storage and handling.

Keep PROPECIA in the original container and keep the container closed. Store it in a dry place at room temperature. PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling, provided that the tablets are not broken or crushed.

Do not give your PROPECIA tablets to anyone else. It has been prescribed only for you. Keep PROPECIA and all medications out of the reach of children.

THIS LEAFLET PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT PROPECIA. IF AFTER READING THIS LEAFLET YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ARE NOT SURE ABOUT ANYTHING, ASK YOUR DOCTOR.

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Around the South

Bush aide quits over candidate's refusal to meet with gay group

AUSTIN—Diane Ravitch, a respected education historian, has quit as education adviser to Texas governor George Bush's presidential campaign because of Bush's refusal to meet with gay Republicans, the *New York Times* reported Dec. 29. The paper said that Ravitch told associates she is resigning to protest Bush's statement during a television appearance that he would probably not meet with Log Cabin Republicans. Ravitch was assistant secretary of education when Bush's father was president. She declined to comment on the reason for her departure. Mindy Tucker, a spokeswoman for the Bush campaign, told the paper that Ravitch had "been a valued adviser to the campaign, and Governor Bush regrets her position."

Baseball commish orders psychological test for Braves pitcher

NEW YORK (AP)—Baseball has ordered John Rocker to undergo psychological testing following his disparaging remarks about gays and minorities. The outspoken Atlanta Braves reliever will meet with doctors before commissioner Bud Selig decides whether to impose discipline for Rocker's comments to *Sports Illustrated* last month. In the interview, Rocker said he would never play for a New York team because he didn't want to ride a train "next to some queer with AIDS." He also bashed immigrants and called a black teammate "a fat monkey." Rocker later apologized and said he was not a racist. "Mr. Rocker's recent remarks made to a national magazine reporter were reprehensible and completely inexcusable," Selig said in a statement he released Thursday. "I am profoundly concerned about the nature of those comments as well as by certain other aspects of his behavior." The Major League Baseball Players Association, which tries to keep medical reports on players confidential, reacted angrily. "We did not authorize the release, nor do we necessarily agree with the characterization of the procedure being discussed concerning Mr. Rocker," said Gene Orza, the union's No. 2 official.

Trial set for Saturday for second Ky. soldier charged in killing

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. (AP)—The court-martial for a second soldier charged in a murder case that has prompted scrutiny of the military's policy towards gays is scheduled to begin Jan. 8, the Army announced Tuesday. Spc. Justin R. Fisher faces four charges in connection with the July 5 beating death of Pfc. Barry Winchell. Fisher, 26, of Lincoln, Neb., is charged with participating as a principal to premeditated murder, acting as an accessory after the fact, making false statements to Army investigators and obstructing the investigation. Last month, Pvt. Calvin N. Glover, 18, of Sulphur, Okla., was convicted in a court-martial of premeditated murder and sentenced to life in prison. Glover used a baseball bat to crush Winchell's skull as he slept in his cot at Fort Campbell. For weeks before the beating, soldiers had harassed Winchell, 21, of Kansas City, Mo., over rumors he was gay, and prosecutors said Glover was driven by anti-gay hatred. Glover never addressed the allegation that he despised gays, but his attorneys argued that Fisher goaded Glover into the attack. The death and the revelations at Glover's trial led to criticism, by gay rights groups and by Winchell's parents, of the Pentagon's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon has said the Defense Department is working on new training programs to ensure a fair enforcement of the policy on gays.



Wally and Patricia Kutteles, the mother and stepfather Pfc. Barry L. Winchell, criticized 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' after their son's commander said the policy prevented him from stopping harassment of Winchell, who was later killed.

Orlando gay community center ready to purchase first building

ORLANDO—Plans are falling in place for a gay and lesbian community center in Orlando, the gay newspaper *Watermark* reported. Orlando's Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Community Center is in the final stages of a fund-raising blitz to obtain \$200,000 for down payment on a sprawling property in the heart of Orlando's gay-friendly ViMi District. If the scheduled Jan. 4 closing takes place, it will mark the first time the organization will own property, instead of leasing. "Purchasing the building is a win/win situation," said GLBCC board president Barry Miller. "PFLAG has already taken us up on our offer of space," said Miller. "The Orlando Gay Chorus is interested, GALIXY (a gay and lesbian youth group) will utilize an office, and we've also offered the space to the MBA (the Metropolitan Business Association)." The push to raise the necessary \$200,000 down payment is currently underway. As of Dec. 9, GLBCC had raised \$125,000.

—From staff and wire reports

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Police Beat

Scottish man accused of murder, dismemberment turns himself in

GLASGOW—Britain's most wanted man, William Beggs, surrendered to police in Holland, the *Glasgow Daily Record & Sunday Mail* reported Dec. 29. The fugitive was being sought over the killing of teenager Barry Wallace, whose dismembered limbs were found in Loch Lomond. Beggs, accompanied by a Dutch lawyer, turned himself in to police in Amsterdam after almost two weeks on the run, but may now oppose extradition proceedings. Beggs evaded police for 12 days before turning himself in.

Court orders new trial for Pa. man convicted of killing roommate

PITTSBURGH—A man convicted last year of the strangulation and beating death of his roommate, has been granted a new trial, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported Dec. 29. A state Superior Court panel this week ruled that a jury should have been allowed to hear that the victim, Gregory Schumacher, 46, had a criminal record that included a conviction for a violent knife attack. Robert Irgang, 33, told police that Schumacher had made advances toward him on April 26, 1997. Irgang said that he had been asleep when Schumacher awakened him by touching his leg, and an altercation ensued. An autopsy showed that Schumacher died after being struck 20 times with a skillet. Irgang was convicted of third-degree murder, and Judge Raymond A. Novak sentenced him to 15 to 40 years in prison. Irgang had argued at trial that the attack was in self-defense, and produced evidence that Schumacher had been involved in a bar fight about five years before and had brandished a knife. The three-judge Superior Court panel ruled that the trial court had been bound to give the jury an instruction that it consider whether Schumacher might have been the aggressor.

D.C. domestic partnership documents may have been stolen

WASHINGTON, D.C.—More than 100 records for Washington, D.C.'s domestic partnership registry have been missing since July, the *Washington Blade* reported Dec. 31. Director of the D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Lloyd Jordan said his staff informed the D.C. Inspector General's office of the missing documents—comprising all the records since the registry was implemented in October 1992—and that an investigation is under way to find out what happened to them. "We feel there may have been a theft," Jordan said. Jordan said that the documents were found in a state of disarray in June, and he instructed people in his office to file the documents properly. A restriction passed by the Republican-controlled Congress forbade Jordan's department from spending any money on the domestic partnership statute. Jordan added that other recent developments at DCRA that may be related to the missing domestic partner registration documents, declining to elaborate. His office is also dealing with a discrimination charge by Robert "Jim" Fagelson, 52, a gay man who was fired in November 1998.

Phelps' son receives suspended jail sentence for slur

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP)—Anti-homosexual picketer Jonathan Phelps has received a suspended jail sentence for shouting a slur at a woman in 1995. District Judge Jack Lively sentenced Phelps Dec. 28 to 30 days in jail but suspended the jail term. Phelps is the son of Fred Phelps, the notoriously anti-gay minister of Westboro Baptist Church who maintains a web-site called www.godhatesfags.com. Lively placed Phelps on probation for one year and ordered him to perform 40 hours of community service. He also must pay a \$250 fine, as well as court and witness fees of \$2,380. Phelps' attorney immediately appealed the conviction for disorderly conduct, a misdemeanor. A jury convicted Phelps May 11 of disorderly conduct related to an incident on Aug. 5, 1995. Teresa Roles, of Bellingham, Wash., and her sister, Hope Goodman, were riding in a vehicle that day when they stopped to let Phelps and his family cross the street. After reading Phelps' picket sign, which said God hates gays, Roles told Phelps, "Hate is not a family value." Roles said Phelps screamed a slur at her, then continued yelling at her.

Ill. governor's bias commission recommends protection for gays

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—Illinois Gov. George Ryan's Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes will recommend non-discrimination legislation that includes "sexual orientation" as an enumerated protected category, the gay newspaper *Outlines* reported. "Changing Headlines: Building Tolerance in the Land of Lincoln" is a 30-page report detailing responses to a variety of bias-motivated actions in the state. The nearly 40-member commission included four gay members and Dorothy Hajdys-Holman, mother of slain gay sailor Allen Schindler. The report, issued Dec. 15, also recommended diversity and sensitivity training within the criminal justice system, non-disclosure of names for victims of hate crimes, and support groups for teen gays and their families. The section dealing with HIV and AIDS recommended, among other things, mandated training for all local health departments on HIV confidentiality issues.



A panel appointed by Illinois Gov. George Ryan has recommended non-discrimination legislation and confidentiality for the victims of hate crimes.

—From staff and wire reports

Around the Nation

Both Democrats endorse litmus test on gays for military brass

DURHAM, N.H.—Vice President Al Gore and his Democratic opponent, Bill Bradley, said Wednesday that if they were elected president they would require their appointees to the Joint Chiefs of Staff to fully support allowing gays to serve openly in the military, the *New York Times* reported. Although both candidates had previously opposed the Clinton administration's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, their comments in the fourth Democratic debate of the primary season were a strikingly forceful embrace of gay rights. Their remarks came in response to a question of whether they would support a "litmus test" on gays in the military in nominating members of the Joint Chiefs. Gore was the more expansive, saying he wanted to make the same sweeping changes toward allowing gays to serve openly in the military that President Harry S. Truman made toward racially integrating the armed forces. Bradley said simply that the commander in chief issued orders and soldiers followed them. Retired members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other military experts warned Wednesday that subjecting future members to a litmus test would hurt the armed services.



Vice President Al Gore said during a presidential debate Wednesday with Bill Bradley that he would support a litmus test on gays in the military in selecting the Joint Chiefs.

McCain meets gay soldier but stands firm on 'Don't Ask' policy

WASHINGTON—An openly gay Army reservist was unable to convince his senator and hero, John McCain, that he should quit supporting the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, the *Arizona Republic* reported Dec. 30. Steve May, who is facing a possible Army discharge, said after a private meeting with McCain that he's not sure the GOP presidential candidate fully understands the consequences of the policy. "Like most Americans, I don't know that John McCain has had the opportunity to think critically about this policy since it was implemented," said May, a Republican state representative from Phoenix. May publicly disclosed that he was gay after he was honorably discharged in 1995, then found himself recalled in early 1999 during the war in Kosovo. Now, the Army is moving ahead with plans to discharge May despite stellar performance ratings.

Gay couples file claim against Wash. state seeking benefits

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP)—Two gay couples have filed a claim against the state of Washington demanding that medical insurance coverage be given to same-sex domestic partners of state employees. Lawyers for the 19,000-member Washington Federation of State Employees filed the claim against the Health Care Authority, a prerequisite to a lawsuit, earlier this month. The couples are asking for financial damages, but the real goal is to pressure the state into offering the benefits, said Ed Younglove, a lawyer representing the federation. "We're going to do everything we can to persuade them to change their policy." But lawyers for the state said the issue is one of policy that belongs before the legislature. Gary L. Christenson, administrator for the Health Care Authority, met with Younglove and union officials Dec. 28 to discuss the matter.

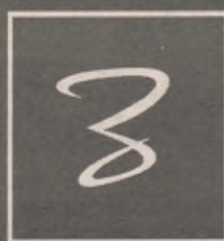
Gay students seek ruling against Orange County school district

ORANGE COUNTY, Calif.—Attorneys asked a federal-court judge to issue a preliminary injunction allowing a gay-support club to begin meeting at El Modena High School, the *Orange County Register* reported Dec. 30. The Orange Unified school board voted unanimously Dec. 7 to deny students' request to form a Gay Straight Alliance club. The students are suing to overturn the decision. If the injunction is granted, it will allow the club to meet pending the suit's outcome. "We believe it is clear the students are likely to prevail in their lawsuit, but there is no telling how long a lawsuit will take," said David Codell, an attorney representing two El Modena students, Anthony Colin and Heather Zetin. School trustees offered to allow the club to meet in a school classroom if the students change its name and ban discussion of sex, reproduction, AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases.

