

houston voice

High school student Marty Pfeiffer may have won his battle to bring a gay-straight alliance to his Baton Rouge school thanks to new rules issued by school officials. Pages 8, 13



Courtney Love and her role in 'Beat' is part of a bevy of queer or gay-themed movies to emerge from this year's Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. Page 17



ISSUE 1008

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

FEBRUARY 18, 2000

Gore, Bradley trade swipes on gay endorsement

HRC nod for vice president criticized by Republicans and Democrats

by LAURA BROWN

With the countdown growing shorter to the March 7 "Super Tuesday" primaries and the Texas primary a week later, the Human Rights Campaign has announced its endorsement of Democrat Al Gore for president.

"While in this campaign year, Sen. Bradley on a couple of issues did prompt the Vice President, I think the breadth and depth of the vice president's work on these issues goes far deeper," said Winnie Stachelberg, HRC political director.

The endorsement—one of the first from a national gay group in this election—surprised few, but still sparked criticism from some on both sides of the political spectrum.

"That was expected. I think the leadership had built up long personal relationships with [Gore] and vice versa," former Sen. Bill Bradley, Gore's only challenger for the Democratic presidential nomination said in a phone interview as he traveled between campaign stops Monday.

Asked if he thought the gay group gave his candidacy fair consideration, Bradley demurred.

"I'm not going to—people do what they have to do," he said.

But Matthew Sage, director of gay and lesbian outreach for Bradley's campaign, was less circumspect.

"We saw this coming for months. HRC has long been in the pocket of the Clinton-Gore administration, so we knew this was inevitable," he said.

Ernestine Bradley hinted that she might support same-sex marriages during a stop Wednesday in Houston, a position that differs from her husband, Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley. Page 15



KIM THOMPSON

Find out where the Democrats stand. Page 14

In an ironic moment of cross-party agreement, the Log Cabin Republicans, the national gay GOP group, issued a similar condemnation.

The Gore endorsement, which covers not just the Democratic primary but the general election this fall, "perpetuates HRC's long-cited image as the voice of the gay Democratic establishment, not the 'bi-partisan' organization it claims to be," Log Cabin said in a press statement.

HRC defends decision

Gore issued a statement praising HRC's endorsement as part of a pledge to fight for "basic fairness and opportunity" for everyone, including gays.

"This endorsement is about more than just votes; it's about the fundamental ideas of fairness and non-discrimination," Gore said. "The time has come to widen the circle of fairness and dignity to include our brothers, sisters, friends and neighbors in the gay and lesbian community."



VICTORIA AROCHO/AP

In an interview with the *Houston Voice*, Bill Bradley blasted Democratic front-runner Al Gore for using 'scare tactics' to suggest the former senator's health care plan will damage care for those with HIV.

While Stachelberg acknowledged that Bradley had been the first candidate to bring several gay issues to the forefront of the Democratic primary, she cited Gore's longtime support on gay rights as the basis for the HRC nod.

"But I think that what you have to do is take a look at the total—

> Continued on Page 15

Will anti-tobacco efforts go up in smoke?

Gays smoke more. Over the next decade, billions in tobacco money will be spent to make sure Americans smoke less. But will anti-smoking efforts aimed at gays catch fire, or fizzle out?

by PAIGE PARVIN

Gay men and lesbians are more likely to smoke than most people, according to recent studies.

And with literally billions of dollars rolling in from the 1998 settlement agreement between state attorneys general and the tobacco industry, some gay health advocates hope a significant portion of the funding for smoking prevention and cessation programs might be targeted at gays.

A national organization formed directly by the tobacco settlement agreement will "definitely" be including gay men and lesbians in its research on "special populations" at higher risk for tobacco use and related health problems, according to the group's openly gay executive director.

It still remains to be seen whether lesbians and gay men will

become a target group when state health organizations start ramping up their prevention and cessation efforts. But the millions of dollars allocated for this purpose are not yet spoken for, and anti-tobacco advocates say gay smokers could find themselves in the line of fire.

Nearly half of gay men may smoke, study finds

Some 48 percent of a sampling of self-identified gay or bisexual men smoke an average of a pack a day, according to a report published in the December issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*.

By contrast, only about 27 percent of all men in the U.S. smoke, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, indicating gay men light up at almost twice the rate of men in general.

One explanation of the findings, researchers say, could be that

> Continued on Page 14



C.J. PARKER

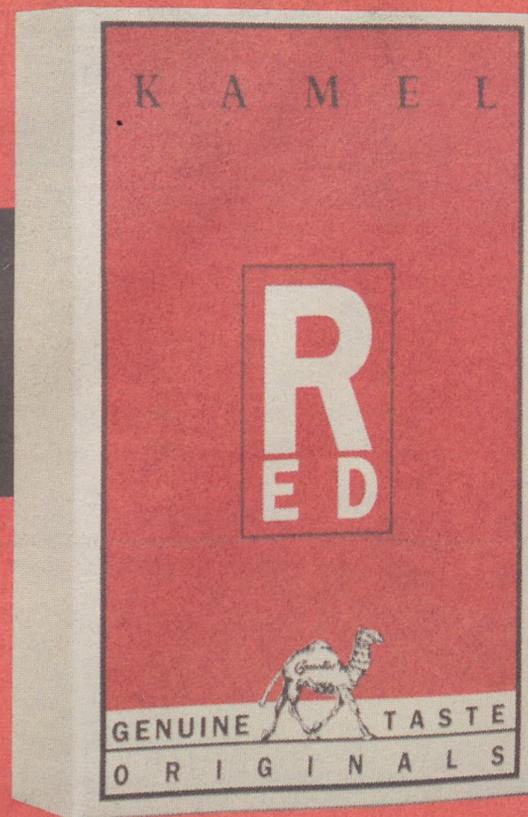
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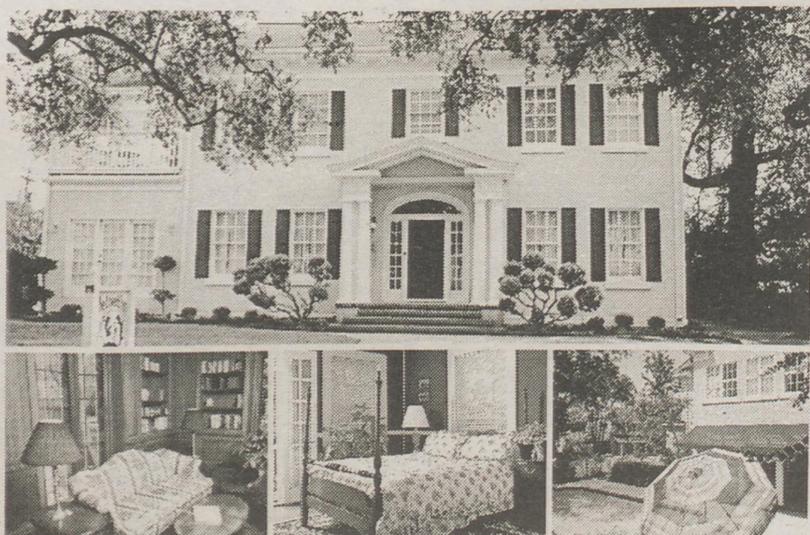


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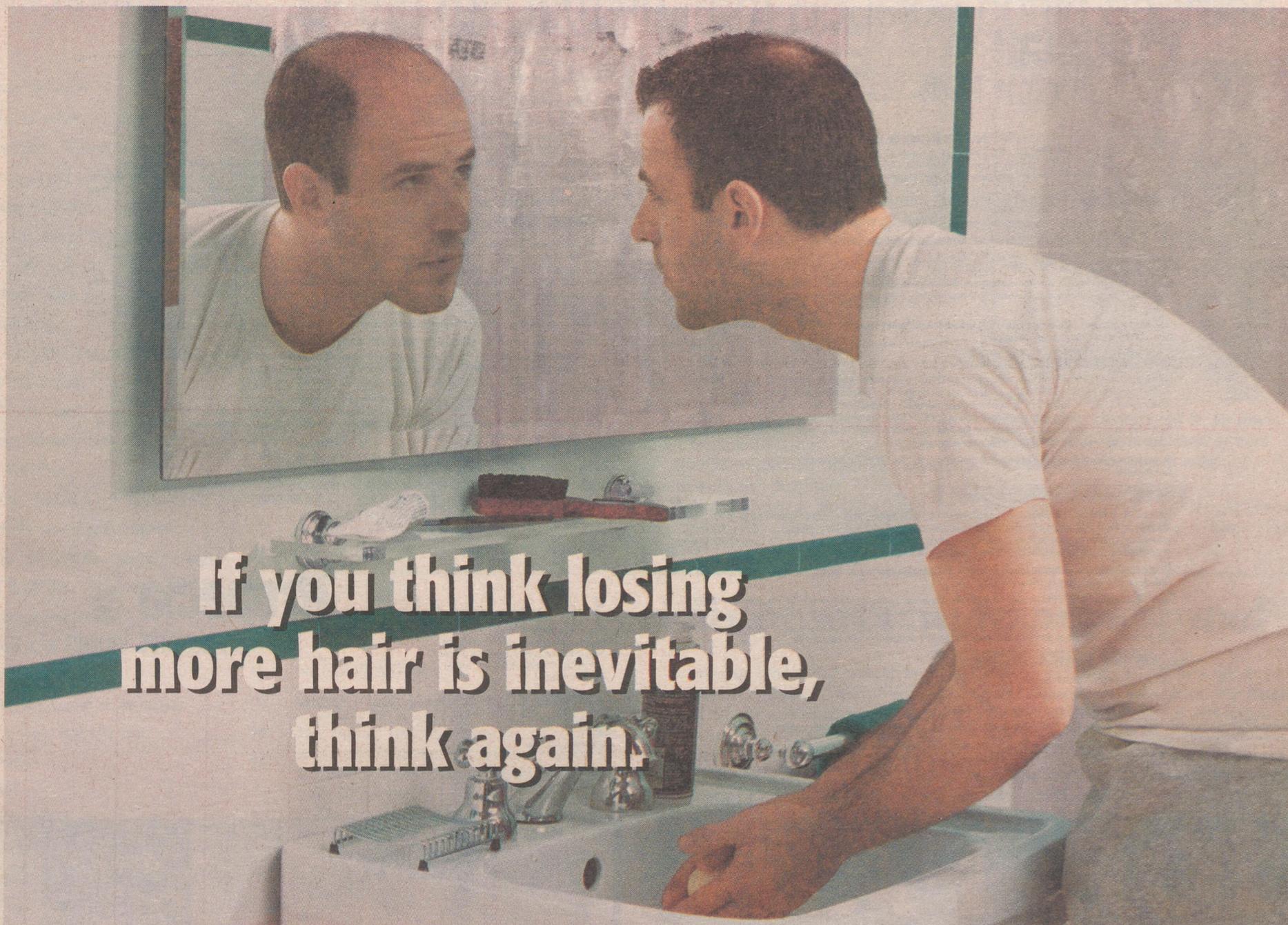


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- 80% were rated as improved by clinical doctors (vs. 47% with placebo).
- Most men reported an increase in the amount of hair, a decrease in hair loss, and improvement in appearance.

*Based on vertex studies at 24 months of men 18 to 41 with mild to moderate hair loss.

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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.

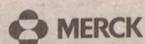
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Please read this leaflet before you start taking PROPECIA. Also, read the information included with PROPECIA each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions 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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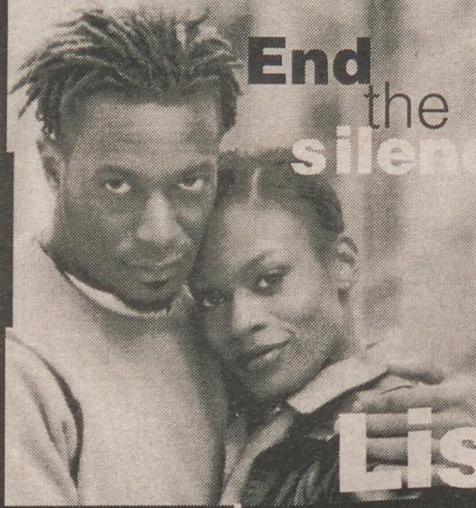
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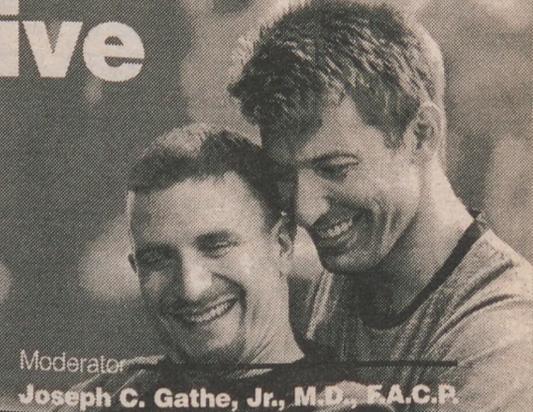
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Death row inmate from Houston could be freed

HUNTSVILLE (AP)—Death row inmate Calvin Burdine said Wednesday he is ecstatic but a bit apprehensive about the possibility of being freed after more than 16 years because state attorneys missed a court-ordered deadline.