West Hollywood rejects mandatory condom distribution law

WEST HOLLYWOOD, Calif. (AP)—The City Council unanimously turned down a proposal ordering bars and nightclubs to offer free condoms at the door, citing anecdotal evidence that many businesses were already voluntarily handing them out. The council on Monday night voted 5-0 to expand the voluntary distribution program that has been in place for eight years and approved the purchase of an additional 50,000 condoms for the program. After more than two hours of discussion, council members decided that forcing bars to offer condoms would create too much resistance in the city's efforts to educate people about safe sex. The AIDS Healthcare Foundation was the driving force behind the mandatory proposal, citing it as a public health issue. The foundation, the nation's largest HIV-AIDS medical provider, hopes to get the mandatory distribution issue on the November ballot. "A bar does not open without beer or without a fire extinguisher. It should not open without condoms," said Michael Weinstein, the foundation's president.

—From staff and wire reports



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EDITORIAL

The evolution of the gay stalker (and the gay activist)

In "The Talented Mr. Ripley," Matt Damon plays a gay man whose obsession with socialite Dickie Greenleaf (played by Jude Law) inspires a killing spree shocking for its amorality.

Among Tom Ripley's victims, after he duplicitously wins his way into high society, are the two wealthy young men with whom he falls in love, a perverted expression of affection if ever there were one.

It's not the first time in recent years that Hollywood has offered up a gay stalker for the big screen. In 1992, "Basic Instinct" enraged gay activists, who took issue with Sharon Stone's chilling, seductive portrayal of a man-hating bisexual.

That same year, "Silence of the Lambs" featured as its villain a misogynous, effeminate man who collected the skin from dead bodies to create a "dress" for him to wear.

A year later, activists took issue with "Six Degrees of Separation," in which rapper/actor Will Smith played a young black man who won his way into white Manhattan society in Ripley-esque fashion by pretending to be Sidney Poitier's son.

Although at the time, it wasn't the less-than-flattering portrayal of a gay character in "Six Degrees" that angered the activists so much as it was Smith's highly publicized refusal to do an on-screen male-male kiss for fear it would ruin his career.

But at the end of the decade, with gays never more powerful in Hollywood, there hasn't been a peep about the negative image homosexuality portrayed in "Mr. Ripley."

And that's a very good thing.

As we enter a new decade, Hollywood has happily evolved and so have gay activists, and both are smarter about how to handle homosexuality on the screen, though both still have something to learn.

For one thing, "Mr. Ripley" doesn't have the history that would suggest insensitivity toward homosexuality. The story is based



on a novel by lesbian author Patricia Highsmith, and the adaptation by director Anthony Minghella actually adds to the homoerotic content. (See story, Page 15)

Minghella injected a more overt, 1990s gay sensibility to Ripley's desire for Dickie, which was portrayed less sexually in Highsmith's early '50s original. Even more important, Minghella added a new, completely likable gay character, Peter Smith Kingsley (played by Jack Davenport).

That Mr. Ripley finds himself incapable of accepting love says more about his character than the movie's view of homosexuality, and Ripley's cruel treatment of the Kingsley character only puts an exclamation point on the image.

Minghella has also been refreshingly open about the tightrope he walked in updating Highsmith's story.

"I'm desperate that no one infer a connection between [Ripley's] actions and his sexuality," Minghella told the *New York Times*. "But it's a sorry state of affairs if you can only write about a homosexual character who behaves well—that's another kind of tyranny, I think."

Minghella's point is well-taken, especially in a turn-of-the-century Hollywood more notable for its well-adjusted, if one-dimensional, gay characters in movies like "American Beauty" and "As Good As It

Gets."

As Minghella himself puts it so well, the flesh-and-blood Ripley, warts and all, is far more interesting to watch and despite his amorality is at times much more sympathetic.

"The minute you try to pull back from what's sensual and erotic, you're losing your nerve, and I just didn't want to shrink away from the romance of it; it's very tender to me," he said.

With all the positive role models in Hollywood today, it's a lot easier than it was in 1992 to swallow the gay psychopaths, and it is a more mature gay audience that understands central characters—gay and straight—must be tragically flawed to be worthy of the casting.

Low marks for the promo

But if Minghella has earned high marks for his intelligent, sensitive update of Highsmith's story, Miramax Films deserves a failing grade for its promotion of "Mr. Ripley."

In ubiquitous commercials and film trailers, the studio portrayed the story as a typical boy-girl stalking. The previews had you believe not that Ripley wanted Dickie, but that he wanted to be Dickie, and that included a relationship with his girl Marge (played by Gwyneth Paltrow).

A number of film critics even repeated the studio tripe that Damon's character was "bisexual," though there is absolutely no indication of it in the movie.

Some movie-goers took the bait and weren't too thrilled with the homoerotic love story they got fed instead.

While there's a certain juiciness to the idea that Hollywood is subverting popular culture by luring mainstream audiences to a movie with a gay love story, it's much more likely that Miramax was simply promoting the Christmas movie it wished Minghella had delivered.

"The studio would have been thrilled if [Tom's attraction to Dickie] was transmogrified into a love for Marge—he wants the life, so he wants the girl!" Minghella confided to the *Times*.

Perhaps the movie's strong box office performance—"Mr. Ripley" finished number two last week—will embolden studio promoters to be more direct in the future.

More honest packaging—and maybe an actual love scene since Damon like Will Smith before him avoids the dreaded male-male kiss—would have made "The Talented Mr. Ripley" a truly evolved portrayal of the gay psychopathic stalker.

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VIEWPOINT

Vermont should help bring us equality in the new millennium

by MELINDA SHELTON

The 20th Century, fittingly, went out with a roar that has left the conservative right quivering in its bigoted boots. The source of their angst is the recent Vermont Supreme Court decision that same-sex couples should have the same marriage benefits extended to different-sex couples.

While the case applies only to Vermont, it is sending shockwaves to the very core of a conservative movement that works tirelessly to perpetuate discrimination against the LGBT community. This fear- and hate-motivated, anti-gay movement cloaks itself in carefully crafted rhetoric, using phrases such as "traditional family values" and "the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman" to garner support and to chill hearts in a public that traditionally supports equality and fairness.

But the Vermont Supreme Court turned a deaf ear to the conservative din. Instead, the five justices largely based their decision on the state's constitution which contains a "Common Benefits Clause" that says the state's government should be "instituted for the common benefit, protection and security of the people, nation, or community, and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single person, family, or set of persons who are part of only that community."

In short, the state is violating its constitution that guarantees equality for all of its citizens.

In its wisdom, and undoubtedly because they understand how slowly the wheels of government can turn, the justices also ruled that the Vermont Legislature must act in an "expeditious fashion" in carrying out the court's order of either legislating same-sex marriage or providing a "substantial equivalent."

Gay rights activists have reacted in a cautiously optimistic fashion. New Orleans gay rights attorney John Rawls criticized the Vermont justices for stopping short of ruling that "marriage is marriage and licenses should be granted to the defendants in the case. ... They're saying 'separate but equal,' but separate is not equal. They were very reluctant to use the 'marriage' word."

While the ruling will be cited repeatedly in cases across the nation and is "a great victory" for the gay community, Rawls cautioned that it also will fuel the backlash against gay rights.

"The fallacy of all of this is that equality is a bad thing. We've proven time and again that's not the case," Rawls said.

The battle for—and against—equality dates back to the very start of the nation. Our founding fathers created the U.S. Constitution around the basic tenets of freedom and equality, albeit under their narrow understanding of such freedoms and their unwillingness to extend full rights and equality to everyone.

In the 1800s, abolitionists fought for an end to slavery, and on Dec. 18, 1865, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution was declared ratified by 27 of 36 state legisla-

tures. Slavery was abolished.

Although the battle for women's equality had already begun, the next victory proved to be less-than-equal.

On March 30, 1870, the Secretary of State declared that the necessary majority—29 of 37 states—had ratified the 15th Amendment. The amendment stipulated that the right of U.S. citizens to vote could not be denied based on "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Voting rights were extended to black men—but not women—although it would be decades before blacks could take full advantage of the polls.

Some 50 years and countless battles and protests later, women finally were granted the right to vote. On Aug. 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment was signed after 36 of 48 state legislatures had ratified it.

Alice Paul, a preeminent feminist leader, wrote an equal rights amendment and introduced it to Congress in 1921, and an ERA has been introduced every congressional session since 1923.

Paul's amendment states: "Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex." Those 23 words send shivers down the spines of conservatives and misogynists who to this day fight an ERA.

The ERA passed Congress in 1972, and the National Organization for Women led the fight for its ratification by the deadline date of July 1982. The deadline mandate from Congress was designed to stymie NOW's national campaign, and it

succeeded, although narrowly: 35 of the 38 needed states ratified the amendment.

The quest for equality has not ended.

Efforts are underway to introduce and ratify a Constitutional Equality Amendment that broadly protects women's rights, including reproductive rights, but also would forbid discrimination based on "sex, race, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnicity, national origin, color or indigence."

Despite the ground gained in the '90s for gay rights, there is a backlash by a few who want the power to decide who should—and should not—be considered "equal" under the law. They expect gay men and lesbians to pay taxes, obey laws and essentially knuckle under and accept second-class status. They incorrectly predict that by extending equal rights under the law to our community, it will be the demise of "the traditional family" as they see it.

Detractors used similar tactics to stop the end of slavery and to deny voting rights to black men and women. They fought desegregation, interracial marriages, equal education and job opportunities, and the civil rights and women's movements.

Now they are fighting the gay rights movement. Vermont opened the door last month, and it's up to us to make sure other states follow—however long it takes to achieve equality.

Melinda Shelton is editor of IMPACT News in New Orleans, a sister newspaper of the Houston Voice.

LETTERS

More than a 'dot-org' at work on the Net

To the Editor:

Thank you for your nicely written and generally accurate story, "New kids on the Net" (Dec. 17). But there are two things we'd like to clarify and comment on.

In the story's lead, you ask whether a "dot-com" or "dot-org" by itself substitutes for "a constituency, bylaws, and the other traditional measures of an organization's legitimacy?"

I would like to point out that NationalGayLobby.Org has a constituency—our members, and the tens of thousands of individuals (not hits) who visit our web-site each month.

Not only does NGL have bylaws, we are the only national organization I know of that publishes its bylaws at its web-site.

And, as for "the other traditional measures of an organization's legitimacy," NGL has in its brief, six month existence:

- Been granted a corporate charter by the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- Attracted members from all 50 states;
- Seated more than one-third of its 29 board members;
- Raised and spent in excess of \$12,000 on start up, operating expenses and on

projects;

- Conducted activism on the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, including a silent vigil outside the White House on Nov. 6; as well as work on incidents ranging from the railroading of a gay man by a county judge in Michigan to the firing of a gay man by a SUNCOCO affiliate in Indiana to protesting entrapment arrests in Virginia.

NationalGayLobby.Org is much more than "just a dot-org," and that NGL meets all the criteria generally included in "traditional measures of an organization's legitimacy."

NGL is also as non-profit as an organization can be. We have no shareholders and if we ever dissolve, our assets must be transferred to an appropriate non-profit entity. We have not opted to seek an IRS 501(c) designation because tax-exempt groups are too limited in their activities.

Michael Romanello
NationalGayLobby.Org
Executive Director

Open club's doors to gay men

To the Editor:

As a former employee of Sue Ellen's, a lesbian bar in Dallas, and being a gay man, I find it hard to believe in the reasoning of Alexis Wasifuddin in changing the policies at Club Rainbow to allow men ("Lesbian club opens its

doors," Dec. 17). During my employment at Sue Ellen's, the incidents of straight men coming to harass lesbian customers were extremely rare. It was also my part of my job to watch any suspicious males that entered the club and to remove them if needed.

I find it infuriating when a gay and lesbian business is discriminating. This is exactly what our community has been fighting against since Stonewall. We of all people should know better than this. I sincerely hope that we always cause a brouhaha when this happens. I just can't believe that ignorance is a valid excuse.

Marshall Rainwater
Houston

Lesbian club should be proud

To the Editor:

I don't know exactly what transpired to make the owners of Club Rainbow feel the need to apologize ("Lesbian club opens its

doors," Dec. 17) or defend its tagline "Exclusively for Gay Women." I am a gay woman and I can't tell you the number of times I have been denied entrance to most of the gay male clubs in this city for silly things like wearing open toe shoes, when gay men with the same shoes were allowed in with no hassle.

I doubt very seriously that this lesbian club ever denied entrance to a gay man. I have to say I was excited to see the club open. I felt proud. We should all remember that we are a community and little battles like this do us no good.

Ladies put your tagline back up and remember, in the world of business, it is a dog eat dog world. By surrendering to this type of silly whining only sets you up to be bitten by the other dog. Put your tagline back up and be proud.

Wanda
Houston

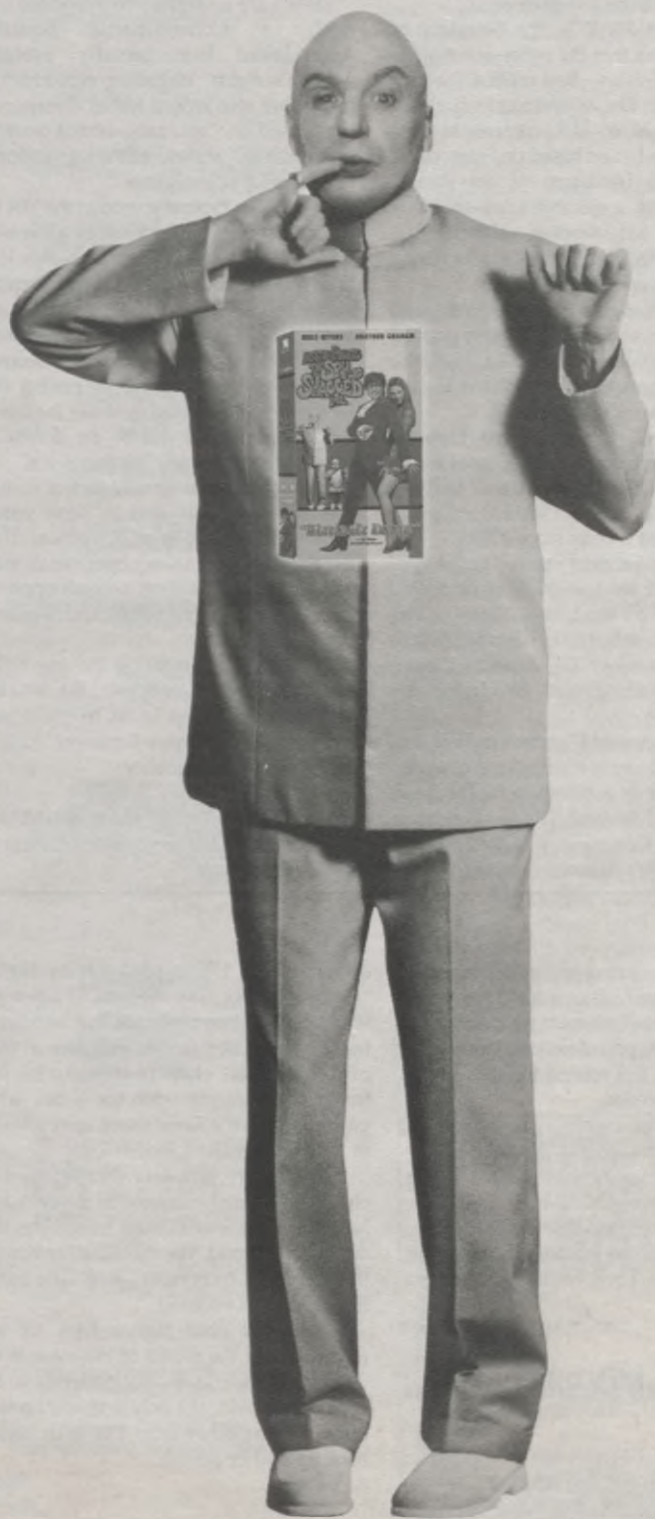


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"Quote unquote"

compiled by STAFF

"The question of whether Ben [Affleck] and I are gay is so awkward in a lot of ways. There is no real right way to answer it without offending somebody. It's offensive to just deny it fiercely, as if there would be anything wrong with it if we were a couple. That would be offensive to the people I grew up with. I don't want to be that person. At the same time, I can't say it's true because it's not."

—Actor Matt Damon (right)
to *the Advocate*, Jan. 18.



"There is a particular variety of American gay man—you know the type: perfect physique, perfect tan, perfect hair, and so on—who is so glossy that my eyes somehow slide right off of him. No, the 'Stepford gay' look doesn't work for me, just as I think the 'body fascism' of the gay scene often fails on its own terms, namely aesthetic."

—Former *Out* magazine editor James Collard, writing in the December issue.

"I think that were Harvey Milk able to come back today, he would be amused that our movement's two top goals are the right to marry and the right to be in the military. In the 70s we were about dismantling the patriarchy and exploring personal liberation and we were not trying to be like straight people. We were radicals!"

—Cleve Jones, founder of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, to the *Associated Press*, Dec. 13.



"I am not conceding the war. I am conceding the battle. My voice may be high, my orientation may be gay, my politics may be left, but we are right. We moved San Francisco forward."

—San Francisco Board of Supervisors President Tom Ammiano (left), acknowledging to supporters that he had lost the mayor's race to incumbent Willie Brown, Dec. 14.

"I meant it when I said I'd like to have a baby. I was deadly serious. I don't think it matters whether you're gay or not. Still, I don't think I'm responsible enough to bring up a child. My lifestyle doesn't allow for children. I'm not saying I've ruled out being a parent forever, though. ...I just don't want to be like Madonna and have a kid as another accessory to go with her new handbag."

—Boy George as quoted by Yahoo! News, Dec. 20.

"I feel like I'm in a sexual no man's land. I'm too poofy for the poofs and too scary for the straights."

—Boy George to Britain's *The Guardian*, Dec. 16.

"I write about things that are going on in the lives of my friends: child abuse, AIDS, contaminated water that got into their system and gave them cancer. It's not like I make these things up. The trick for the songwriter-for me-is to take these issues that are too painful to hear about and put them in a context so that you can listen."

—Lesbian singer Holly Near to the *Sacramento Bee*, Dec. 12.

"I do believe in true bisexuality. We all have the capacity. [My partner] Julie is much more bisexual than I am. The more the world understands their bisexuality the better we'll be. I'm attracted to souls. I can be attracted to both."

—Singer Melissa Etheridge (right) to the Los Angeles gay newspaper *Fab*, Dec. 23.



"Straight man wins Mr. Oklahoma leather contest"

—Headline in the *Gayly Oklahoman* newspaper, Dec. 15.

"We are poised to expand the circle of human dignity yet again, to say that it will no longer be permissible to discriminate against someone because of who he or she falls in love with or because of that person's sexual orientation."

—U.S. Vice President and presidential candidate Al Gore in Des Moines, Iowa, Dec. 21.

Exxon Mobil 'took something' away from gays

> Continued from Page 1

domestic partner benefits will be allowed to keep them, but former Exxon employees and former Mobil employees who had not already signed up for the benefits will not be eligible.

Exxon's nondiscrimination policy, which does not mention protection based on sexual orientation, applies to all employees of the newly merged company.

DiDonato said the idea for the Equality Rally came from a discussion of Exxon Mobil's policies and benefits on the Houston Activist Network, an email discussion list for gay men and lesbians. He said that he and two other activists worked to secure the city park at the intersection of Brazos and Pease for the rally.

The park is in downtown, near Exxon Mobil's Houston offices.

The rally is a way for gay men and lesbians to show their opposition to the policy and benefits changes without having to travel to the company's headquarters in Irving, a suburb of Dallas, DiDonato said.

"We think there is plenty of upper management down here," he said.

Organizers hope for hundreds to attend the rally, which is intended to show non-violent opposition to the company's changes, DiDonato said.

"We want to make a statement, and we want to make it a very peaceful statement," he said. "We can get equal rights if we ask for them in a peaceful manner."

DiDonato said he encourages gay men and lesbians to send receipts for purchases from gay-friendly oil companies to rally organizers to be passed on to Exxon Mobil.

People attending the rally are also encouraged to bring their Exxon and Mobil credit cards to destroy them at the event in a public display of dissatisfaction with the new company, DiDonato said.

The event seems to be gaining some momentum, as the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus weighed in Wednesday, approving a resolution encouraging gay men and lesbians to buy products from companies other than Exxon Mobil.

Exxon Mobil spokesman Tom Cirigliano said he had not heard about the Houston event, but when he was informed by a reporter, said he is displeased to learn of the effort. The event may be the result of misinformation in the media, he said.

"We think it is unfortunate [that a rally is planned]," Cirigliano said. "We think there has been a lot of misinformation out there."

He said the company does not oppose same-sex marriage, but that it has chosen to adopt a broad policy rather than one that mentions specific categories of people outside of categories required by federal law.

"A lot of organizations, a lot of gay organizations, believe that once you've covered sexual orientation, you've covered the world," he said. "It isn't true. It isn't going to happen here."

Cirigliano said Mobil Corp. no longer exists,

so any policies it had are no longer an issue.

Cirigliano said the company bases its benefits on legally recognized marriages and partnership because benefits based on other criteria would force the company to invade the privacy of employees to verify the information.

"We don't think any company has the right or the knowledge to get into personal relationships," he said.

Exxon Mobil, which does 80 percent of its business outside the U.S., recognizes same-sex relationship in Holland, for example, because they are legally recognized there, Cirigliano said.

"This isn't a political issue. This isn't a gay issue. It's a matter of personal rights. We believe that there is only one criterion we can apply throughout the world: Is it a legally recognized partnership?" he said.

Chris Martin, spokesman for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance at the former Mobil Corp., said he hopes upcoming meetings with company officials will push Exxon Mobil to clarify its position on nondiscrimination.

When told by the *Houston Voice* about Cirigliano's statement that the company has a broad nondiscrimination policy that includes everyone instead of mentioning specific groups, Martin said Cirigliano is "not incorrect, technically."

Martin also said he is not sure if company officials are committed to doing the right thing for its gay and lesbian employees.

Exxon Mobil has bucked the national trend



Dan DiDonato is helping to organize a Houston rally against Exxon Mobil.

of companies offering domestic partner benefits and including sexual orientation in nondiscrimination policies, Martin said.

"The company is going to have to go back at some point to adopt what Mobil had in the first place," he said.

The Equality Rally

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INFO

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Who cries for Jesse?

➤ Continued from Page 1

But gay groups refute charges that not condemning the sado-masochistic behavior practiced by some gay adults, as well as some heterosexuals, amounts to condoning sexual assault.

"I have two words to completely obliterate that argument: consenting adults," said Cathy Renna, community relations director for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

Renna said that GLAAD is overall pleased with the way the national media has responded to criticisms like LaBarbera's, "but although the religious right is trying to say this is some sort of gay conspiracy, not a single gay organization was involved in shaping this story one way or another."

"If there is some kind of pro-gay media conspiracy, can someone explain to me the amount of coverage we saw of Jeffrey Dahmer and Andrew Cunanan that focused obsessively on their sexual orientation and not their crimes?" Renna asked.

Headlines frequently described both Dahmer and Cunanan as "gay killers," she noted, placing their sexual orientation before even the acts that put them in the news.

Hate crime or sex crime?