"It's been a long time coming. It's like walking from the death house to freedom," Burdine, condemned for a 1983 Houston burglary murder, said from a cage near death row. "It just feels weird. It's a whole lot of happiness right now. At the same time I'm kind of scared. The more I think about it, the more nervous I get."

His conviction was thrown out last year because his defense lawyer allegedly slept through long segments of his 1984 trial. U.S. District Judge David Hittner overturned the jury's decision and gave the state 120 days to give Burdine a new trial or free him. That time ran out in late January.

Hittner on Monday ordered Burdine's lawyers and attorneys for the state to submit motions or any paperwork by today

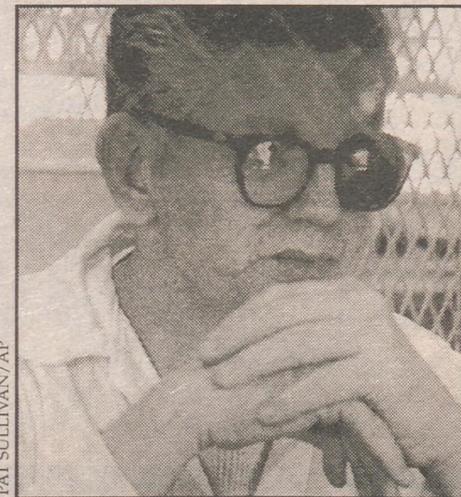
that would show if there's any precedent in the case. Hittner said he likely would issue an order next week.

Lawyers who handle capital cases for the state apologized Monday for the mistake but were unable to explain their failure to file the paperwork in the case.

It's uncertain if a decision in Burdine's favor would mean immediate release, although Burdine said his attorneys told him it was "98 percent certain." The inmate, however, said he expected such a ruling would be appealed.

Burdine, 46, hoped he could at least be moved off death row to the Harris County Jail. He was convicted of the April 3, 1983, stabbing death of W.T. Wise, 50, of Houston, a former housemate and gay lover. Burdine told police he argued with Wise and moved out because Wise wanted him to work as a prostitute.

Evidence showed Burdine and an accomplice, Douglas McCreight, were involved in the burglary in which Wise



PAT SULLIVAN/AP

Calvin Burdine, on death row for his role in the killing of his boyfriend, could be freed from prison as soon as next week.

was fatally stabbed. McCreight served eight years in prison for a lesser crime before he was paroled.

Florida viaticals charged with 'widespread fraud'

by GIP PLASTER

Efforts by Florida regulators to clean up the viatical industry have so far resulted in fraud indictments and the release of medical records for more than 100 terminally ill people.

The investigation by a Florida grand jury involves only a few viatical companies, which facilitate the purchase of life insurance policies so that the terminally ill—including many people with AIDS—may enjoy the benefits before death.

But regulators in that state have warned that without changes, the right to viaticate may be at risk.

"Fraud in the viatical settlement industry is rampant," the Florida grand jury said in its report, which estimated that as much as 40 to 50 percent of viaticated policies have been procured through fraud.

"If this fraud continues unchallenged, the industry will likely disappear," the panel said.

The viatical industry developed in the 1980s to allow people with AIDS to access cash, and now more than \$1 billion in policies are sold each year, according to industry estimates.

More than half of viatical settlements are in Florida, which has a large elderly population.

State regulators there began cracking down on the industry more than a year ago, looking for companies that work with customers to buy policies fraudulently, then viaticate them.

Under the most common fraudulent practice, terminally ill people illegally obtain life insurance coverage by "clean-sheeting," or failing to report a serious medical condition.

Viatical companies can then buy these new, "wet ink" policies and sell them to investors.

An investor who unknowingly buys a "clean-sheeted" policy is put at a greater financial risk because a policy less than two years old can be contested by the issuing insurer and declared invalid, resulting in the loss of the investment.

The grand jury found that many policies are viaticated within days of the original purchase, leading to speculation that the policies were fraudulently acquired, given how unlikely it is that someone would learn of a terminal illness within days after buying a new policy.

Future First Financial Group Inc. and its vice president William F. Sweeney were indicted by the grand jury and charged with marketing fraudulently obtained policies valued at \$6.9 million.

Wanda Tappan, president of Life Benefit Services Inc., and three other company employees were also charged in a second indictment alleging the sale of about \$2.5 million in fraudulently obtained policies.

In October, the officers of Justus Viatical Group of Pompano Beach were indicted on charges of organized fraud, grand theft and insurance fraud.

"For more than a year now, we've been digging into the viatical industry," said Bill Nelson, Florida treasurer and insurance commissioner, at a Feb. 4 press conference. "Our investigation so far suggests widespread fraud."

The grand jury report called on the insurance industry to consider greater use of medical exams and blood tests before issuing policies and to require that issuers receive notice of viatication.

The aggressive investigations by the Florida Department of Insurance and the grand jury have resulted in the release of dozens of viatical patient records, leading to concerns about the privacy of those files.

During a still-ongoing investigation of Mutual Benefits Corp., more than 100 client

records were released to law enforcement.

Special counsel Oscar Gelpi, who headed up the investigation, said when patients enter into a commercial transaction involving their medical records, the records became part of the transaction and lose their confidentiality.

While the viatical industry's two trade associations find no fault in the ongoing investigation of Mutual Benefits, they say they worry that the Florida scandals will hurt the industry nationwide.

Bill Kelley, who heads up the Viatical Association of America, said his organization favors reforms to prevent fraud. Mutual Benefits is a member of VAA and McNeer serves on its board.

Scott Page, spokesperson and past president of the National Viatical Association, said too much has been made of the privacy issue and said his organization also supports efforts to prevent fraud.

"It's really the media taking this thing and twisting it," Page said.

Bryan Freeman, owner of Atlanta-based viatical company Benefits America, said that although Georgia doesn't license viatical brokers, his companies are licensed in Texas, Louisiana and Florida and are subject to regulators there. Benefits America advertises in *Houston Voice*.

"Nationwide, the viatical industry is beginning to get to the point that it is drawing more attention from regulators, and I don't think that's a bad thing," Freeman said.

"But with all this publicity has come some very real and verifiable problems raising money," he said.

Gelpi, who has headed up the investigation, said his office wants to help the industry, not hurt it.

"The viatical industry serves a very good purpose. That's obvious," he said. "The grand jury is trying to save it from itself."



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Around the South

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Arkansas sodomy challenge survives another dismissal motion

LITTLE ROCK (AP)—A judge let a lawsuit go forward Feb. 10 that seeks to overturn Arkansas' anti-sodomy law. Circuit Judge David Bogard dropped Attorney General Mark Pryor a defendant but said the group challenging the 1977 law could proceed with its suit against local prosecutors. Seven Arkansans sued Pryor and local prosecutors in an attempt to void the law that prohibits certain sexual conduct between people of the same gender. The law does not prohibit heterosexual sodomy. "It is finally time for us to proceed on the merits of our case. We're delighted about that," said Beatrice Dohrn, legal director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling 13 years ago upheld a Georgia sodomy law but state courts in Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky and Montana have since thrown out laws prohibiting consensual homosexual contact behind closed doors.

New Orleans TV reporter busted for drugs, sex with underage boys

NEW ORLEANS—A veteran reporter in New Orleans was arrested Feb. 4 for having sex with underage boys and drug charges. Mike Longman, 43, who has worked in New Orleans for more than two decades, was an award-winning investigative reporter with WVUE-TV at the time of his arrest. In an impromptu news conference, Longman admitted only to having an alcohol problem. Lt. David Benelli said New Orleans police were initially tipped off by a youth counselor, who informed them that a 15-year-old boy at a group home for abused children reported he had exchanged sex for money with Longman. Benelli said a raid of Longman's house produced 22 videocassettes showing Longman engaged in various sex acts with "very young-looking males." The videos also reportedly showed the newsman using and sharing cocaine.



Police say videotapes found in TV reporter Mike Longman's home show him having sex with 'very young-looking males.'

Ads for ex-gay, anti-gay conference rejected by Tampa media

TAMPA—A Christian group promoting a conference aimed at preventing homosexuality among teens has claimed it is being censored by media that won't run their ads, the *Tampa Tribune* reported Feb. 11. "We have a constitutional right to this message, and we feel that people are at work to get our message silenced," said John Paulk of Focus on the Family, which has sponsored six "Love Won Out" conferences across the U.S. Their ad, "Tired of Being Gay?" has run since Jan. 28 in the Tribune's "Friday Extra" section. But a 10-second ad they ran on WSSR-FM caused local radio personality Carmen Conner to apologize after it aired, and the station quickly dropped the ads. Several other radio stations have canceled promotional spots for the conference. Eller Media Co. in Clearwater backed out of a verbal commitment to work on a bus shelter promotion. In its materials, Focus on the Family says its purpose is to educate public school administrators, teachers and parents about the "homosexual agenda in Florida public schools, and how they should respond." The conference is set for Feb. 26 at a Baptist church in Brandon, Fla.



'Ex-gay' John Paulk claims Tampa media outlets are wrongfully refusing to run paid ads for a conference called 'Love Won Out.'

Groups cancel events over discrimination suit against Fla. hotel

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP)—A gay and bisexual men's organization became the fifth group to cancel reservations at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Denver over a pending racial discrimination lawsuit filed against a Daytona Beach hotel in the same chain. "Gays are discriminated against every day. We can't meet in a place that discriminates against any group," said Cal Hackler, president of Prime Timers Worldwide. St. Louis-based Adam's Mark was sued in December after U.S. Justice Department investigators said there was a pattern of discrimination at the chain's 21 hotels, including charging African-Americans more to discourage reservations. The suit named the Adam's Mark in Daytona Beach, Fla., which hosted a convention of African-Americans last year. Adam's Mark has denied all allegations. Other organizations that have canceled events include several religious denominations and the Human Rights Campaign. The cancellations could cost the hotel chain \$5 million, said Andre van Hall, general manager of the Denver hotel.

Miami commissioners approve anti-gay ballot initiative

MIAMI (AP)—Miami-Dade County commissioners allowed the Christian Coalition to begin collecting signatures Feb. 8 for a petition to repeal a 1998 amendment to the county's civil rights law that makes it illegal to discriminate in employment, housing and public accommodation based on sexual orientation. The commissioners' move comes a week after the county attorney's office approved the petition's language. The coalition now must collect 32,500 signatures in 60 days. If they succeed, the measure could be on the ballot in September. Voters overturned a similar law in 1977 after former beauty queen Anita Bryant led a crusade against it.

—From staff and wire reports

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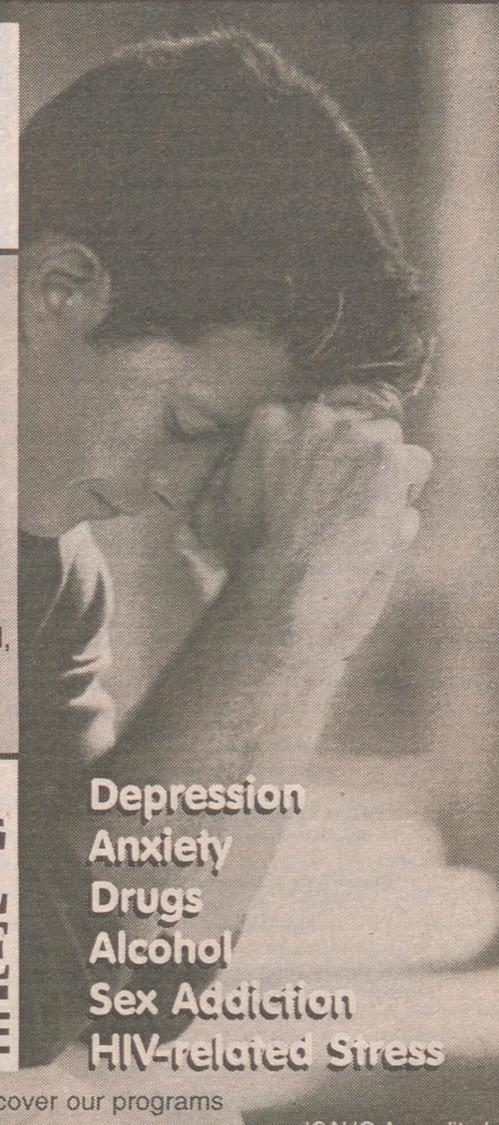
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VIEWPOINT

Gay activism becomes a Pfeiffer family tradition

by MELINDA SHELTON

Molly Pfeiffer's anger seethed just below the surface as her 17-year-old son Marty talked about the harassment he endures daily at his Baton Rouge high school. Molly listened closely to the dialogue between him and a television reporter during what was Marty's third interview on Valentine's Day, and she appeared anxious for the topic to shift from violence to politics.