While Matthew Shepard's death, and the vigils and outcry that followed, drew immediate national media attention, Dirkhising's murder initially drew mostly regional media attention, except for an article in the conservative Washington Times, which described the killing as "the result of homosexual rape and ritual."

But supporters of groups that have adopted the cause have slowly brought the case into a national spotlight, mainly through repeated letters to the editor demanding that crimes "committed by homosexuals" get as much attention as those "where homosexuals are victims."

Some local newspapers have joined the fight, including the generally conservative Augusta Chronicle in Augusta, Ga.

"Of course, the Dirkhising murder got little notice outside of Arkansas because it would have been 'politically incorrect,'" a Nov. 15 editorial argued. "There's absolutely no excuse not to report murders that might upset homosexuals. The liberal notion that they occupy the moral high ground in the murder sweepstakes is ludicrous!"

Still, national mainstream media outlets that have responded to the criticism, including Time magazine's web-site and the Washington Post, have agreed with gay groups that the Shepard and Dirkhising killings—beyond both being tragic and involving gays—are substantially different, explaining the difference in coverage.

Shepard's murder, they argue, is a hate crime, perpetrated by heterosexuals against someone simply because he is homosexual, while Dirkhising's is a sex crime, something that unfortunately happens far too often for every case to make national news.

"The most salient difference between the

Shepard case and this one ... is that while Shepard's murderers were driven to kill by hate, the boy's rape and death was a sex crime. It was repulsive, unconscionable—and the predictable pastime of perverted criminals," wrote Jonathan Gregg, associate editor of Time magazine's web-site in a commentary posted on-line in response to letters.

"It was the kind of depraved act that happens with even more regularity against young females, and, indeed, if the victim had been a 13-year-old girl, the story would probably never have gotten beyond Benton County, much less Arkansas. (There is, of course, a double standard there)," Time argued. "Matthew Shepard died not because of an all-too-common sex crime, but because of prejudice."

The tremendous public outcry of fear and anger generated by Shepard's death also fueled the increased news coverage, Washington Post ombudsman R. Shipp wrote in a Nov. 14 editorial.

A hate crime like Shepard's murder or that of James Byrd Jr., a black man dragged to death in Texas, is "a special kind of killing" that "tells a segment of American society that its physical safety is at risk," Shipp wrote, quoting previous Post editorials.

"Arkansas authorities have not characterized the Dirkhising death as a hate crime," she said. "Matthew Shepard's death sparked public expressions of outrage that themselves became news. That Jesse Dirkhising's death has not done so to date is hardly the fault of the Washington Post."

Even smaller regional papers covering the crime, and the law enforcement officials investigating it, have agreed that comparing Shepard and Dirkhising is somewhat of a false parallel.

"Journalists in Northwest Arkansas are in a unique position to evaluate the controversy, because the Dirkhising case was and is a high-interest story to our readers," wrote the Northwest Arkansas Morning News in a Nov. 7 editorial titled, "Differences in two cases: death of boy not a hate crime."

"There are those who want to believe in some sort of wide-ranging media conspiracy designed to engage sympathy for certain groups of people, including homosexuals, ... [but] like most conspiracy theories, this one crumbles under the weight of the facts," the paper said.

"Shepard was killed because he was a homosexual. This is a sex crime, but it is not a hate crime, and I think to compare it to the Shepard case is comparing apples and oranges," Benton County prosecuting attorney Brad Butler told Reuters.

Butler said he believes it is "wrong" for groups to use Dirkhising's death to voice their political and religious views. "These crimes are just the acts of two degenerates, sick people," he said.

Pedophilia or gay?

While national gay organizations have been quick to distance themselves from Dirkhising's murder, the case nevertheless



Gay groups say coverage of Jeffrey Dahmer and Andrew Cunanan—murderers who were branded 'gay serial killers' in many press accounts, putting their sexual orientation before their crimes—refutes claims that the media is biased towards gays.

raises thorny questions about the dangers of linking homosexuality and pedophilia, as well as when an accused criminal's sexual orientation is relevant to a story.

"The reality is that homosexuals are far more likely to be predators than they are to be victims," David Duke, a nationally known "white civil rights activist" wrote in a press release describing Dirkhising as "a child who was literally raped to death by two male homosexuals."

By focusing on the sexual nature of the crime, anti-gay groups are trying to play on fears that all homosexuals are pedophiles, GLAAD's Renna said.

"I am sure that when they heard about this, it was the first thing they thought of," she said. "But if you look at all of the research, the vast majority of people who commit child sexual abuse are identified as heterosexual men who are usually related to the children they abuse."

"In my experience, there certainly can be gay or lesbian people who prey upon children, but the numbers are far, far greater for heterosexuals in that regard," agreed Dr. Barbara Rubin, an Atlanta psychologist with many gay clients who also works as a court psychologist for Fulton County.

A case like the Dirkhising murder "opens things up for manipulation on the part of those who want to portray gays and lesbians in an inaccurate light, to suggest that here is an example of what two gay men are out there in the world doing, and the statistics don't bear that out," Rubin said.

"The truth is, there can be gay people who commit heinous crimes, but that doesn't mean gay people equal heinous crimes, and that is what is worth talking about," she said.

In the Dirkhising case, most media outlets appear to be understanding of that distinction.

"A red herring worth addressing at the outset is the failure to distinguish between homosexuality and pedophilia, which creates a false parallel" between the Shepard and Dirkhising murders, Time argued.

"A double standard would be in effect had the media ignored a situation where two gay men killed a straight man for being straight. But sex with children is a crime

regardless of the sexes involved, and is not synonymous with homosexuality," it said.

Initial Associated Press reports on Dirkhising's murder did not describe the two accused killers as gay, although later reports quoted investigators who described the two men as "roommates" and "lovers."

When to identify an accused criminal's sexual orientation, like when to identify someone's race, can often prove a difficult issue in news rooms. Most media advocates agree that such identifying characteristics should only be included when they are clearly relevant to the story, like revealing a suspect's race when the person is still at-large and a physical description is necessary.

In the Dirkhising case, HRC's Besen said he believes it is appropriate for news reports to note the two men's relationship, so long as it is not portrayed as the reason they allegedly committed the crime.

"It is relevant that the media should report they were dating and they were gay, in that their relationship to each other is relevant," he said. "But this is not a 'gay issue' and there shouldn't be a 'gay angle' to it anymore than there is a 'straight angle' when it is a young woman who has been molested."

"It has to do with molestation and child abuse, not sexual orientation, and I don't really see how a gay angle fits into this story other than to sensationalize it," Besen said. "Nobody looked at the O.J. Simpson case and tried to find the straight angle."

Most pedophiles are primarily sexually attracted to children, sometimes of both sexes, with few adult relationships, so you can't necessarily assume that someone who molests a child of the same sex should be labeled "gay," Rubin said.

The same holds true for cases of same-sex sexual assault involving adults, she noted.

"The issue of rape is really about power and control versus sex or sexual attraction," she said. "From my treatment experience with folks as outpatients and in running a psychiatric hospital, you can't pigeon hole it that way. Rape is way more an issue about rage and control over others as opposed to linking it to sexual orientation."

Child died during bondage, rape

Jesse Dirkhising, 13, died last Sept. 26 in Rogers, Ark., after being repeatedly raped and sodomized, according to police and press reports.

Davis Carpenter, 38, and Joshua Brown, 22, are charged with capital murder and six counts of rape in Dirkhising's death. The boy was found bound and near death in the apartment the two men shared. Both men have pleaded not guilty.

A pre-trial hearing in the case is scheduled for Jan. 13. In a brief hearing on Dec. 10, Benton County Circuit Judge David Clinger rejected the men's claims that the death penalty is unconstitutional, and ruled prosecutors may pursue it in the case.

Carpenter, who was working for a hair salon at the time of Dirkhising's death, told police he has lived in 26 states. Brown told police he was Carpenter's lover. The pair are being held without bond in the Benton County jail pending their trial April 10.

Dirkhising's grandmother said the seventh-grader, a resident of nearby Prairie Grove, had been going to the men's home on weekends because he sometimes worked at the salon where Carpenter was employed. Dirkhising's parents knew Carpenter. Brown reportedly later told police he had been having sexual relations with the boy.

In court last month for the death penalty hearing, Carpenter appeared attentive. Brown kept his head down and fiddled with his fingers. Neither made any comment.

Their lawyers tried to convince Clinger that the state's death penalty law was unconstitutional, but the judge rejected their arguments.

"I don't find anything new that changes the current status of the law in Arkansas," Clinger said. He also rejected the defense argument that it would be inappropriate to automatically disqualify potential jurors who were opposed to the death sentence.

Clinger said he would weigh later the defendants' arguments to move the trial to another county because the notoriety of the case could keep them from getting a fair trial.

"I'm very much concerned about being able to pick a jury here in Benton County," Clinger said.

Police say they were called to the men's home and were met at the door by Carpenter. They found Dirkhising nude and unconscious on the floor.

Brown was also nude and holding a telephone and a flashlight when officers arrived, police said. Brown reportedly told the officers he and Dirkhising "were just playing a game."

Dirkhising's mouth was blue and he didn't respond to officers. Duct tape was wrapped around his right hand and an empty prescription bottle was found next to him. The boy was pronounced dead at a hospital.

According to court records, Brown said he had tied Dirkhising's hands behind his back, placed a pair of underwear in his mouth and secured it with duct tape. Police said Brown



Davis Carpenter, 38, allegedly told a fellow jail inmate that he went to the grocery store while Jesse Dirkhising was tied up to purchase items to use to rape the boy.

told officers they placed belts around Jesse's legs and ankles, blindfolded him and strapped him to a mattress face-down.

Brown allegedly repeatedly raped the boy while Carpenter watched and masturbated, police said. Brown took a break to eat a sandwich and soon noticed the boy had stopped breathing, according to police. Carpenter called 911, investigators said.

An autopsy indicated Jesse died of positional asphyxia, the inability to breathe while in restrictive positions. Once in jail on

the charges, Carpenter told another inmate that he went to a grocery store late on the night of Sept. 26 to purchase items used to rape Dirkhising, including the duct tape and a cucumber, a Rogers detective said in a sworn affidavit.

Carpenter also said he stuffed "pain pills" in the boy's throat, the detective said. Police reportedly found drugs in the men's home, as well as notes that described various sex acts and how to bind and sedate a child.

—From staff and wire reports

OBITUARIES



Mark Richard Reinhardt

Services are scheduled for Houston HIV/AIDS activist Mark Richard Reinhardt, who died Jan. 1 after complications caused by the flu. He was 36.

A service will be held Jan. 8 at 10 a.m. at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St.

Reinhardt moved to Houston in 1982 to attend San Jacinto College and Houston Baptist University and pursue a career in health care while working as a home healthcare attendant. He later formed a computer consulting firm.

Reinhardt was a well-respected HIV/AIDS advocate in Houston and an active member of the Ryan White Planning Council and the Thomas Street Health

Center Advisory Council.

Reinhardt is survived by his parents, Ruth and Walter Reinhardt and his brother Steve, all of Jamestown, N.D. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to People With AIDS Coalition/TSC Volunteer Program or Omega House Hospice.



Margaretta Newell

Longtime disability activist Margaretta Newell died Dec. 12 from complications related to Multiple Sclerosis. She was 46.

Services are scheduled for Jan. 8 at 12:30 p.m. at Bering United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St. A reception will follow. Visitation was held Dec. 13 at Croley Funeral Home in Gladewater. A private memorial service took place Dec. 14 at Starrville Cemetery.

Newell volunteered with the Houston chapter of American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today (ADAPT) as an advocate for the disabled. She also co-founded Houston-based Canine Alternatives, which trains and places service dogs with human companions.

Newell also served as a board member of AssistHers, a women's health group, and the Houston Center for Independent Living.