When the videographer extinguished the hot lights and switched off the camera, in unison Molly and Marty expelled long sighs of relief. For an instant their eyes locked in a mother and son moment filled with undeniable love and trust.

"Being a parent of a gay kid, you come out, too," the 40-something mother of two sons said. "You know, I'm embarrassed to admit this, but I used to pray every single day for God to make Marty heterosexual. I remember lying on the bed crying, tears in my ears, feeling such deep pain, and praying for that."

"Now I pray almost every moment of every day for God to keep him safe. I worry about his safety a lot, a lot."

A momentary silence settled on the group gathered at the Baton Rouge Lambda Center as we felt a mother's fear.

When Marty told his mom almost two years ago—in the frozen foods section of a Super Wal-Mart—that he was gay, Molly said she wasn't completely surprised.

"Make no mistake, I was in a lot of pain over this," Molly said, switching from a serious demeanor to a smile. "There I was thinking that if he could have a gay best friend—which he did, the cutest little guy—then I'd really done my job in raising a child who was not discriminatory, who was real open and accepting of gays. Wow, was I ever thrown. Can you imagine? I mean, Marty didn't even act gay."

While her conservative husband retreated, Molly Pfeiffer dug in her heels, shared her pain with friends, and sought support from Lambda,

While her conservative husband retreated, Molly Pfeiffer dug in her heels, shared her pain with friends, and sought support from Lambda, PFLAG and anywhere else she could find it.

PFLAG and anywhere else she could find it. It was she who encouraged Marty to join gay youth groups and to stand up for his rights.

Molly said she had been told it's not unusual for multiple siblings in a family to be gay so she confronted Marty's older brother, Matt, "to cover all the bases. I thought if we're going to go through this with Marty then we may as well get it over with Matt, too. ... he told me he's straight."

Matt at first was ashamed of his gay brother, but once Marty came out and became a public spokesperson for gay youth "he really came around. Last week he went to the [East Baton Rouge Parish] school board meeting and wore a rainbow pin and a gay rights button. He's come a long way. We all have, even Marty's father," Molly said.

Marty was outed last fall when his high school principal denied his request to form a Gay-Straight Alliance chapter at the magnet school and he was forced to take the matter before the school board. For almost two months, Marty has been at the center of a media-generated maelstrom.

Anti-gay forces were whipped into a frenzy by conservative religious groups who said GSAs would serve as breeding and recruiting grounds for homosexuality. At last week's board meeting, an eighth grade student clad in her public school's letter jacket held her bible and tearfully said she'd rather see all extracurricular clubs—her bible study club included—abolished rather than have the board approve a policy granting equal access to queer groups.

The publicity has emboldened bigoted and fearful classmates who have escalated verbal and physical attacks and threats against Marty and his friends, gay and straight alike. Even

strangers who recognize Marty feel compelled to stare, make caustic asides or even physically threaten the youngster.

Although the debate has gone full circle back to the principal, who told Marty she will allow a campus GSA if he files all the necessary paperwork, Marty knows the fight is far from over.

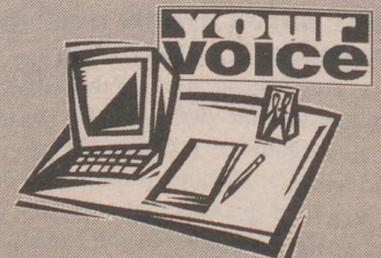
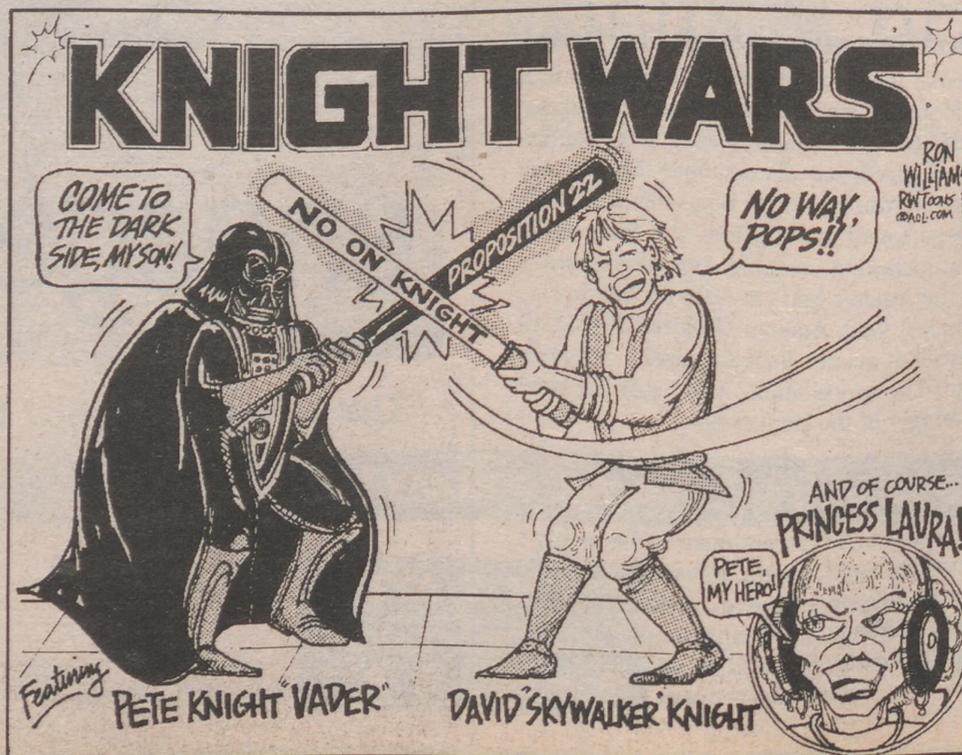
One moment Marty the activist said he will not yield to bigots who want to trample on his rights. In the next instance Marty the teenager knitted his brows, cast a worried glance toward his mom and admitted he and his friends "are scared to death."

As I watched pain reel across Molly Pfeiffer's face, I recalled meeting last fall another heroic mother of a gay child. Judy Shepard was an ordinary mom dedicated to raising two sons, including her gay son Matthew, until October 1998 when doctors told her that her beloved boy had been beaten so severely they did not expect him to recover. And he didn't.

Almost two years later Shepard still wept, and she told me her tears would flow until no other parents would have to endure the pain she and her husband do over the senseless death of their gay child. Today, she is an indefatigable gay rights activist.

Molly Pfeiffer knows of the Shepard family's painful journey, and she knows the chances her son takes with every interview and any public appearance. She also knows that by standing with her son, Marty is stronger and more confident. And so is she.

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



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VIEWPOINT

The movement has moved from the streets to the tube

by CINDY L. ABEL

"When was the last time you went to a good sit-in?" one woman asked.

"Nobody protests these days," added another. "It's just about rich people giving money to political candidates."

"It's true, there is no movement anymore," concluded a third, while many 40-something heads nodded in agreement.

I was attending the lesbian and bisexual women's caucus at a philanthropic conference. Discussion about how out we were in our organizations led to more talk about progress in general.

They described perspectives very different from mine, as a woman who straddles the age gap between Baby Boomer and Gen-Xer and who missed the Civil Rights, Women's Rights and Anti-War movements.

No wonder they looked at me like I was some sort of alien when I volunteered that the very existence of this caucus and the growing number of openly gay elected officials was, to me, an indication of progress.

Maybe I hadn't experienced Selma, Kent State or a crush on Gloria Steinem. But I was used to trying to find ways to dialogue with rather than destroy "the Man."

A few months later, a friend raised the

question again: "Is there even a movement anymore? How do we measure progress?"

Well, not the way we used to.

A 1970s song proclaimed, "The revolution will not be televised. it will be live—not brought to you by Xerox in four parts with commercial interruptions." Maybe not then, but today that's exactly what's happening. Actually, it's both: live and televised

Okay, so it's not brought to us by Xerox—but by Miller, Absolut, American Airlines and a host of others spending a lot of money to participate in this revolution where our incomes, rather than our lives, are viewed as disposable.

Consider how art is imitating life is imitating art in television, the most popular of the popular media.

While gay critics may sneer at "Will & Grace," proclaiming the show devoid of both talent and redeeming value, millions of Americans still tune in weekly to watch an openly gay character deal with the annoyances of his daily life.

Yes, it's a privileged, non-representative portrayal, but did the Cosby show really reflect the experience of most African-American families in the 1980s? The progress is that it's still on the air—and Will is not the brunt of homophobia-driven comedy.

"Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?"

recently made history when a gay contestant hugged his partner on-air and the audience reacted with applause, not jeers. One small step toward "no big deal" inclusion.

The White House drama "West Wing" made it even clearer: The President was introducing hate crimes legislation that included sexual orientation and the communications staff thought a photo-op with the parents of a murdered gay teen would boost their efforts.

Pressed on his views, the grieving father exploded, "I don't support the President."

He wasn't opposed to the proposed bill, but rather to a President who felt his son wasn't qualified to serve his country, lacked the qualities to be a good parent and didn't deserve to be married. The staffers had no response, and we took another step forward.

Back in the "real" world, we used to be the constituency that politicians dare not speak of favorably. Now Democratic presidential candidates eagerly agree we need protective employment legislation and argue as to the best way to get it.

Even the Republicans are fighting mostly over "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," not returning to an outright ban on gays in the military—and as bad as that might seem today, it's light years from the previous election.

No, there aren't many good street



The movement for gay civil rights: then and now.

protests anymore, not in the picketing sense. Today, sit-ins take place every night of the week, on the couch and in the Lazy-Boy recliner, as folks tune in to TV land where there's a slow but steady re-design of the social and political landscape.

How do we measure progress? In our media-dominated world, one character, one episode, one story line at a time. Not only is the revolution live and televised, television has a part in creating that revolution.

Cindy L. Abel is a communications and political consultant and was formerly executive director of the Georgia Equality Project, a statewide gay rights group. She may be reached at clabel@realworld-usa.com.

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VIEWPOINT

Timely tips for avoiding the predatory lip-lockers

by MICHAEL ALVEAR

Being gay is an exercise in dodging kamikaze lips. No matter how you try to avoid them, somebody's dive-bombing labias inevitably find their mark. In the world of gay greetings, a hello isn't really a hello unless you end up wiping saliva off your mouth.

Tonsil-wiping greetings have reached epidemic proportions. Whatever happened to a smile, a nod of the head or a handshake? Like frogs who see a fly at the back of your throat, gay men feel the need to relieve you of the insect within. My dentist doesn't check my cavities as thoroughly as my casual friends do.

And of course, it's always the balding, rotund Gecko lizards who flick the imaginary throat flies the hardest. Which leads me to believe the whole phenomenon got started as a way for ugly guys to get a piece of the action.

It's a brilliant move, really. A bunch of fat losers got together and asked a simple question: "How can we cop a feel from guys who wouldn't normally touch us with a 10-foot pole?"

The answer was simple: Develop a social expectation of kissing men on the lips when you say hello. The rush of testosterone undoubtedly pasted the few weak argu-

ments from the health-minded. Gay men may be obsessively clean but the germ-obsessed among us don't stand a chance against the sex-obsessed within us. The founding fathers of the gay lip-lock struck gold. They couldn't get laid, but they could get kissed.

In fact, it worked so well, they broadened the lip-kissing expectation from saying hello to saying goodbye. That way you can get two kisses out of one encounter.