"One of my fondest memories is when I picked her up at the airport after an ADAPT demonstration. With signs and buttons saying, 'Free our people' and handcuffs still on the wheelchair, she proudly stated how they shut several federal buildings down. I was proud too," said friend Kim Thompson. "She was honest and admitted she wasn't a saint. She found peace in her unique spirituality."

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to AssistHers, P.O. Box 541095, Houston, Texas 77254; Canine Alternatives, 14134 Sylvia Drive, Cypress, Texas 77429; or Multiple Sclerosis Society, 2211 Norfolk, Suite 825, Houston, Texas 77098.



Shirley Goulet

Longtime Houston resident Shirley Goulet died Dec. 18 after a short illness. She was 47.

Goulet, who moved to Houston in 1982, was employed at Kroger and Leather by Boots. She was a member of the area's leather community since the early 1980s.

Services are scheduled for Jan. 15 at 3 p.m. at Bering United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St.

"She always took care of everybody and made sure everyone had a good time," said Tommy Nix, her brother.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to AIDS Foundation Houston, 3202 Wesleyan Annex, Houston, Texas 77027.

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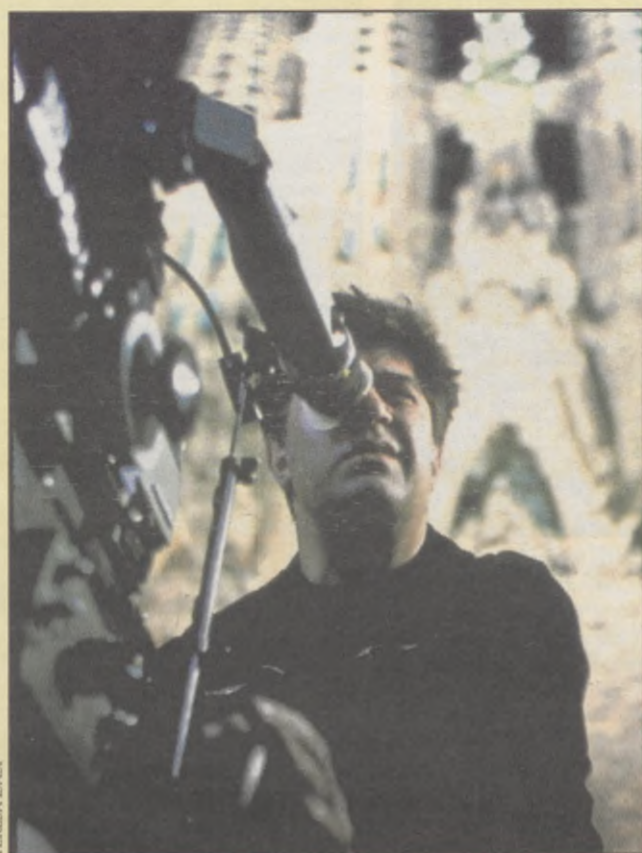
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A GUIDE FOR YOUR LEISURE TIME



TERESA ESASI

Film-goers should worry less about his sexuality and more about the content of his films, director Pedro Almodóvar said.

all about almodóvar

Highly lauded gay filmmaker bears the whip of self-criticism that comes with the gift of talent

by EARL DITTMAN

For all intents and purposes, gay Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar should be in the best of spirits: his 13th feature-length film, "All About My Mother" has been winning critical acclaim the world over. Better still, it has been selected as Spain's official entry for Best Foreign Film at this year's Academy Awards.

But at this moment, Almodóvar is a bit perturbed. He has spent most of the day talking to dozens of American journalists, and it appears the majority of them are more interested in discussing his sexuality than the making of "All About My Mother."

"What is this American phobia with people's sexual preference?" Almodóvar asked in Spanish, speaking through an interpreter. "Do journalists ask straight directors about their sex life before

talking about their movies? I find the questions about me being gay or straight very irritating. It's not like I've ever tried to hide my sexuality, so why is it so important to talk about?"

Surely, an artist who has made such bold and sexually provocative films like "Law Of Desire," "Women On the Verge of A Nervous Breakdown" and "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" should expect such questions. American critics and movie-goers simply aren't used to seeing motion pictures with transvestites, gay men and lesbians as lead characters in box office smashes, and has been done in Almodóvar's native Spain.

"In a way, you're right," he agreed. "I guess I just don't want my sexuality to take away from what is clearly more important—my films. What I do in my personal life should not enter into the equation. My movies should stand on their own without having me to carry along as baggage."

> Continued on page 17

an absolute ORIGINAL

Patricia Highsmith, wary of being labeled a lesbian writer, is the force behind the popular movie 'The Talented Mr. Ripley'

by GERALD BARTELL

"Sissy!"

The word stings Tom Ripley, protagonist of Patricia Highsmith's novel, "The Talented Mr. Ripley." So does the taunt from Dickie Greenleaf, the man Tom loves, that Tom is "queer." The lashes fester until Tom, in a moment Highsmith loads with blatant Freudian symbolism, lifts an oar resting between his legs and smashes Dickie's skull.

Tom Ripley, closeted gay sociopath, has plenty of com-

pany among the other characters in Highsmith's dark world. There's cagey Bruno Anthony in "Strangers on a Train," a murdering psychopath, an alien to his father, a close friend to his mother. She and Bruno sail on "The Fairy Prince" after Bruno strangles the wife of a man he finds attractive. And there's Elsie in "Found in the Street," bludgeoned to death by a jealous former girlfriend of Elsie's female lover.

"Highsmith was one of the most closeted and homo-

> Continued on page 18



Patricia Highsmith, concerned about being viewed as a lesbian writer, used the pseudonym Claire Morgan when writing 'The Price of Salt,' a novel about a woman who falls in love with a married woman.

Out In Print

BOOK NEWS

'Depot Street' depicts decades-long journey

by AL COTTON

One of the great joys of reading poetry is how efficiently it can convey another person's world view.

For example, to go from the poetry of Mary Oliver to that of the late James Broughton is to leave a world where the cruelty and beauty of nature is perpetually on view, and enter one where playfulness and awe intersect in male sexuality. The worlds poets create can be so radically different that sometimes you find it impossible to reconcile, as Oliver said in one poem, that "there is, after all, only one world."

Minnie Bruce Pratt's world, on display in *WALKING BACK UP DEPOT STREET*, is a place where life's oppressions are ever-present, and solace seems to come only from your knowledge of their existence.

The point of view of these poems is that of a Southern woman named Beatrice (which instinct says must be pronounced Be-AT-ric) who, like Pratt herself, is an anti-racist lesbian teacher living in the South who eventually moves North.

The title poem serves as prologue to the collection, and perfectly sums up Southern expatriate-hood: "Words would not remake the past. She could not make it/ vanish like an old photograph thrown onto live coals.//

If she meant to live in the present, she would have to work, do/ without, send money, call home long distance about the heat."

Beatrice's world is one in which the personal is almost unrelentingly political—in "The A&P," a trip to the grocery store for tomatoes reminds her of who picked them, how mechanistically they're grown. Slavery, racist oppression, homophobia—they haunt Beatrice's South. But ignoring what we know about the past, trying to forget, is not an option. "Every day she wanted to/ forget something she'd learned about the house, the fields,/ the lopped cedar posts propping the scuppernong arbor,/ the fallen grapes fermenting on the ground."

The closest she gets to an answer? "Stay conscious, a voice said. Can't do nothing if you don't/ stay conscious. ...// But every time, every damn time, she walked/ into this A&P to get groceries, she had to decide/ not to be like her father."

Life in the Beatrice's South creates one dilemma of memory after another—the ghosts of Hiroshima show up in "Strange Flesh"; sharecroppers' lives are the topic of "A Cold Not the Opposite of Life"; "Shades" tells of how the stories of African tribes arise in her mind while she's teaching. But the urban North provides no respite from injustice, just different subjects—factory workers,



miners, evil landlords, even the sweatshop malady of the '90s, carpal tunnel syndrome.

These poems, some of which are almost two decades old, are a cycle that tells the story Pratt's personal political evolution. They are tough, vigorous poems, full of long lines of blank verse that ache to convey the painful truths people try to forget. Technically, they are ambitious, using italic and indentation to denote shifts in time, narration and perspective.

In tone, you'll find a fascinating combination of moral certainty and personal ambiguity, a complex perspective that feels very familiar—a sort of "I know what's wrong here, but where can I find something that's right?" that speaks directly to the soul's Southern queerness.

In the final poem, "The Other Side," Beatrice meets a mysterious figure at a drag bar who challenges that personal ambiguity—"What kind of woman/ are you? Stand here. Answer/. ... Answer me and live."

Since Pratt's partner is transgendered activist Leslie Feinberg, the ironic ending for this book of poems is Beatrice finding solace when she accepts the challenge to make the political even more ferociously personal in her life.

As they leave together—"Into the rain-streaked street of night, the yellow leaves fallen/ like golden scars on black asphalt, they walk out their answer/ to the riddle, the woman who is not a man, the woman who is not/ a woman, following the yellow drift like fire around the corner"—you can imagine the thunderclap that follows when love strikes in someone's poetic world.

What your neighbors are reading . . .

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- 2 **Cybersocket 2000**
by Gaynet Directories, \$9.95
- 3 **Best of the Superstars 2000**
edited by John Patrick, \$11.95
- 4 **Way to Go, Smith**
by Bob Smith, \$24
- 5 **Don't Get Me Started**
by Kate Clinton, \$14
- 6 **Outfoxed**
by Rita Mae Brown, \$24
- 7 **The Hours**
by Michael Cunningham, \$13
- 8 **The Talented Mr. Ripley**
by Patricia Highsmith, \$13
- 9 **Welcome to World, Baby Girl!**
by Fannie Flagg, \$7.50
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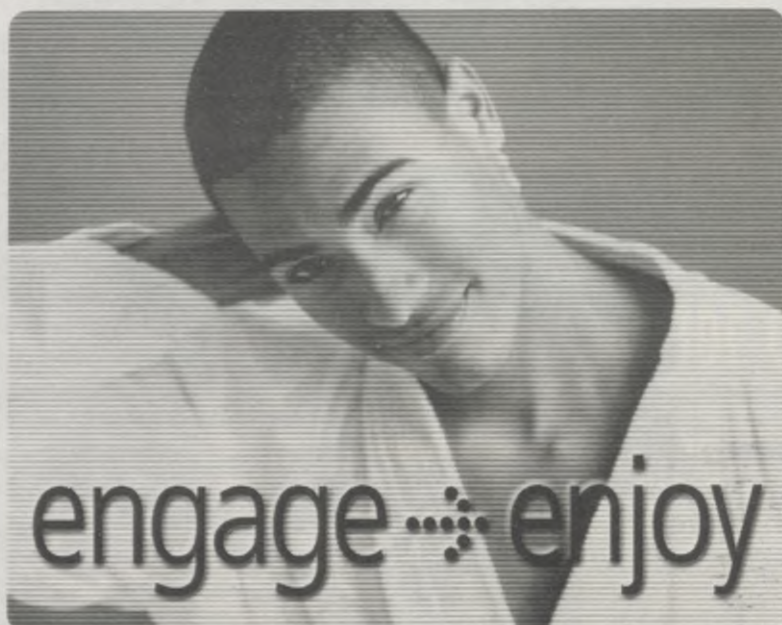
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- 5 **Innuendo**
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- 6 **Best Lesbian Erotica 2000**
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- 8 **Girls Will Be Girls**
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INFO

Walking Back Up Depot Street

by Minnie Bruce Pratt
University of Pittsburgh Press,
\$12.95

all about almodóvar

> Continued from page 15

Almodóvar's latest film, "All About My Mother," certainly does just that.

The film recently dominated Spain's Goya cinema awards with 14 nominations, including best actress, best director and best picture. The winners will be announced Jan. 29.

The movie, which won an award for best director at the Cannes Film Festival in May, is the story of a single woman whose son dies and her search for the boy's father.