Casual lip kissers are today's low-pressure sex telemarketers, transforming subtlety into higher-margin sales. Every kiss has the potential up-sell for a graze of the chest, a squeeze of the butt or a hold of the hand.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the rest of us are learning a form of face judo to fend off the lapping lips of the can't-get-laid. There are three basic self-defense moves I've learned through the years. They're listed in rising order of effectiveness:

- The "Stick-Out-Your-Hand-Before-It's-Too-Late" Move. This is a pretty useless tactic. He who flicks tongues knows how to swat hands.

- The "Oh Dear God, It's Him Again" Face-Turn. You turn your cheek just at the moment of impact and not a second before. Gay lizards have homing devices on their lips, so turn too soon and they'll just follow your lips around the corner.

The founding fathers of the gay lip-lock struck gold. They couldn't get laid, but they could get kissed, and now the rest of us are learning a form of face judo to fend off their lapping lips.

- The "Rush the Lush" Brush-Off. Instead of recoiling back, rush in and hug them before they get a chance to pucker up. This is probably the most effective move. They feel warmly welcomed, and you feel dry and safe.

We all pretend that kissing on the lips is just an affectionate way of saying hello when it's really a way of sneaking a feel on somebody you're hot for. Most of us would gross out at the thought of being sexually intimate with the people we kiss on the lips, yet we greet them with what a lot of us agree is the ultimate act of intimacy.

Why? Because we'll put up with kissing guys we'd never sleep with if we can kiss studs who'd never sleep with us. It's a deal with the devil: To kiss the pin-ups you have

to kiss the pugs.

I only kiss guys hello or goodbye on the lips if I'm sexually attracted to them. Everyone else gets a hand or a hug. Maybe even a peck on the cheek. It's my version of Tough Love. I get a lot of "why-are-you-so-tight" looks but, hey, I also get fewer colds than most guys.

I'm always on-guard at a bar or a party. I can hear the sound of lips moistening at a hundred paces. Like the characters in M*A*S*H who can sense the helicopters before they see them, something in my brain yells out "incoming!" and I begin my diversionary tactics.

Michael Alvear is more than willing to pucker up, but send your photo first. He can be reached at mikealvear@aol.com.

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Gay Ariz. college student stabbed in back in apparent hate crime

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—A 20-year-old University of Arizona student was stabbed Feb. 6 outside a cafe that caters to gay customers in what police are calling a hate crime. Witnesses said the attacker said he wanted to "kill a fucking faggot" before and after stabbing the victim in the back. "Let this be a warning to the gay community!" the attacker reportedly yelled as he fled the scene. Police arrested Gary Grayson, 37, about a block away from the Rainbow Planet Cafe, and charged him with aggravated assault. The attack came the day before the university's Pride Alliance kicked off its annual Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Awareness Week. The victim, who has asked to remain anonymous, made an unexpected appearance at a rally of 1,500 on his behalf near the University of Arizona campus seven days after the stabbing. "I am afraid," said the tearful student. "I am afraid to be the target of the world's discrimination. I am afraid of the hate that leads to violence. But perhaps I am most afraid that I am but one target in a world that holds so much intolerance to so many."

Calif. gay group backs ballot measure ban on same-sex-marriage

SACRAMENTO (AP)—A proposed same-sex-marriage ban on California's March 7 ballot is drawing some unexpected support from a small group of gay men and women. The Proposition 22 campaign announced Feb. 10 the formation of a coalition called "Gays for 22." Tom Beddingfield, 24, a gay political consultant from San Jose and coalition chairman, said he has been seeking other gays who share his support for the initiative. "California needs to be protected from other state judges redefining our law for us," said Beddingfield. "It's not an anti-gay initiative," Beddingfield said at a news conference. He said his coalition claims about 50 members statewide. Opponents of the initiative said the five public members of the group, all in their early 20s, are "naïve."

Methodists drop gay wedding case against Calif. ministers

SACRAMENTO (AP)—United Methodist officials decided Feb. 11 against charging 68 ministers who blessed a lesbian wedding to protest their church's ban on gay marriages. "No further steps or actions will be pursued," said Bishop Melvin Talbert of the church's California-Northern Nevada Conference. Had the pastors been convicted of breaking church law, they could have faced punishment as severe as dismissal. The lead defendant, Rev. Don Fado of St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento, performed the union ceremony for church members Ellie Charlton, 64, and Jeanne Barnett, 69. The January 1999 ceremony in Sacramento was attended by 1,500 guests and a total of 92 Methodist ministers, 68 of whom were from the California-Northern Nevada Conference. The decision against pursuing charges drew an immediate protest from Rev. Greg Smith, a Sacramento minister, who said he is considering the leaving the church because of it. He said he would ask the church's national ruling body in May to make it clear ministers who perform gay weddings will be punished, or allow those opposed to gay marriage to leave the church with dignity.

Gay columnist says flu terrorism aimed at Bauer was a joke

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—A Seattle columnist under investigation for alleged voter fraud during the Iowa caucuses says his story about trying to infect former presidential candidate Gary Bauer with the flu was just a joke. During the final days of the campaign, Dan Savage posed as a volunteer at Bauer's headquarters in Des Moines. He also claimed, in a column for the on-line magazine Salon, to have voted in the caucuses. Savage, who was suffering from the flu, also wrote that he licked doorknobs and coffee cups and slobbered on a pen, all in hopes of slowing Bauer and his conservative agenda. "A good chunk of it was satire," said Savage. "People overlooked the fact that it was called 'The Merry Prankster.'" Prosecutors are still deciding whether to file charges.



Faced with voter fraud charges, columnist Dan Savage now says he was mostly joking when he wrote that he tried to infect then-GOP presidential candidate Gary Bauer with the flu.

Millennium March on Washington organizers cut event budget

WASHINGTON—Organizers of the Millennium March on Washington for Equality have cut \$1 million from the budget, both from anticipated costs and revenue projections from the April 30 event. But despite cuts and even a loan from one of its directors, budget projections show the event is running a deficit. Diane Hardy-Garcia, MMOW co-executive director, says budget cuts were necessary to bring the cost of the event down from \$2.97 to under \$2 million. MMOW organizers are counting on revenue projections from a street festival, merchandise and corporate marketing to pay the cost of the April 30 event. Plans call for a march, a rally on the National Mall, a two-day street festival, and about two dozen related events April 28-30. A group, the Ad Hoc Committee for an Open Process, has called on MMOW officials to cancel the march, citing concerns over its purpose, and what one critic has called its "top-down, closed-door" planning process.

—From staff and wire reports

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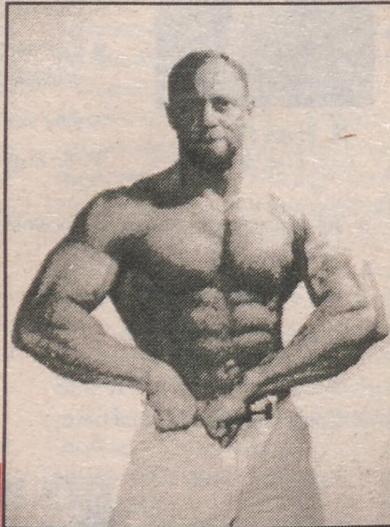


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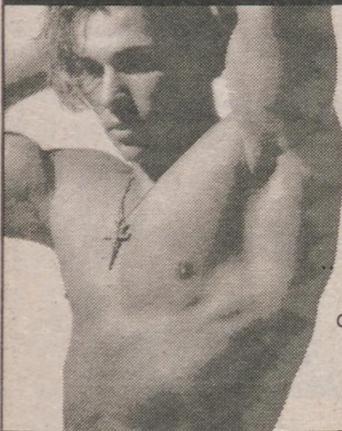
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Studies show St. John's wort may interfere with HIV medication

LONDON (AP)—St. John's wort, a popular herbal remedy used to relieve mild depression, can interfere with drugs used to treat HIV-infected people and heart transplant patients, new research has found. Two studies published in *The Lancet* medical journal found that St. John's wort dulls the effectiveness of both the HIV medicine Crixivan and the transplant drug cyclosporin. In the study on Crixivan, also known as indinavir, NIH researchers gave the protease inhibitor to eight HIV-negative volunteers, then added St. John's wort tablets three days later. Tests indicated that the concentration of Crixivan in the bloodstream was on average 81 percent lower when St. John's wort was added. Overall, levels of the HIV medicine in the blood dropped 57 percent when taken with St. John's wort. "This is a cautionary note," said Dr. Fred Valentine, professor of medicine at New York University Medical Center. "These [herbal remedies] really aren't necessarily benign compounds." Last month, CVS Corp., the second-largest drugstore chain in the United States, said it has started asking customers to list the herbal supplements they use—in addition to their prescription drugs—in an effort to avoid potentially dangerous drug interactions.

Gay medical students face hostile training environment in Canada

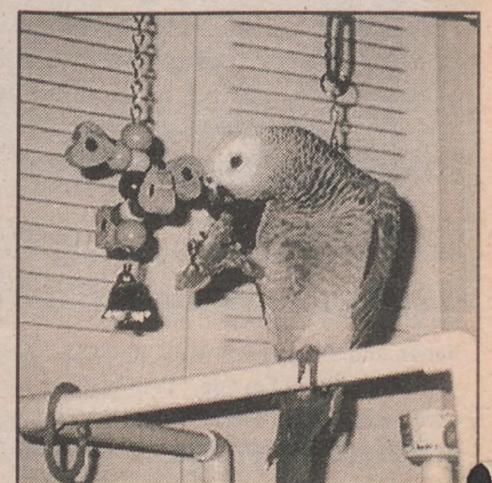
TORONTO—Canadian medical schools are being asked to develop ways to combat homophobia following a study that found some gay students face a hostile training environment, the *London (Ont.) Free Press* reported Feb. 7. The study of 29 gay and lesbian physicians-in-training concluded many hide their sexual orientation because of fears that "coming out" will harm their grades and careers. "I don't do anything to let people know," said one budding doctor in the study. "A large part of that is spawned from the fear that I won't get a residency spot in a specialty that I want to be in if people know I'm gay." The 16 women and 13 men students, from all over the country, said they frequently faced negative attitudes. "Hateful jokes and remarks targeting gay and lesbian patients were common and usually went unchallenged," the researchers wrote. The study appeared in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.

AIDS texts among worst in training doctors on end-of-life care

CHICAGO (AP)—Top medical textbooks generally don't include enough information on how to care for patients at the end of their lives, researchers reported Feb. 9 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Previous studies have concluded that many patients die in pain unnecessarily or in hospitals rather than at home. Inadequate training has been blamed for the deficient care—and doctors have reported increasing anxiety about treating dying patients. "The information exists, but it's not being relayed" to medical students, said Dr. Michael Rabow, the study's lead author. "Pain goes untreated primarily because the focus is on extending life." Textbooks covering surgery, AIDS and oncology were the worst offenders, researchers said. Dr. Nicholas Christakis, who specializes in hospice care at the University of Chicago, said the study confirmed that "Americans die needlessly bad deaths. ... Textbooks are not the only problem or the magic bullet that will solve it, but it's an important step," he said.

Birds are bad for those with weak immune systems, study finds

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—People with weakened immune systems who come in contact with birds may be putting themselves at risk for developing life-threatening illnesses, according to a study published the Feb. 8 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*. It found that the 1998 death of a 72-year-old Boston woman might have been caused by breathing an airborne fungus found in bird feces. The woman, who lived in a house with family members, had owned a pet cockatoo for seven years. She did not live on the same floor as the bird, but did pass its cage several times a week. The woman had undergone a liver transplant in 1989 and was taking drugs that suppress the body's immune system. The study's authors said it may be wise to advise people with compromised immune systems, including HIV and AIDS patients, to consider avoiding pet birds and public places such as parks where pigeon and other bird feces may be found.



A fungus found in bird feces has been blamed for killing one woman and could threaten others with compromised immune systems, researcher said.

Johnson & Johnson unveils high-tech, high-priced Band-Aid

NEW YORK (AP)—Johnson & Johnson introduced a high-tech, higher-priced Band-Aid on Feb. 10. The new bandage, called the Band-Aid Brand Advanced Healing Strip, promises to heal wounds fast and eliminate the formation of scabs, which can cause scarring. At \$3.79 for a box of 10, it will be at least eight times more expensive than normal adhesive bandages, and is expected to be on store shelves in April. Company officials said that unlike most bandages, which need to be changed daily, its new bandage can be worn for several days, including in showers and baths.

—From staff and wire reports

Victory follows setback in fight for gay student group in La.

by MELINDA SHELTON

BATON ROUGE, La.—One day after a Baton Rouge school board voted down a policy that would have allowed all extracurricular clubs, including a proposed gay/straight alliance, a gay student pushing for the group said it would likely be approved anyway.