Manuela, played by Argentine Cecilia Roth, is accompanied by a handful of other female characters, including an aging lesbian actress, a transvestite homemaker and a nun with the HIV virus.

"It's really Pedro's most mainstream film to date," actor Antonio Banderas, who was "discovered" by Almodóvar, stated in a recent interview. "And by 'mainstream,' I don't mean he has gone out of his way to make something commercial in order to sell more tickets. It's mainstream in the way that it can touch so many souls, regardless of who they are. You don't have to be a transvestite to understand the feelings of his characters."

Inspired by the Bette Davis classic "All About Eve," Almodóvar began writing "All About My Mother" shortly after complet-

ing production on his 1995 film "The Flower Of My Secret."

"There's a character in that movie, a nurse named Manuela, who appears just in the beginning," Almodóvar said. "In so many situations, she has to become an actress: to the doctors she works with and to people she has to attend to. So, my idea was to make a movie about the capacity to act of certain people who are not actors. And what is acting anyway? It's just the ability to fake things really well."

From an early age, Almodóvar discovered that the best "actors" always seemed to be women.

"As a child, I remembered seeing that quality in some of the women in my family," he said. "They faked more and better than men. And through their lies, they managed to avoid more than one tragedy. The women really resolved their problems, in silence, having sometimes to lie in order to do so. They faked, lied, hid ... and by doing so, allowed life to flow and develop, without men finding out or obstructing it."

But "All About My Mother" harbors much deeper messages, Almodóvar said.

"It's really about wounded maternity, and the spontaneous solidarity between women," he said. "There's a line in

Tennessee Williams' 'A Streetcar Named Desire' where Blanche Dubois says, 'I have always depended in the kindness of strangers.' In 'All About My Mother,' women are those kind strangers. Like most of my films, this one is kind of a salute, a tribute to women and their strength."

Raised in a country ruled by "machismo," Almodóvar said he has always used his films to celebrate females and femininity.

"Femininity is an important part of all of us, whether men would like to admit that or not," he said. "So, as a filmmaker, I feel like it is my responsibility to express that. In my early films, people thought I was just trying to make subversive, gay movies by having homosexuals and drag queens in them. They were just missing the point."

"Don't get me wrong, Spain is not the most open-minded country in the world, not by a long shot," he said, "but I think my films have had some impact when it comes to acceptance of alternative lifestyles."

So why, then, is Almodóvar so sensitive about discussing his own sexuality?

"A lot of people begin to confuse your work with your real life," he said. "Like I said, I'm not ashamed of who I am—morally or sexually. But what if I wanted to make



Cecilia Roth as Manuela in 'All About My Mother,' a critically acclaimed film that tells the story of a single woman whose son dies and her search for the boy's father.

a children's movie? I don't think that's very likely, but what if I did want to do one? Would people let their children go see it if it was done by 'Pedro Almodóvar, the gay director?' Probably not. So, by labeling myself this or that, I can limit my abilities to reach people."

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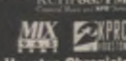
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an absolute ORIGINAL

➤ Continued from page 15

phobic of writers," says Barbara Greer, president of Naiad Press, who worked with the late author.

Highsmith's fears produced a disturbing series of novels that were published to wide acclaim. But success apparently never healed the scars of her life.

According to Russell Harrison, in a critical biographical study he wrote about Highsmith in 1997, the author was born Mary Patricia Plangman in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1921. Her parents had separated before she was born, and Highsmith took the name of her stepfather, Stanley Highsmith.

She suffered her parents' bitter quarrels, separations, and cruelties. Her mother once told her she tried to abort her by drinking turpentine.

"She made my childhood a little hell," Highsmith said in an interview quoted by Harrison. "She never loved anyone, neither my father, my stepfather, nor me."

Adult life brought Highsmith success as a writer, beginning with the publication of "Strangers on a Train" in 1950. "The Talented Mr. Ripley" appeared in 1955. Four sequels followed, including "Ripley Under Ground" and "Ripley's Game." Readers savored Ripley's impersonations, forgeries and murders.

But tucked among Highsmith's thrillers was a curiosity.

"After Strangers on a Train," Highsmith

wrote "The Price of Salt," a novel about a woman who falls in love with a married woman. The two become a couple, and the married woman sacrifices custody of her child to remain with her partner. Highsmith describes the women's sexual relationship explicitly, their happiness contrasting sharply with the misery most of the author's other characters feel.

But Highsmith did not sign her name to the book when it was published in 1955. Instead, she used the pseudonym Claire Morgan.

"Harper and Brothers, who had published 'Strangers on a Train,' was embarrassed by the lesbian content, especially since Hitchcock's film version of 'Strangers' was a big success," Greer says. "They arranged for Coward McCann to publish 'The Price of Salt' under a pseudonym. [Highsmith] was scared shitless that people would identify her as a 'lesbian writer.'"

The book became a perennial favorite, eventually selling over a million copies. In 1984, Naiad reissued the book under Highsmith's real name. In an afterward in that edition, Highsmith explained that because "Strangers" had resulted in her being mislabeled as a suspense writer, she once feared "The Price of Salt" would lead to her being labeled a lesbian writer.

Grier believes Highsmith had several relationships with women over the course of her life, spent mostly in Switzerland. In an interview Harrison

borrows from, however, Highsmith acknowledged only one such relationship, describing it as "catastrophic."

"She was a dear person, but she was shy, private, self-hating," Greer says of Highsmith. Others offer less tempered opinions.

"She was the most odious human being I've ever met," says Otto Penzler, who edited and published several of Highsmith's works. "I never heard her speak warmly of anybody. She was full of hatred for men and women."

Yet Penzler, like most critics, is unstinting in his praise of Highsmith's writing.

"She's an absolute original," he says. "It's hard to find a mystery-suspense writer who's better. There's a sense of disquiet and unease about her books. I don't know anybody else who writes like that."

In 1995, the year Highsmith died, film director Anthony Minghella began the first draft of a screenplay of "The Talented Mr. Ripley." Like other readers, Minghella admired Highsmith's work, yet sensed the darkness in her personality.

"She had the most amazing conceptual mind," Minghella says. "She always started with a thrilling idea. I also think she was misanthropic. I think she had a dim view of the majority of her characters. They always feel like if you ordered the wrong martini you could be in great danger."

Mingella's worldview is, he says, "quite the reverse." And that has influenced how he adapted the book for the big screen.

"The film is a series of love stories,"



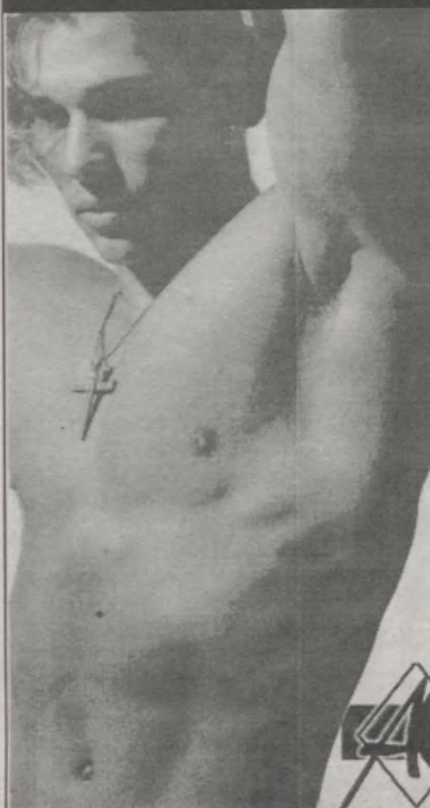
Matt Damon and Jude Law in 'The Talented Mr. Ripley,' a screen adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's 1955 book.

Minghella says. "Ripley is looking for love wherever he can find it. He meets somebody who embraces him for all the things that Tom Ripley is, but at a point when he doesn't think he can be Tom Ripley any longer."

Epithets like "sissy" and "queer" that were hurled at Ripley in the original novel are gone from Minghella's film version. When Ripley kills, he does so partly in self-defense, and Ripley's pathology is no longer connected to his sexuality.

"I'm nervous of reducing the film to a story about a man in a closet," Minghella says. "Ripley's biggest fears are with rejection on all terms—in terms of his class, his tastes, his own identity, with which he has such a mysterious relationship. Anything which makes him different troubles him. I think that is something that is absolutely universal."

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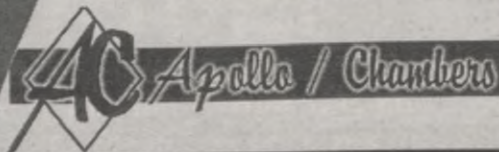


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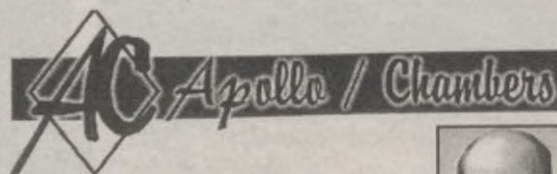
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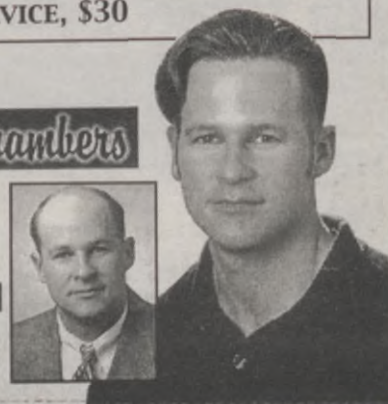
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Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEWS

This is no Big Mac

by TRAYCE DISKIN

It's easy to be captivated by that one block of Europe between Richmond and Oakley on Montrose Boulevard, a place where tiny white lights are wrapped around large oaks and diners fill the sidewalks.

This scene is real, in part because of **BOULEVARD BISTRO**, owned by revered Houston chef Monica Pope. It continues to live up to its reputation as one of Houston's top restaurants.

Boulevard Bistro is swank and trendy. But with the sleek wood interior and dim lighting comes a genuinely friendly and easy-going attitude that helps make the place more like a classy neighborhood cafe.

On a recent visit, the hors d'oeuvres of corn meal and sage crackers were delicious, although the dry texture makes one long for some sort of dipping sauce or butter.

We started our meal with Cornmeal-Fried Calamari (\$7.50) which were meaty and lightly dusted with a crunchy, greaseless batter. The tomato sauce was fairly pedestrian—likable, but nothing special.

Two other appetizers lend just a hint of the magic Boulevard Bistro can deliver with a slab of salmon. The Tempura of Tuna and Salmon Nori Roll (\$12.50) is heavenly, with the tender meat soaking up the orange chili sauce and sting of roasted garlic wasabi mustard.

For a more breakfast-like side of the great pink fish, try the Citrus and Dill

Cured Salmon (\$7). The rye toast seems the perfect choice to hold the tangy salmon piled with capers, chopped egg and red onion. The solid, mild flavor of the egg mingled with the more potent vinegary capers, onion and fish.

Salads don't come with entrees, but some are worth the extra bucks to complete your meal. The Organic Field Greens (\$5.50) is a classier, tastier version of the simple dinner salad, with handsome chunks of shaved romano and crunchy apple and hazelnuts thrown in. The

Endive Salad (\$7.50) is more adventurous, with grapefruit, bleu cheese, candied pecans and a sweet red wine and honey dressing.

The variety and quality of the entrees illustrates the high standards that make Boulevard

Bistro stand out from other restaurants. The Venison Chops with Blackberry Glaze and Truffled Country Potatoes (\$28), the most expensive item, feature tender meat with a sweet-sour sauce that isn't overpowering or too sweet. The Hanger Steak (\$16), according to two friends who ordered it, offers a rich steak sauce.

The Thyme Fries lend a smoky, Italian twist to the typical French fry. Like the creamy Horseradish Mashed Potatoes, these can be ordered as a side dish. Even when some of the selections didn't knock our socks off, there was something about each one that made it impressive.

The Pistachio Crusted Salmon Filet's (\$19) spinach salad proved rather bland and watery, but why complain when the rocky pistachio flakes seem baked right into the fish, creating a nutty and smooth combination of flavors. The special for the evening, Grilled Mahi-Mahi (\$16) was served in a well of black bean and corn ragout. It was sheer bliss.

When a friend ordered the Hamburger (\$12.50), I had to rescind the menu to make sure she didn't misread. The idea of a burger plate next to the Hazelnut Baked Duck Breast (\$20) seemed out of place; I was mistaken.

This is no Big Mac. The B3R Ranch Burger on Pizzette is served with mild, white cheddar cheese, a caramelized onion with rich sauté and apple-smoked bacon.

Our server continued to win points by suggesting the most egalitarian, and decadent dessert option, for our large group. The dessert sampler tray included a chocolate cheesecake, a cherry chocolate bread pudding, crème brûlée, banana walnut gelato and tiramisu. There was enough for eight of us, making a delicious finale to our satisfying meals.



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Flexology

A GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH

Your physical groove for Y2K

by GREG HERREN

Every year at this time I write about New Year's fitness resolutions and how to stick to them. Once again, it is that time of year, and as I sat down to write another column along those lines, it occurred that my approach was all wrong. The advice I had given in the past was valid, and hopefully it had helped some people get back into the groove of regular exercise.

But why does it work for some and not for others?

The fitness industry has turned into a billion dollar realm based on playing on the fears of an America obsessed with appearance. "The fattest people in the world," headlines trumpet. Everyone obsesses about body image.

We all worry about whether we've gained weight over the holidays. We worry if we're too fat. We worry if our muscles are big enough. We worry, worry, worry. Somehow, the true message of exercise has gotten lost in the shuffle.

Exercise is about being healthier and improving your quality of life. It's not about dropping four pounds so you can fit into those 30-waist jeans. It's not about going on a fad diet because you feel bad

We all worry about whether we've gained weight over the holidays. We worry if we're too fat. We worry if our muscles are big enough.

We worry, worry, worry. Somehow, the true message of exercise has gotten lost in the shuffle.

to yourself, and everyone else, "I care about myself."

Don't you do regular preventive maintenance on your car? On your house? Well, why not do preventive maintenance on your body? Why not approach it from that perspective? Forget about the weight. Forget about the body image. Forget about everything except that you are taking care of yourself.

So, if you want to make a resolution regarding exercise this year, here's one I suggest: "I resolve that in the 21st century that I am going to treat my body with the respect that it is more than entitled to. I am not going on fad diets. I am not going to buy into the latest exercise fad. I am going to start exercising and I am going to find an exercise routine that appeals to me, whether it is weight lifting, aerobics, playing tennis, taking walks, jogging or riding a bicycle.

"I am going to eat a sensible diet with the proper combinations of carbohydrates, protein, and fats. If I have to miss some exercise or if I want to indulge in a cheesecake. I will do it and not judge myself harshly because of it. I am going to do this because I care about myself, and because I deserve to have a better, healthier quality of life. I am not going to be intimidated by anything or anyone that wants to stand in my way. I deserve it."

That is the attitude that you need to have. That is the positive mental attitude that will get you into the groove. You can do it. Don't let negativity invade your life. And once you start treating yourself better, it will carry over into other aspects of your life as well.

Don't allow the negativity in. Don't tell yourself you can't do it. You can. It is possible. People do it every day, and are happier and healthier because of it. You'll be amazed.

Greg Herren is a personal trainer and fitness writer. He can be reached at 504-588-9563 or at greg121@aol.com.



MEN'S EXERCISE

about being overweight. It's not about getting pecs the size of grapefruits so other men will think you're hot. It's not about having washboard abs so you can go shirtless at a bar. It's not about training for a marathon.

What happens to your body when you exercise regularly is a side effect. The goal should be living a healthier lifestyle. Exercise is about feeling better about yourself, but not better about the way you look. Exercise is your way of saying



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Occasions

Birthdays

Happy birthday to Robert P. of the CCCC on Jan. 7.

Happy birthday to Ron Black on Jan. 7.

Happy birthday to singers Joan Baez and Crystal Gayle on Jan. 9.

Happy birthday to Gary B. of the CCCC on Jan. 10.

Former *Houston Voice*er Susan Scott celebrates her birthday on Jan. 13.

Happy birthday to Kip Granberg of the Guava Lamp on Jan. 13.

Happy birthday to local activist and radio personality Jimmy Carper on Jan. 23.

The *Houston Voice* welcomes your special occasions. Send e-mail to croberts@houstonvoice.com. Fax: 713-529-9531. Mail: Occasions, *Houston Voice*, 500 Lovett Blvd., Suite 200, Houston, Texas 77006. Please include a telephone number so occasions can be verified and considered for publication.



Happy birthday to Eddie, the hunky bartender at the Venture-N, on Jan. 7.



Happy birthday to Rick Ellsasser, co-publisher of the *Houston Voice*, on Jan. 13.



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community calendar

saturday, jan. 8

After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM, 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. 713-526-5738.
Q-Patrol walks the streets at 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
Visual Arts Alliance. 10 a.m. 281-583-8408.
Dignity mass at 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary at 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.
Houston Lesbian and Gay drop-in hours from noon to 4 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. Montrose Writer's Project 3 to 4:30 p.m. International Billiards League meeting. 2 p.m. 713-524-3818. Kolbe Breakfast Club and Hospital Visitation. 9:30 a.m. 713-861-1800.

sunday, jan. 9

The Women's Group. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.
Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets. 713-942-7002.
Rainbow Riders. A bicycle club for women. 713-869-1686.
Church of the XII Apostles Anglican Rite Old Catholic Church. Holy Communion 10:30 a.m. at 239 Westheimer. 713-665-7903.
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Holy Rite Eucharist I at 7:45 a.m.; Holy Rite Eucharist II at 8:55 a.m.; Education hour at 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist at 11 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.
Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church. "Preaching the Gospel" Bible study at 9:30 p.m. 713-528-6756.
Resurrection MCC Services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. 713-861-9149.
Grace Lutheran Church. Sunday school for all ages at 9:30 a.m. Service at 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.
First Unitarian Universalist Church. Services at 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.
Community Gospel. Service at 11 a.m.; 7 p.m. Sunday School for children. 4305 Lillian. 713-880-9235 or www.community-gospel.org.
Houston Mission Church. Service at 10:30 a.m. 713-529-8225.
Covenant Baptist Church. Service at 1:30 p.m.; education hour at 3 p.m. 713-668-8830.
Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Services at 8:30 a.m., 10:50 a.m. Sunday school at 9:40 a.m. 713-526-1017.
Resurrection MCC Handbell Choir rehearsal at 1:30 p.m. 713-861-9149.
Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County. 402 Church St. in Galveston. Service at 10:30 a.m. 409-765-8330.
Faith and Hope Fellowship. Service at 11 a.m. 713-520-7847.
First Congregational Church (Memorial). Service at 11 a.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.
Church of Kindred Spirits (Beaumont). Service at 7 p.m. 409-835-4765.

Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum at 10 a.m. Service at 11 a.m. and noon. Open Circle Family Support at 12:30 p.m. 1504 Wirt. 713-686-5876.
Interfaith Worship Celebration. 7 p.m. 2515 Waugh Dr. 713-528-3601.
Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation: Adult discussion at 9:45 a.m.; service at 11 a.m. 3945 Greenbriar. Stafford. 281-277-8882. www.neosoft.com/~thoreau.
Lone Star Volleyball Association (LSVA) Winter League begins. 281-878-4629.
PFLAG-Houston. 2 p.m. 1117 Texas. 713-867-9020.

monday, jan. 10

Gay Fathers/Fathers First support group, 8 p.m. 713-861-6181.
Calendar/Computer workshop for Pride Week, 7 p.m. 713-529-1223.
Gay Men Survivors of Domestic Violence support group. 713-526-1017.
Bering Support Network. Grief and Divorce Groups at 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
AIDS Caregivers' Support Group. 6 p.m. 713-732-4300.
HIV testing. Free from AVES from 1 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. 713-626-2837.
FrontRunners. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.
Kolbe Project. Eucharist at 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.
Integrity Houston. For gay and lesbian Episcopalians. 7:30 p.m., Autry House, 6265 Main.
More Light Presbyterians. Meeting. 1110 Lovett. 9:30 p.m. 281-444-8861 X309.
Black Lesbian and Gay Coalition's weekly meeting at 7 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. Houston Lesbian and Gay Community drop-in hours from 6 to 9 p.m.; Positive/Negative Photo Exhibition. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

tuesday, jan. 11

FREE HIV testing at Club Houston at 8:30 p.m. to midnight. the Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.
Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous. 7 p.m., 239 Westheimer. 713-495-8009.
Gay Men HIV+ Psychotherapy. "The Survivor's Circle" ceremony and celebration. Montrose Counseling Center at 4:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.
Youth-Rap. 6:30 p.m. 713-822-8511.
Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center at 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.
AIDS Alliance of the Bay Area. 7 p.m. 713-488-4492.
PROTECT. An HIV-negative support group at 7 p.m.

713-526-1017.
Women Survivors of Childhood Abuse. Montrose Counseling Center at 6:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.
Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang at 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.
Gay Men's Process Group. 7 p.m., 3316 Mt. Vernon. 713-526-8390.
Men's Network. Discussion group for social, educational development of gay and bisexual men, 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.
More on Relationships. Discussion group. 7 p.m. 415 W. Gray. 713-861-9149.
Lambda Skating Club skates at 8 p.m. at the Tradewinds. 713-523-9620.
Gay & Bi Male Support Group support group forming. Sponsored by AVES 713-626-2837.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m.; Lesbian Coming Out Group meets at 7:30 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-528-3818.
PFLAG-Houston discussion group. 7:30 p.m. 2700 Albany. #304. 713-867-9020.

wednesday, jan. 12

Free HIV testing by Thomas Street Clinic (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.). 713-793-4026.
Free HIV testing by Montrose clinic at Mary's (4 p.m. to 8 p.m.), Midtowne Spa (8 p.m. to midnight), Ripcord (9 p.m. to midnight). 713-830-3000.
BiNet Houston. 7:30 p.m. Social meeting at Cafe Toopees, 1830 W. Alabama. 713-467-4380.
Women's Network. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond. 713-529-0037.
HIV survivor support group. 7 p.m. 713-782-4050.
Mind/Body Connection: Alternative Approaches. 7 p.m. 1475 W. Gray. 713-524-2374.
Project: Caesar. 7 p.m. AFH, 3203 Wesleyan. 713-623-6796.
Out Skate Rollerskating Club, 8 to 10 p.m. at 8075 Cook Road. 281-933-5818.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

thursday, jan. 13

Free HIV testing at Toyz (9 p.m. to midnight) by the Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.
Art Labs. The Art League at 1 p.m. 713-225-9411.
Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Open rehearsal at 7 p.m. 713-521-7464.
HIV+ Men Psychotherapy. Montrose Counseling Center, 1:15 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Relapse Prevention. Montrose Counseling Center, 2 p.m. 713-529-0037.
Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center, 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.
Women's Therapy Group. Montrose Counseling Center, 5:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.
Center for the Healing of Racism. 7:30 p.m. 713-738-RACE.
FrontRunners at 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.
HIV Art Course Program. 1 to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.
Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic, 713-830-3000.
Faith and Hope Fellowship. Bible study 7 p.m. 713-520-7847.
Community Gospel. Choir practice. 6:30 p.m.; service at 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.
HIV/AIDS Support Group. 2:30 at Family Service Center. 713-861-4849.
Women's HIV/AIDS Support Group. 4:30 p.m. Family Service Center. 713-247-3810.
HIV/AIDS Support Group. 7 p.m. Family Service Center in Conroe. 888-247-3810.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. 713-524-3818.

friday, jan. 14

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) meets. 713-942-7002.
Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center at 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
Lesbian Avengers. Cafe Toopees, 1830 W. Alabama at 7 p.m.
Q-Patrol walks the streets at 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
Kolbe Project. Park Plaza Hospital visitation. 713-861-1800.
Positive Art Workshop. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.
Lesbian and Gay Voices. KPFT 90.1 FM, 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.
Movie Time at the Kolbe Project. 7:30 p.m. 713-522-8182.
Life Begins at 40. Pot luck dinner. 6:30 p.m. 1440 Harold. 713-526-1017.
Mishpachah Alizim Shabbat Services. 8 p.m. 713-748-7079.
Co-dependents Anonymous. 7:30 p.m. at MCCR. 713-861-9149.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. 713-524-3818.
Healing Eucharist at Christ Church Cathedral. 7 p.m. 1117 Texas. 713-222-2593.