The tumultuous week was the latest round in a battle first begun five months ago, when 17-year-old Marty Pfeiffer asked McKinley High School Principal Alma Warren for permission to form a Gay-Straight Alliance at the school.

When Warren refused, the honors student took his case to the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board where he was publicly berated by several elected members—and praised by others for his courage to speak out against bigotry and homophobia.

At its Feb. 10 meeting, the full board—against the recommendations of a subcommittee, board attorneys and the school superintendent—narrowly voted down a new policy that would have granted school access to all extracurricular clubs, GSAs included.

The board's refusal, gay rights attorneys said, essentially violated the federal Equal Access Act, which mandates that public secondary schools allow clubs that are not curriculum-related access to a school's premises, including groups that meet for "religious, political, philosophical or other content of speech purposes."

The federal act was passed by Congress largely at the urging of religious groups seeking to meet on public school campuses.

Immediately following the Feb. 10 meeting, attorneys funded by the anti-gay Family Research Council basked in what appeared to be a victory for members of student Christian clubs who condemned Pfeiffer's sexual orientation and his request.

One student, clad in a school letter jacket, clutched a Bible and tearfully told the school board that allowing GSAs in her school would violate her religious beliefs.

"I would rather have no noncurricular clubs and go with God than have all clubs and go against my God," said Alysia Chambers, a member of a student Bible club. Her request for the banning of all extracurricular clubs was supported by board member Jay Devall, whose motion failed.

Pfeiffer and classmate Leslie Spillman told the board that school harassment and verbal abuse against them had escalated to the point that they feared for their safety.

"I have been called 'dyke' by cowards in the hallway, pushed into lockers, spit on, you name it," Spillman, who attends McKinley with Pfeiffer, told the board.

Board member Warren Pratt blamed the harassment on Pfeiffer and Spillman and their request for a gay-oriented club. He said he would not take responsibility for any harm done to them.

The board voted 6-4, with one abstention, against an inclusive club policy. Board president Roger Moser was absent from last Thursday's meeting.

After the meeting, a visibly angry Pfeiffer, flanked by family and friends, met with media and vowed to take legal action for what he described as the board's willful "trampling of my rights."

But Pfeiffer's anger subsided the next day, when School Superintendent Gary Mathews and board attorney Max Kees brought the dispute full-circle, back to school principals.

Kees announced that principals would be given guidelines to determine which student clubs could exist on their campuses. Existing policy, Kees said, contains specific guidelines for such groups and should be enforced by principals.

As promised, principals received new guidelines Monday that included a clause Family Research Council attorney Mike Johnson said was based on a U.S. Supreme Court deci-



Marty Pfeiffer, with his mother Molly, is optimistic that his principal will now approve a gay-straight alliance in his Baton Rouge high school.

sion that would allow principals to ban clubs that would be "likely to incite or produce imminent lawless action."

The policy stipulates that students in all clubs must have permission from their parents or legal guardians to participate.

The clubs must also file a request for organization that includes a copy of its bylaws, mission statement, list of officers/directors, and names of any non-student persons attending meetings.

Pfeiffer filed the necessary paperwork Tuesday morning and said a faculty monitor had been obtained. He said that McKinley's principal indicated his request would now likely be approved.

Once the necessary paperwork is approved, Pfeiffer said he hopes to hold the first GSA meeting at McKinley on March 16.

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Will gays be part of anti-tobacco efforts?

➤ Continued from Page 1

"tobacco control measures designed for the American public are failing gay men."

"It's almost like tobacco prevention campaigns have worked for men in general, but gay men have been left high and dry," said Dr. Ronald Stall, who is gay and a contributor to the study.

"One out of every two [gay] men in the study has a substantial history of smoking. Smoking rates are certainly too high among gay men," he said.

Stall speculated that tobacco ad campaigns have been particularly successful in attracting gay men, and gay youth in particular. Most smokers get hooked as teenagers, he pointed out, when gay youth are highly susceptible to peer pressure and low self-esteem.

"Look at the ads," Stall said. "They are not selling smoke, they are selling being butch. A lot of gay men are really vulnerable to wanting to convey butchness, as a survival mechanism."

The study, conducted by researchers at the University of California at San Francisco's Center for AIDS Prevention Studies and based on data gathered in 1992, found that lack of education, low income, HIV-positive status, and AIDS-related losses are associated with smoking among gay men.

Smoking rates are even higher among HIV-positive gay men than gay men in general, Stall said, guessing this could be due to depression or a fatalistic outlook.

There is some evidence that with improved

HIV treatments, these rates may have dropped slightly since the beginning of the decade, although the data is inconclusive, he said.

A tendency to drink heavily and socialize frequently in bars was also a factor for smokers.

"Men who center their gayness around bars may be less likely to be able to quit smoking over the long haul," Stall said. "If their social connections are oriented around a bar lifestyle, it makes sense that it would be harder to quit."

A lesbian health study released last year indicated that lesbians have similar habits, including much higher rates of alcohol consumption and tobacco use for lesbians than for all women.

The same study, conducted by the Institute of Medicine's Committee on Lesbian Health, highlighted a serious shortage of information about lesbian health issues in general.

Gay smokers make list of 'special populations'

A non-profit organization formed by the tobacco settlement and charged with lowering tobacco use in the U.S., particularly among youth, will target niche groups in their efforts, including gay men and lesbians, according to the group's executive director.

The American Legacy Foundation (ALF) will spend \$300 million a year over the next four years on public education alone. A portion of these funds will be used to target "special populations" at higher risk for tobacco use, including African Americans, Latino



Chuck Wolfe of the American Legacy Foundation said gay men and lesbians will 'definitely' be considered in tobacco prevention and cessation programs

Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders, native Americans, people of low socioeconomic status, and gays, said Chuck Wolfe, the foundation's executive director.

"Gay and lesbian groups will definitely be included," said Wolfe, who is openly gay. "These are all groups we believe have been disproportionately targeted by tobacco companies."

The tobacco industry has historically pushed cigarettes on gays through ad content and placement, product placement, and by sponsoring gay and lesbian events, Wolfe said.

This spring, ALF will hold a series of special population forums, some of which will be focused on gay and lesbian tobacco use, Wolfe said. He could not yet say which gay community representatives or organizations will be invited to participate.

The forums will help determine how to best reach these markets with prevention and cessation campaigns, Wolfe said. Advertising will play a key role, as well as community events and grassroots outreach efforts.

"To deal with the problem, we will require the participation of gay and lesbian groups that are interested in addressing dependence on the tobacco industry," Wolfe said.

A case study: Georgia

If the Georgia General Assembly passes the budget proposal submitted by Gov. Roy Barnes last month, about \$20 million of the state's \$4.8 billion tobacco settlement will be used to fund smoking prevention and cessation programs.

How that \$20 million would be carved up and doled out is still up for discussion, according to health care officials. Young people are the primary target, but there should be money for a range of programs, officials say.

The governor's plan establishes community programs to reduce tobacco use through counter marketing and cessation campaigns, said Jim Brannon, director of the chronic disease branch of the Division of Public Health, the arm of the state Department of Human Resources charged with disseminating the money.

"Counter-marketing, such as print, billboards, radio ads, these activities could be geared toward a specific audience like African-Americans or the gay community," Brannon said. "They could address whatever community is shown to have a need."



Where the Democrats stand on the issues...

Gays in the military

Bradley: As a senator, voted against "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" in 1993; voted for an amendment that would have given President Clinton the authority to lift the ban by executive order. In September 1999, became the first presidential candidate to publicly call for overturning DADT and allowing gays to serve openly.

Gore: Reportedly worked behind-the-scenes to encourage Clinton to lift the ban entirely, though he ultimately supported DADT. Last fall called only for more "compassionate" enforcement of DADT. After and President and Hillary Clinton joined Bradley in calling for DADT to be scrapped, Gore announced opposition to DADT.

Anti-discrimination laws

Bradley: As a senator, voted for Employment Non-Discrimination Act in 1996, when the federal bill to ban job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation failed by just one vote. Also supports amending the Civil Rights Act of 1964—the landmark civil rights bill banning discrimination in employment, public accommodations, voting rights and other areas—to add sexual orientation as a category.

Gore: Favors of ENDA and, as vice president, was prepared to fly back to D.C. to vote if the bill had reached a tie in the Senate in 1996. Gore has joined some gay activists in opposing Bradley's suggestion of amending the 1964 Civil Rights Act, calling opening the act too dangerous in a conservative Congress. Gore supports in concept banning discrimination against gays in other categories but favors focusing first on ENDA.

Hate crimes legislation

Bradley: Supports the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which would add sexual orientation, gender and disability to existing federal hate crimes laws and provide for greater federal jurisdiction in prosecuting such crimes.

Gore: Supports HCPA and has repeatedly spoken in favor of the bill.

Gay parenting issues

Bradley: Supports adoption rights for gay men and lesbians.

Gore: Opposes efforts to ban gay adoptions. According to a spokesperson, "the vice president would leave gay adoptions up to adoption professionals on an individual basis."

Gay appointments

Bradley: Would appoint qualified gay men and lesbians to his administration.

Gore: Would appoint qualified gay men and lesbians; Clinton-Gore administration has appointed more openly gay individuals than any previous administration.

—Sources: staff and wire reports; National Gay & Lesbian Task Force

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Bradley's wife pushes husband on same-sex marriage

by MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Ernestine Bradley hinted on Wednesday that her position on same-sex marriage would differ from that of her husband if she were once again a private citizen and not the wife of a Democratic presidential candidate.

In an intense fight to win over gay voters, former Sen. Bill Bradley and Vice President Al Gore have supported several gay issues, including allowing gays to serve openly in the military, ensuring adequate health care for people with HIV, and opposing the Knight Initiative in California, which would ban same-sex marriage.

But both Democratic candidates for president have stopped short of endorsing same-sex marriage.

Ernestine Bradley said that she has questioned her husband about why he won't support gay marriages.

"Bill would say he is a proponent of all the rights, except for marriage," Bradley said during a campaign stop in Houston Wednesday. "This is the one step he still has

to go. We still have one step."

Bradley suggested that if she was still in the private sector as a professor at Montclair State University in New Jersey, she would support granting gays the right to marry, but as the wife of a well-known politician, "I guess my opinion should have no weight."

She added that Bill Bradley's opposition to same-sex marriage is in part based on his religious beliefs as well as division over the issue among gay men and lesbians.

Bradley also defended her husband from recent attacks by Gore, who has said Bradley's health care plan is dangerous to people with HIV, during a 20-minute interview. She said that Gore is trying to win over crucial gay voters by alienating them from Bradley's campaign before the upcoming March primaries.

Gore said in an interview published Monday in the *San Francisco Chronicle* that his challenger's health plan would hurt people with HIV and other long-term illnesses by dismantling Medicaid.

Bradley has proposed allowing those



KIM THOMPSON

Ernestine Bradley, a breast cancer survivor, said it's important for lesbians to overcome any fears they may have of doctors and undergo regular check ups.

currently on Medicaid to receive the same private health coverage available to federal employees, which he says would result in less stigma and better care.

Gore claimed that because half of all people with AIDS are on Medicaid, their care could be damaged by transferring their benefits to the private sector.

"That really made Bill angry. No. 1 it's not true and No. 2 it's using a scare tactic," Bradley said.

Bradley's health plan would allow access to the plans currently available for federal employees, which offers greater variety and depth of care than Medicaid, Ernestine Bradley said.

As First Lady, Bradley said she would be an advocate for education and breast cancer research and treatment, an issue she has spoken on since she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1992.

She said it's particularly critical for lesbians, who studies have shown are often reluctant to seek health care because of their sexual orientation, to undergo regular health screenings with a gay-friendly doctor.

"I understand the fear lesbians have in falling into the hands of the wrong doctor," Bradley said. "There must be a network of doctors you can go to. And have yourself checked as often as possible—confront the music and you will survive."

Gore endorsement rankles Bradley, some gays

> Continued from Page 1

ity of each man's record, not just their presidential campaign. I think you have got to look beyond that to what they have done over the years," she said.

Overall, while Bradley voted in favor of gay rights issues while he served in the U.S. Senate, he did not speak publicly for the measures or lobby for them the way Gore has, Stachelberg argued.

Bradley, on the other hand, insisted his campaign stands should be given more weight.

"I opposed the Knight Initiative in California before the vice president, I stated I was against 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' before the vice president—the way this campaign has moved, I have taken the positions, and he has followed.

"So the question is, would he have ever taken those positions if I had not? I think the jury is out," Bradley said. "I think it is doubtful."

Bradley said he grew more vocal on gay issues after recognizing the "misinformation and stereotypes surrounding gay Americans."

"All of the friends I have, and all of the [gay] couples I know, bear no resemblance to the stereotype the far right puts out," he said.

"If you don't confront it, if you don't try to broaden people's understanding, it is not going to get better, and the way you do that is by speaking out."

Gore spokesperson Doug Hattaway dismissed Bradley's claim that he has led the way on gay issues in the primary.

"Al Gore has been fighting alongside HRC and the gay community against the Republicans in Congress for years now, ... so Sen. Bradley is creating distinctions that don't really exist," he said.

The two Democrats did disagree last fall over the best strategy to win federal gay civil rights protection.

Bradley supports adding "sexual orientation" to the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act, which covers public accommodations in addition to employment. Gore supports the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would cover only job discrimination.

HRC and Gore argue that opening up the 1964 act to add gays would risk efforts by conservatives to add amendments to undermine affirmative action and other protections for minorities, Stachelberg said. She said HRC disagrees with criticism that Gore's vocal opposition to opening the Civil Rights Act was intended to pit gay and black voters against each other.



For more election coverage: www.houstonvoice.com

Party politics?

HRC's endorsement of Gore shows the group to be little more than a voice for the "Democratic establishment," according to Log Cabin.

Log Cabin opened itself up to similar criticism four years ago when it endorsed Bob Dole, the 1996 Republican presidential nominee, even after a public controversy when Dole returned a donation from Log Cabin.

But Dole had apologized, asked for Log Cabin's endorsement, and made specific promises to keep federal non-discrimination policies and funding for Ryan White and other AIDS programs, said Kevin Ivers, Log Cabin communications director.

"For the first time, a Republican presidential ticket was committing to specific promises to the gay and lesbian community, and that was making history, so we had to play our role in making sure [Dole] understood that when you do something like that, you get something in return," Ivers said.

"That is how you play internal party politics, and I wish HRC had the integrity to admit that is what they are doing [in the Democratic party], because they are very good at it," he said.

On a checklist of gay issues, Bradley is the better candidate in this year's Democratic primary, Ivers insisted, and HRC did not even meet with Republican candidate John McCain.

"HRC... would be better off embracing its hard-won position as a powerful player [in the Democratic party] and not hold out the myths of bipartisanship and that their issues checklist governs endorsements," said Rich Tafel, Log Cabin executive director.

Yet HRC's Stachelberg insisted the group considered all the candidates' records, including McCain, who she said did not return HRC's candidate survey and did not request a meeting, and Gore weighed out on top.

"It continues to amaze me that Log Cabin's strategy for moving forward politically is to tear down the Human Rights Campaign," said Stachelberg. "I would have thought from people as bright as Rich Tafel and Kevin Ivers, they would have done better."

"I am troubled that their approach, rather than working on educating their own candidates, is to criticize us for endorsing someone who is clearly far superior," she said.

Few gay groups take a stand

Although gay issues have been at the forefront of this presidential election as never before, HRC's endorsement came in a virtual vacuum, as few other national gay groups have issued recommendations for the upcoming primaries.

Until HRC's announcement last Friday, only one national gay organization—the upstart, Internet-based NationalGayLobby.org—had issued presidential primary endorsements.

NGL endorsed Bradley in the Democratic primary and McCain in the Republican, but urged Democratic voters to cross party lines and vote for McCain in the primary, to keep George W. Bush, the other leading Republican candidate, from winning the nomination.

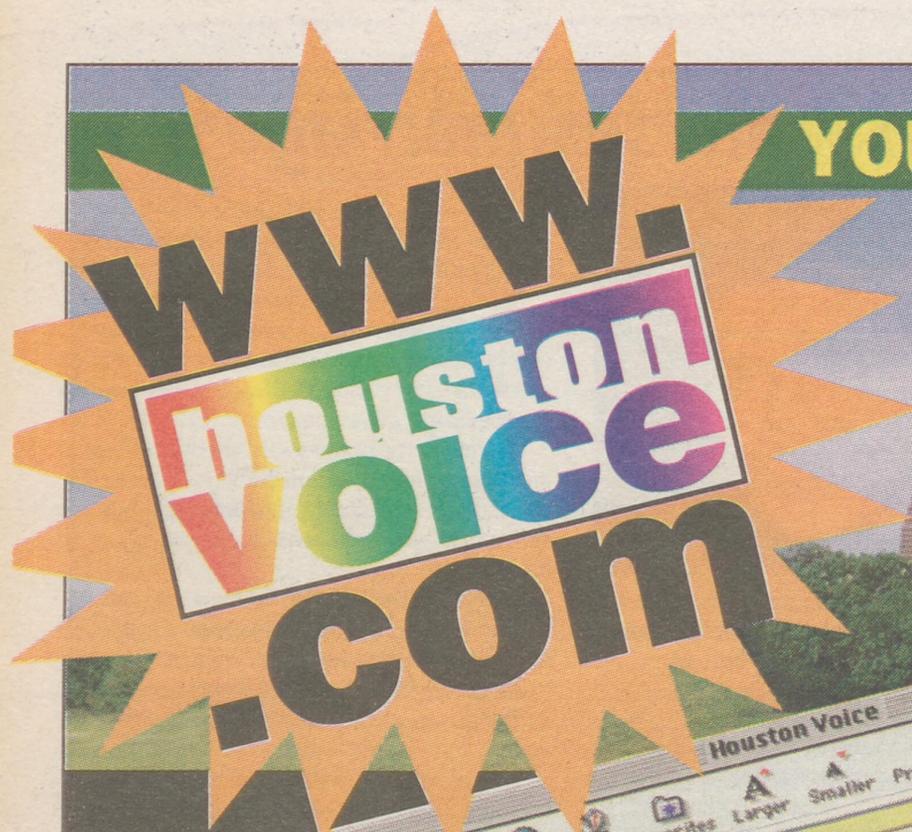
While other prominent national gay groups, including the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, National Stonewall Democratic Federation and Log Cabin Republicans, agree the 2000 presidential race will be crucial to gay rights initiatives, none have chosen to take a stand before the nominations are decided.

For NGLTF, it is merely a matter of rules. The organization's tax exempt status does not allow political endorsements, although NGLTF has published several educational guides with candidates' positions on gay issues.

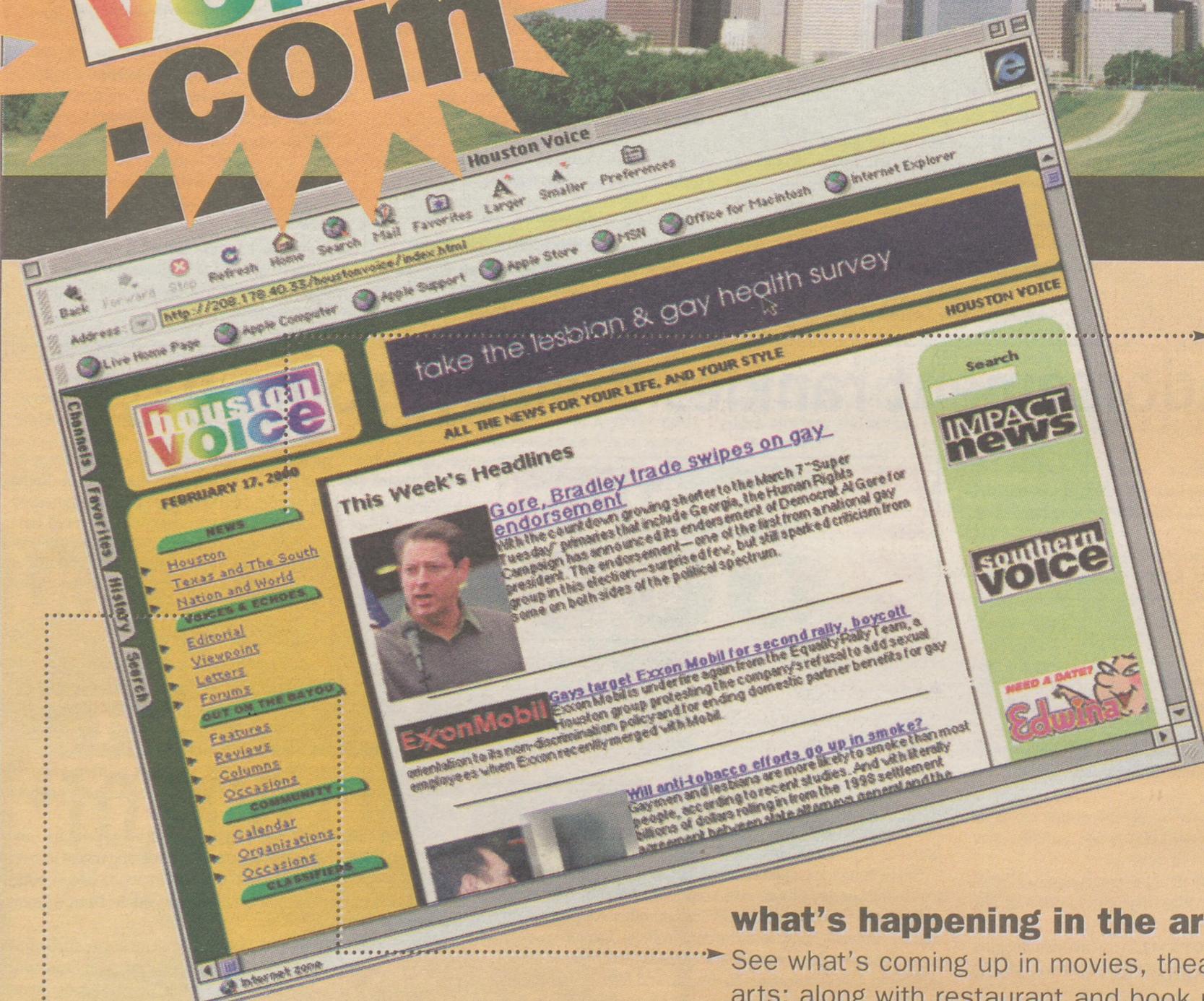
"We see our role in any election as trying to get as much information out to the candidates—Republican, Democrat and anyone else—that pertains to the LGBT community," said Ginny Apuzzo of NGLTF's Public Policy Institute.

As partisan organizations, Stonewall Democrats and Log Cabin Republicans say they will focus on educating and trying to work with whichever candidate wins their party's nomination.

But while no official endorsements will be made before the major primaries next month, officials for both groups suggested they were leaning toward particular candidates—John McCain for Log Cabin; Gore for Stonewall.



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Out on the Bayou

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A GUIDE FOR YOUR LEISURE TIME

Sundance

goes

QUEER

The nation's top showcase for independent movies is over, but several of its gay-themed films could soon be in a theater near you

by EARL DITTMAN

PARK CITY, Utah—For the better part of the year, this city is a peaceful little hamlet tucked away in the scenic, snow-capped mountains of Utah. But for 10 days each year, the tiny town becomes the center of the universe for the Hollywood movie-making machine.

Last month, thousands of directors, producers, studio executives, movie stars, journalists and film aficionados descended to participate in the spectacle that has become known as the Sundance Film Festival. Filmmakers came to show and sell and studio reps arrived with checkbooks in hand to browse and buy—hoping to snap up another box office hit like "The Blair Witch Project."

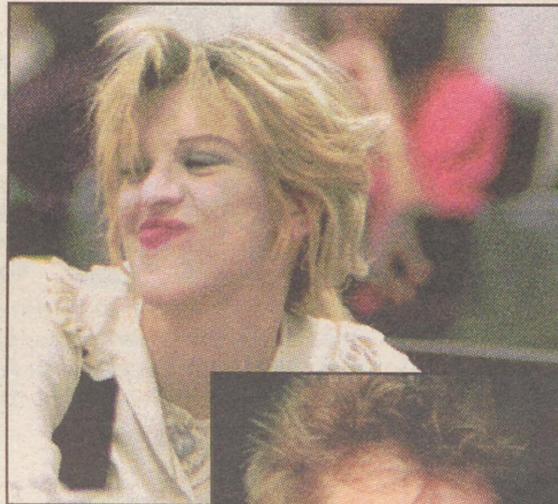
And while the lion's share of this year's 1,650 feature films submitted for consideration were intended for straight, mainstream audiences, there was no shortage of gay and gay-themed movies at Sundance 2000.