To list an event, call Carolyn Roberts at 713-529-8490, fax at 713-529-9531, or e-mail editor@houstonvoice.com. Deadline is Friday at 5 p.m.

ASK THE PASTOR

Q: "How do I go on living when I don't want to, but I know I need to stay alive for the Lord's work?"

A: Sometime situations get so bad that we feel we just don't want to go on living. I would imagine that you are in this place right now. The option to end our life as we know it is not really ours to have. God has given us this life and we are to live it to the glory of God. So how does a person go on when life does not feel worth it? God has promised us that there would not be any test or trial put upon us that would be more than we could bear. God promises a way out, a way to escape the pressure of life that does not involve taking our life. Many times that way out can be through a good therapist who is gifted to help us see a new perspective on our situation. One can learn coping skills for the toughest challenges that life presents to us. For others, prayer and meditation bring a sense of peace and a place of solace for a busy and overwhelming life. What you and I are encouraged to do is to seek that "way of escape" that God promises us that is most beneficial for us. It is there and we must seek to find that way out. Sometimes it is hard for us to admit that we need help to face the next day, or just to get up in the morning. God does have a purpose for your life and it is a good one. God's plans are for you to prosper and be in good health. God's plans are for your good, and not to harm you. Let us remember that God is pulling FOR us. And if God be for us, who can be against us?

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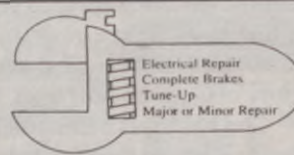


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YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

by JILL DEARMAN

Jan. 7 - Jan. 13

**ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)**

Try to do things by the book in the days ahead. Creating your own rules is not the way to go. I know you're not big on reflection, but this would be a good time to look at the past and learn from it. An Aquarius could introduce you to a whole new way of life.

**TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)**

While everyone else is crying the post-holiday blues, you could actually experience a surge of freedom and optimism. Make opportunities happen; maybe go back to school. You've been relying on your good looks long enough. A Pisces wants to relive a high school experience with you.

**GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)**

Venus conjuncts Pluto in your house, which means major change is forthcoming in your romantic life. A show of guts is necessary, though. You've got to risk minor humiliation (risk, darling, not necessarily experience) in order to achieve major triumph. Another Gemini wants to see what you're made of.

**CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)**

Mercury in your house of love indicates that you can really articulate your feelings to that special somebody. Your mind and your heart are in sync. So go easy on yourself; let a Scorpio pamper you. Spend more nights on the couch in front of the TV, or in bed naked.

**LEO (JULY 24 - AUG. 23)**

The Sun and Mercury in your health sector are forcing you to take a chronic body problem seriously. Common sense will serve you better than dramatic performances. Put some extra energy into your career. Follow the lead of a workaholic Aries, and work as hard as you play.

**VIRGO (AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23)**

Stop downplaying your talents. Present an idea to someone who believes in you and follow through with it. Be bold in love, too. A Pisces needs a grand over-the-top statement of passion. And the fewer words you use the better. Use your imagination.

**LIBRA (SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)**

Lucky Jupiter is moving quickly through your house of love. If you let a few good ones get away last year, you can make up for lost time now with an Aquarius. But only if you act quickly. Be focused at work in the days ahead; people who have power over you are watching. No paranoia necessary, just diligence and integrity.

**SCORPIO (OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)**

Saturn goes direct, after a tedious period in retrograde, in your house of relationships. That means you need to put some elbow grease into the love thang. You could change the world you live in if you would just write something down instead of brooding over it. Make notes on the body of a Taurus.

**SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)**

Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to turn your dreams into reality. Pick up a hammer and a nail. Make a metaphor real. You could receive good news about finances this week, but play your cards close to the vest. Hold a Scorpio close to your chest, too.

**CAPRICORN (DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)**

This is your time to play in the sunshine and to taste some honey with a Leo. After some delicious frolicking, you can begin to bring an artistic project to fruition. You have the persistence and will power to make magic, and finish something brilliant you started long ago.

**AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 - FEB 19)**

Venus is traveling through your house of friends right now, and that explains why your little buddies are rubbing up so close to you. If you're attracted to a Virgo, you can at least get to first base. But don't neglect to clean up any leftover messes in your home life. You'll be glad you did.

**PISCES (FEB. 20 - MARCH 20)**

Decadence follows you wherever you go these days; your friends just have to look at you to know you're thinking something you shouldn't. The moon in your sign on Jan. 12 makes you extra-sexy, and just when you thought you'd never date again. This is a good time for you to indulge your ego—and indulge a Leo.

Jill Dearman is the author of two new books, "Queer Astrology for Men" and "Queer Astrology for Women." For information on charts and consultations, call 212-841-0177 or e-mail QScopes@aol.com.



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Announcements

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JANUARY 9, 2000- Stella Link Seville, Candidate for Empress XVI of the RSCSS will be hosting a candidate show entitled "Millennium Madness", held at the Brazos River Bottom. Show time is 8:30 drag standard time p.m. Some of Houston's biggest and brightest stars will be performing. Draft Beer and Hot Dogs. Benefactors for the show are Emperor & Empress XV for their stepping down at Coronation XVI.

Place To Play?

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Community Resale Shop, 515 Richmond has been providing clothing to people living with AIDS for 14 years. We urgently need fall clothes. Open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Sunday. Purveyors of couture to starving artists of all ilk. Independent 501 (c) (3). 713.528.2555.

PWA COALITION

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Employment

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The Spay Neuter Assistance Program will provide FREE spaying/neutering, rabies vaccinations and city licenses for animals belonging to qualifying low income dog and cat guardians. For qualifications and transportation information please call 713.522.2337.

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Volunteers

The Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center is seeking volunteers to staff the facility in more extended hours. If organizations and individuals are interested, please contact Kevin Davidson at 713.524.3818 to discuss how you can help.

Gay & Lesbian Switchboard

Volunteers needed at the Gay & Lesbian Switchboard-Houston. www.gayswitchboardhouston.org. To sign up please call 713.523.4390.

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'98 Volkswagen Beetle • Black, Only 17K miles, PW, PL, 5-speed, let this one take you back! • \$16,988 • Contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'96 Infiniti I-30 • Green, sunroof, leather, full power pkg., low miles • \$16,295 • For more information, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'98 Jeep Wrangler • Red w/ Beige hard top, lots of fun to drive, go anywhere! • \$15,600 • For further details, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'97 Jeep Grand Cherokee • PW, PL, P-Seat, Cruise, tilt, and more! • \$15,688 • For your test drive, see Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'97 Nissan Pathfinder • Champagne, ready to go with lots of equipment! • \$19,290 • For more information, see Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'99 Chrysler 300M • Slate with Graphite Leather, beautiful car, Be the talk of the town, don't miss this one! • \$20,995 • See Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'99 Mazda 626 • Only 12K low miles, PW, PL, cruise, cassette, and much more! • \$12,988 • For more info., see Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'97 Toyota LandCruiser • The Cream of the Crop! A one of a kind beauty • \$30,595 • For all the details, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'96 Ford Ranger Extended Cab • Auto, very low miles, very economical, great Pick-up! • Only \$9,500 • Ask for Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'95 Saturn SC-2 • 27K very low miles, auto, PW, PL, cruise, cassette, very clean! • \$7,488 • To test drive, call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'96 Infiniti I-30 • Leather, Bose premium sound system, PW, PL, P-Seat, Nice! • \$14,888 • Call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'99 Chrysler LHS • 17K, Super clean vehicle w/ lots of options, Let's do business! • \$24,180 • Call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'98 Mercury Mountaineer • PW, PL, tilt, cruise, cassette, much more, Great sport utility! • Only \$16,888 • Contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'99 Plymouth Breeze • Very nice car with low miles, save thousands, why buy new? • \$12,700 • For information, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'97 Jeep Grand Cherokee • White, real clean, low miles • \$15,790 • For more information and a test drive, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'98 Dodge Avenger • Fully loaded w/ auto, V6, leather, sunroof, PW, PL, very nice! • Hurry! Only \$12,888 • Call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'98 Jeep Grand Cherokee • Red, real sharp vehicle w/ lots of room • \$18,860 • Call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'99 Chevrolet Malibu • 4-Door, auto, PW, PL, and much more, very nice vehicle! • \$12,888 • Call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'97 Chrysler Sebring • Low miles, many great features, very sporty! • Sale priced at only \$14,650 • To drive today, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'97 Infiniti I-30 • Leather, Bose premium sound system, PW, PL, P-Seat, and much, much more! • \$15,888 • Contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'97 GMC Bravada • Low miles, leather, CD, PW, PL, tilt, and much more! • \$19,360 • Ask for Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'97 Jeep Grand Cherokee • Only 32K low miles, PW, PL, and much, much more! • \$15,995 • To test drive, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'96 Toyota Camry • PW, PL, Tilt, cruise, great vehicle! • A great deal at only \$12,350 • For details, ask for Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'98 Dodge Stratus • Sporty red, one hot vehicle! Must drive to appreciate! • \$11,780 • To drive today, contact Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'99 BMW 318Ti • Avus Blue, sunroof, cass., Stk.#30067 • MSRP \$25,975, this week's special \$21,969 • Call Mauricio Hussmann - Advantage BMW, 713.653.8300.

'98 Saturn SL-2 • Loaded w/ all the options, a must see, great vehicle, save thousands! • Only \$11,995 • Call Saturn of Houston - Gulf Frwy., 713.944.4550.

'96 Saturn SC-1 • Black Gold, auto, alloy wheels, PW, PL, Certified Saturn Warranty, a must see! • Only \$8,600 • Call Saturn of Houston - North Frwy., 281.847.8700.

'96 Saturn SL-2 • Power package, rear spoiler, sporty and lots of fun to drive. Stk.#90987-1 • \$7,975 • Call Saturn of Houston - Southwest Frwy., 713.777.6100.

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AD POLICY: Houston Voice reserves the right to edit, reclassify or reject ads not meeting Houston Voice standards. No refunds for early cancellation. Misprints: Houston Voice is not responsible for misprints appearing after first week. Check ads promptly.

Deadline for ad submission is: MONDAY at 12 NOON

1 PICK YOUR CATEGORY

FREE: Call for guidelines
— HIV Services & Education
— Volunteers
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INDIVIDUAL RATE \$7:

— Announcements
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BUSINESS RATE \$12:

— Auto Repair
— Business Opportunities
— Entertainment
— Help Wanted
— Help Wanted-Seeking
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Call 713-529-8490
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2 WRITE YOUR AD

Please print clearly

CATEGORY: _____ # OF ISSUES: _____

Giant or Bold Headline - Not to exceed 14 characters and spaces

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

TEXT: _____

3 TOTAL YOUR COST

CALL FOR BUSINESS CARD DISPLAY RATES

INDIVIDUAL RATE ADS

Up to 20 words for \$7.00 per week. Additional words at 50¢ each per week.

Up to 20 words: 7.00

Additional words _____ x 50¢: _____

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Giant headline: 5.00 (per week)

Subtotal: _____ x _____ # of issues

Total: \$ _____

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Up to 20 words per week.

1-3 weeks: 12.00 • 4-7 weeks: 10.80 • 8 or more weeks: 9.60

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