During the event, top honors for documentary directing went to Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman for "Paragraph 175," an exploration of Nazi atrocities against homosexuals.

Now that the cinematic lollapalooza is over, here's a small sampling of some of the best queer flicks vying for a spot on the 2000 screening schedules of theaters.

PUNKS is a heartwarming debut feature by writer/director Patrik-Ian Polk, who takes the genre of the hip-hop and R&B-driven, African-American romantic comedy to a whole new level. He takes viewers into the completely black, gay world of West Hollywood.

"I wanted to show a side of gay life that most people never get to see, whether they are straight or gay," Polk said. "Over the years, gay cinema has pretty much ignored what goes on in the black gay community. I don't think we have been fairly represented—our lives and our feelings. With 'Punks,' I want-



RENE MACURA AND G. SKENE/AP

Kiefer Sutherland and Courtney Love take part in the Sundance-debuted film 'Beat,' a 1950s look into the life of bisexual literary genius William Burroughs.

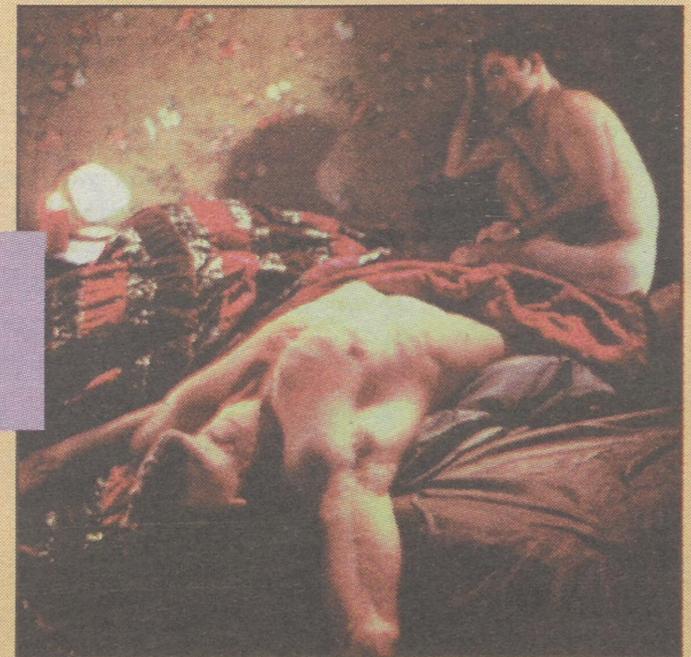


ed to change some of that."

The movie follows the trials and tribulations of Marcus, a young, successful gay black photographer, who is yearning for a meaningful relationship with another man. Things begin to look-up for Marcus when the hunky Darby moves in next door. There's only one little problem: Darby is ostensibly heterosexual and Marcus' "sisters" from Miss Smokies' club warn him he can expect nothing but heartbreak from falling for a straight man.

But he forges ahead anyway.

> Continued on page 21



Turkish BLOOD BATH

As brutal as his 'Lola und Bilidikid' is, writer/director Kutlug Ataman says it's actually a tame view of the terrors gays face

by DAVID GOLDMAN

"Lola and Billy the Kid" paints a violent, tragic picture of life for Turkish gays.

The Lola of this German subtitled film ("Lola und Bilidikid") is a Turkish gay man who's driven from his family's Berlin home by a homophobic older brother. Though Lola's boyfriend Billy loves him, he insists Lola dress as a woman in public and dreams of the day when Lola will undergo a sex change. Lola is revolted at the thought, but Billy sees it as the only way "we can live like normal people, not like two German fags."

Then the beautiful young Murat, who's questioning his own sexuality, finds his long-lost brother Lola. Billy helpfully instructs Murat in the art of getting blow-jobs for \$50, but he makes sure Murat understands the code of the Turkish top: "never kiss" and "never be a hole for anyone."

Later, when Lola's body is found floating in the river, Billy

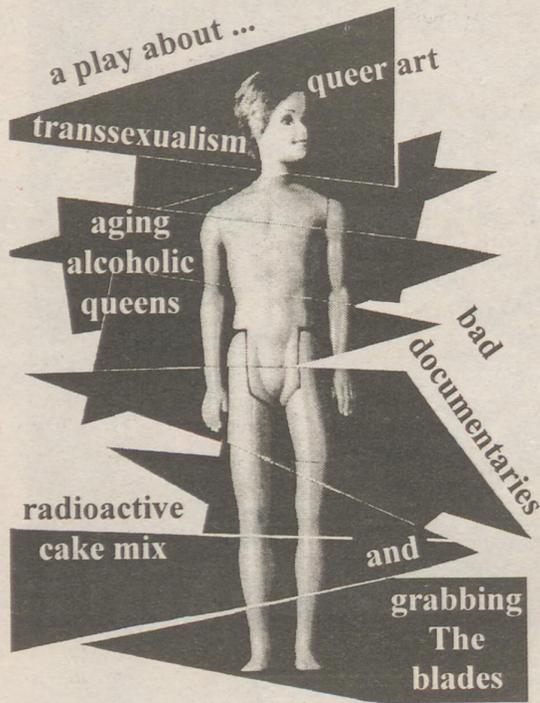
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Veronica was a sweet little girl in a pretty dress. She grew up to be a lesbian called Ronnie. Then, Ronnie became a man named Homer.

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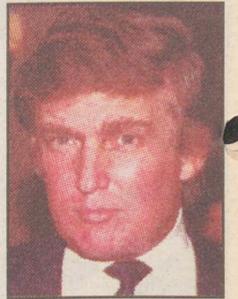
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“Quote unquote”

compiled by REX WOCKNER

“I don’t care whether a person is gay. I judge people based on their capability, honesty and merit. Being in the entertainment business—that is, owning casinos and ... several large beauty pageants—I’ve worked with many gay people. I have met some tough, talented, capable, terrific people. Their lifestyle is of no interest to me.”

—Donald Trump (right), real estate developer and possible Reform Party presidential candidate, to the *Advocate*, Feb. 15



“I don’t see the Pet Shop Boys as a gay pop group. I mean, do you have to see Benjamin Britten as a gay composer?”

—Pet Shop Boys singer Neil Tennant to *Out* magazine, January issue

“Being gay wasn’t a prerequisite of being in the group, it was how well you sang and you danced. But it was basically a group formed to appeal to gay audiences.”

—Village People construction worker David Hodo to London’s *Gay Times*, February issue



“I’ve gone out with some nuts. When I first met them, they seemed decent and regular and said they weren’t big fans, but then they turn out to be crazy—mad, insane Madonna fans. Looking back, it’s pretty funny. Nobody’s ever caused any harm. Let’s just say it was bad judgment on my part.”

—Madonna’s brother Christopher Ciccone (left) to the *Advocate*, Feb. 15

“Gaydar can lead to a social form of racial profiling. The police aren’t stopping gays on the highway, but a gay who comes anywhere near the Richard Simmons profile still carries an added burden in the workplace. At its worst, gaydar is deadly. At the Army base in Kentucky where Private First Class Barry Winchell was beaten to death with a baseball bat last July 5, he hadn’t told that he was gay, in strict compliance with regulations. It was gaydar that tracked him down.”

—*Time* magazine columnist Margaret Carlson, Jan. 31

“This should be up to the states, and if a state has decided to allow medical marijuana, the federal government should be ashamed to forbid it. Who the hell are they to tell people with AIDS or cancer what to take. They should take anything they damn well want to.”

—Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura, in an interview in the Feb. 2000 issue of *Poz* magazine

“Every [gay] stereotype is the basis of someone’s lifestyle, and at any gay gathering large enough to be noticed by the press, you’ll see the violation of your most cherished belief on flagrant display.”

—*Village Voice* Executive Editor Richard Goldstein writing in the Feb. 15 *Advocate*

“You want to see courage? Watch somebody come out. Watch them take the risk of losing their relationship with their parents, their clergy, their brothers and sisters—to say the truth about who they are. Look at somebody who has the courage to come out and say, “I have HIV.”

—Actress Judith Light (right), who is starring on Broadway in “Wit,” the Pulitzer-winning play by Atlanta lesbian Margaret Edson, in an interview in the Feb. 2000 issue of *Poz* magazine



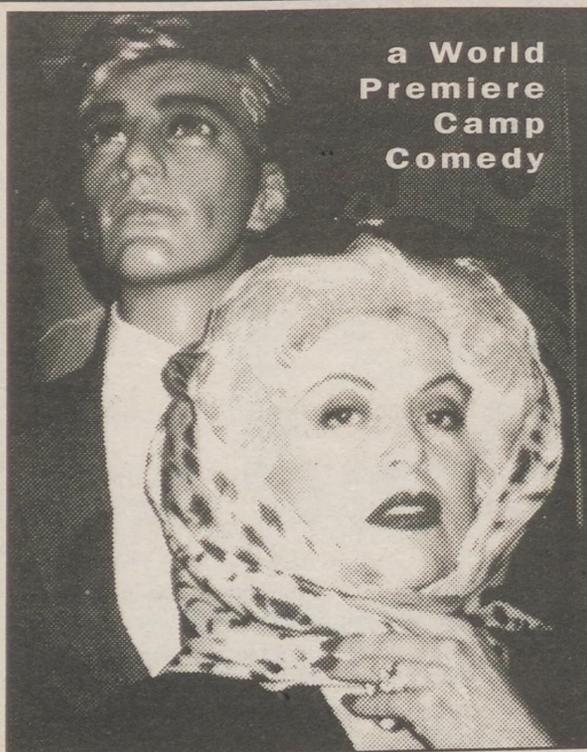
“I can’t do anything to help Matt anymore. But maybe I can use this platform to help others. He would want me to be doing it. He always said I shouldn’t have been a housewife, I should have a career.”

—Judy Shepard, Matthew’s mother, on her expanding role as a gay- rights activist, at a San Francisco press conference, Jan. 27. Shepard is campaigning against Proposition 22, the California ballot initiative that would ban gay marriage

“There are hundreds and thousands of people that I represent that are just like me that don’t happen to have two Grammys that this affects. And this affects me deeply. What Proposition 22 does is tell me, my partner, my children, that we are less than my neighbor.”

—Melissa Etheridge at a Jan. 28 Beverly Hills press conference against Proposition 22, California’s anti-gay-marriage ballot initiative

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SUSTIVA is tough on HIV. It reduces the amount of virus in your blood and increases the number of CD4 cells. SUSTIVA can even be used in young children, 3 years of age or older. This is based on results from controlled clinical trials at 24 weeks. Presently, there are no results from controlled clinical trials showing the long-term effects of SUSTIVA.

SUSTIVA has manageable side effects. Most side effects are mild to moderate and can be managed. The most significant side effects associated with SUSTIVA therapy have been nervous system symptoms (dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating and/or abnormal dreams) and rash. These usually subside within the first two to four weeks of treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may help make nervous system symptoms less noticeable.

*NNRTI - non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor.

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Pregnancy should be avoided in women receiving SUSTIVA because birth defects have been seen in primates dosed with SUSTIVA. Barrier contraception should always be used in combination with other methods of contraception.

Talk to your doctor when you start taking SUSTIVA. SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Always tell your doctor if you are taking, starting or changing any prescription or non-prescription medicine when taking SUSTIVA. Your doctor may change your medicines or change their dose. You should discuss your prior medical conditions (such as mental illness, substance abuse, hepatitis, etc.) with your doctor before taking SUSTIVA.

We know that coping with HIV is difficult enough. Your treatment doesn't have to be. Ask your doctor about SUSTIVA. For more important information see the next page for Patient Information about SUSTIVA.

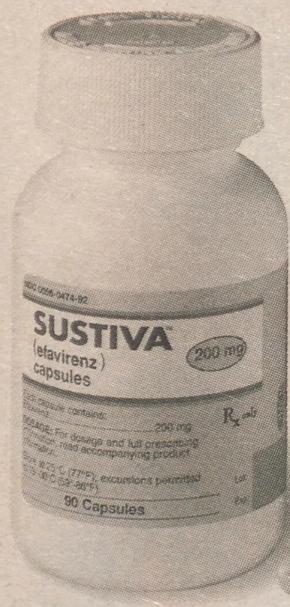
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†. Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV Infection, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), December 1998.

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(sus-TEE-vah)

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Please read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA. Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. Don't treat this leaflet as your only source of information about SUSTIVA. Always discuss SUSTIVA with your doctor when you start taking your medicine and at every visit. You should remain under a doctor's care when using SUSTIVA. You should not change or stop treatment without first talking to your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is a medicine used to help treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

How does SUSTIVA work?

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (called "viral load"). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells (a type of immune cell in blood). SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?

SUSTIVA is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important that you remain under the care of your doctor.

Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take SUSTIVA?

- The dose of SUSTIVA for adults is 600 mg (three 200 mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).
- Take SUSTIVA at the same time each day. You should take SUSTIVA at bedtime during the first few weeks or if you have side effects, such as dizziness or trouble concentrating (see **What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**).
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water, juice, milk or soda. You may take SUSTIVA with or without meals; however, SUSTIVA should not be taken with a high fat meal.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away. If you do miss a dose, do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.

Can children take SUSTIVA?

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to SUSTIVA or any of its ingredients.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor right away if you:

- Are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- Are breast-feeding
- Have problems with your liver, or have had hepatitis
- Start or change any medicine
- Have side effects while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)
- Have a history of mental illness, substance or alcohol abuse

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting treatment with SUSTIVA. These feelings may be less noticeable if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime. They also tend to go away after you've taken the medicine for a few weeks. Rarely, patients have more serious side effects that may affect mood or ability to think clearly. These side effects occur more often in patients with a history of mental illness or substance abuse. Tell your doctor promptly if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. There is the possibility that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs. You should avoid driving or operating machinery if you are having these side effects.

One of the most common side effects is rash. These rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor promptly.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, this is not a complete list of side effects reported with SUSTIVA when taken with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss a more complete list of side effects with you.

Please contact your doctor immediately before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects. Tell your doctor or other healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

What about birth control, pregnancy, or breast-feeding?

Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA. Birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. You should use a condom or diaphragm in addition to other methods of birth control while taking SUSTIVA. Inform your doctor immediately if you are pregnant. If you want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor. Do not take SUSTIVA if you are breast-feeding. Talk to your doctor if you are breast-feeding your baby.

Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Your doctor may change your medicines or change their doses. For this reason, it is very important to:

- Let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- Tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your medicines when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA:**

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafegot®)

The following medicines may need to be changed or have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA:**

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Fortovase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

How should I keep SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is available as 50 mg, 100 mg, and 200 mg capsules.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59°-86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider if you have questions about either SUSTIVA or HIV. For additional information you can visit the SUSTIVA website at <http://www.sustiva.com>.

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

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DuPont Pharmaceuticals

Wilmington, DE 19880
 Issued September, 1998

Sundance goes QUEER

> Continued from page 17

THE BROKEN HEARTS CLUB includes an all-star cast with the likes of Dean Cain, Andrew Keegan, Nia Long, Mary McCormack, John Mahoney and Timothy Olyphant. And it could best be described as a gay "Diner" or "The Big Chill." Written and directed by Greg Berlanti, the movie focuses on a group of gay friends who come together for what should be a fun-filled birthday party for their pal Dennis.

The gang includes Benji, the punkish innocent with a penchant for gym bodies; Howie, the psychology grad student who thinks too much and lives too little; Cole, the charismatic actor who accidentally keeps stealing everybody's guy; Patrick, the cynical quipster, and Taylor, resident drama queen, who, until recently, prided himself on his long-term relationship.

Providing sage advice and steady work is Jack, the beloved patriarch whose restaurant is a haven for them all. While they are often at odds with one another, when tragedy strikes, their friendships are put to the test.

"It's really a film about hope and the strength of friendship," Berlanti said. "I've had folks compare it to a lot of things, even 'The Boys In The Band.' But I think the story it tells is a unique one. It speaks to a part of all of us."

For years, a shroud of mystery has surrounded the death of the wife of "Beat Generation" guru William Burroughs. Did the heroin-addicted, bisexual literary genius murder her or was Joan Burroughs' demise the result of a stupid accident? Director Gary Walkow's **BEAT** attempts to end the speculation once and for all.

"Beat" isn't meant as an exposé or anything, but it really sheds some light on a subject that hasn't been touched upon for 40 years now," castmate Courtney Love said. "And it gives some real insight into what drove the men and women who started the 'Beat Generation.'"

All the members of the "Beat Generation" lived on the edge, and they all shared a gift for falling in love with the wrong people. "Beat" is set in 1951, and William (Kiefer Sutherland) and Joan (Courtney Love) are living in Mexico City. When old friends, the openly-gay Allen Ginsberg (Ron Livingston) and Lucien Carr (Norman Reedus), drive down for a visit, Burroughs has taken off to Guatemala with another man.

Joan is feeling low, but is captivated by the idea of a car trip to an erupting volcano. On the road, Joan and Lucien fall in love. When Burroughs returns home, there is a confrontation over the obvious flaws in their marriage which ends in a drunken game of William Tell.

Director Jamie Babbit's debut feature **BUT I'M A CHEERLEADER** is a raucous satire that turns up the volume on the absurdity of "curing" homosexuality. It's a swipe at so-called lesbian and gay rehabilitation camps that delivers lots of laughs and a sexy love story.

"It's so strange and ridiculous that these

gay rehab camps actually exist," "Cheerleader" star Natasha Lyonne said. "It is such a bizarre concept that parents actually send their kids to these places. It's mad, really, that's one of the reasons I wanted to make this film. It's a silly, funny comedy, but it addresses some very serious issues at the same time."

Lyonne portrays Megan, a model teenager that parents dream of. She's a top student and popular cheerleader who dates the captain of the football team. But her friends and family begin to notice little things that cause them concern. Megan's behavior is too forthright; she doesn't like kissing her boyfriend; and then there are those swimsuit-issue pages adorning her locker.

Determined to save Megan from incipient lesbianism, her family and friends stage a gay intervention and ship her off to the five-step, homo-rehab camp True Directions, guided by ex-gay Mike (RuPaul). The thing is, Megan never thought of herself as a lesbian—she is a cheerleader, after all—so when sadistic camp master Mary Brown (Cathy Moriarty) insists that she take the first step to recovery by admitting she is a homosexual, Megan balks.

Then sparks fly when Megan meets Graham (Clea Duvall), a rebel tomboy who enrolled to prevent being cut off from her trust fund. Can all those accusations about Megan's deviant sexuality be true?

AMERICAN PSYCHO by director Mary Harron returned to Sundance this year with what was clearly the most anticipated and controversial feature of the festival. It's a darkly sly, tongue-in-cheek lash at '80s materialism and corporate-clone culture based on author's Bret Easton Ellis' over-the-top novel.

"Velvet Goldmine" lead Christian Bale stars as Patrick Bateman, a young, handsome Wall Street clone. Shielded by conformity, privilege and wealth, Bateman is also the ultimate serial killer, roaming freely and fearlessly. His murderous impulses are fueled by zealous materialism and piercing envy when he discovers someone else has acquired more than him.

After a colleague presents a business card superior in ink and paper to his, Bateman's blood thirst sharpens, and he steps up his homicidal activities to a frenzied pitch.

"The book wasn't shy in the way it depicted Patrick's depravity, so I felt like the only way I could do it justice was to take everything in the film to the extreme," Harron said.

But her vision quickly earned "American Psycho" a dreaded NC-17-rating not for its violence, but because of an explicit sex scene that included Bale's character and two female prostitutes.

"The ratings board doesn't seem to mind people getting killed and chopped up, but don't have two women getting intimate, because that's a real crime," Harron said. "I guess that sends a message that it's okay to be a serial killer, but not a person who kisses someone of the same sex. It's just ridiculous."

Since Sundance Harron has submitted an edited version of the film, in hopes of garnering an R-rating.

COULD IT BE WORSE! is a coming out story unlike most others. Casting his very own Greek American family as



An explicit sex scene with Krista Sutton, Christian Bale and Cara Seymour—including a same-sex kiss—brought 'American Psycho' an NC-17 rating.

themselves, director and co-writer Zachary Stratis serves up an exuberant cocktail of musical comedy, documentary and family therapy in a film that certainly had Sundance audiences talking.

It's Sunday night at the Stratises, where plans are afoot for Ollie and Gus's 50th wedding anniversary party. When Zack leaks his intention to incorporate a lavish coming-out spectacle, jaws drop, the pot roast plops, and all hell breaks loose. A Greek American Archie Bunker, Gus belts out the first of what becomes a series of outrageously expressive musical numbers, "I'm Your Father, Listen to Me."

Zack's hypochondriac artist sister, Evmorphia, follows with the vampy con-

fessional, "I Gotta Tell Ya." Not to be outdone, punk-rocker-turned-yuppie Tedi breaks into the scalding "Leave Me Alone," while brother Stathi, a fervent traditionalist, steps up the drama with his tragic "Tears and Pain." Pressured to paint her phyllo triangles pink for pride, Zack's mother rebounds with her own solo, "You Think It's Hard Being Gay, Try Growin' Up a Woman."

"People are either going to love this film or hate it," Zachary Stratis said. "It isn't your conventional musical or the typical coming-out story we've all grown up with. But I think that is what makes it fun to watch. It's made from the heart, with a lot of love and care."

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Nokia 5190-Actual Size

Turkish BLOOD BATH

> Continued from page 17

carries out a horrific revenge against the street thugs he blames for her murder. But then Murat learns the awful truth: Lola's killer was someone much closer to home.

Writer/director Kutlug Ataman's bristles at criticism that his movie goes over the top in its grim portrayal.

"I get really pissed off when I read in the newspapers in the States that this is just too much, etcetera, etcetera," Ataman said last week from his London home. "Well, it can be too much—but it is the truth. In fact, it is the censored truth."

Ataman depicts a Turkish culture that is brutally homophobic and steeped in feudal violence—a culture whose shadowy codes demand the absolute fealty even of those who have escaped its geographic boundaries.

His frank portrayal of homosexuality among Turks earned him death threats from Islamic fundamentalists. But the movie's image of Billy as knife-wielding wild man set on revenge enraged even some Turkish expatriates in the U.S. At a recent Columbia University panel, Turkish student teachers confronted the director.

Ataman, 38, was born and educated in Istanbul. He studied film at UCLA, then returned to Europe and lived in Paris,

London, Berlin and Istanbul. In addition to his career as a film writer/director, Ataman is an artist whose video art pieces sell in galleries in Turkey and elsewhere. He directed one previous feature film: "The Serpent's Tale," a Turkish vampire movie with cult following on the festival circuit.

"Lola," Ataman says, is the first movie about Turkish gays not filmed by a Westerner or a straight director.

"I believe that telling your stories gives permanence to life," he said. "It was important that this story had to be told for the record. Two hundred years from now, when people look back, they would have said, 'What was going on in the late '90s? There was not a single gay voice in this culture.' Basically, I felt like it was about time to do it."

Ataman, long out to his family and friends, seized the movie as his opportunity to come out publicly as well.

Boldly, Ataman took his movie to Turkish distributors in the fall of 1998. They wouldn't touch it, even though Western gay-themed films like "Maurice" and "Velvet Goldmine" were commonly exhibited. "But they didn't want to see Turks doing with each other. It was just too close."

"Lola" first screened at the Berlin Film Festival's opening night last year. It won an award and went on to play several months in German cinemas.

After that, Turkish distributors "couldn't ignore it," Ataman said. It was selected for the 18th International Istanbul Film Festival, where it caused a major sensation. "Lola" took the audience award at the festival and then went into wide distribution across Turkey.



The teen-age Murat (Baki Davrak) in a scene where he is bathed by his mother (Nurinisa Yikdirim).

"It came out in June, which is not a good month because the cities are empty. Despite that, it was quite remarkable. You had a lot of gay people and transgender people lining up in front of the cinemas, which meant they would be really visible. It caused quite a bit of change—but I'm not claiming it caused a revolution, as some of the press seems to have exaggerated."

Neither did the movie go unnoticed by

those it was most likely to offend. "This is nothing that should be taken out of proportion, but yes, it is a fact that both me and my producer separately have been threatened by faxes and telephone."

The threats persuaded Ataman, who had been scheduled to stay in Turkey to help publicize "Lola," to quit the country for England, his lover's native land.

Back on the subject of whether the movie paints too bleak a picture, Ataman talks about the stark choice that confronts men who want to use homosexuality as a means to evade Turkey's mandatory military service.

"If you are active—a 'top'—you are not considered gay by the army," he said. "You have to be passive." Proving passivity requires presenting yourself as "a full-blown transvestite, not a drag queen—or you have to bring in a photo of you actually getting butt-fucked. You have to show this to the government," Ataman said.

The gay man, then, who is lucky enough to avoid the army must bear the shame of being an official "passive homosexual" from then on.

"For the rest of your life, it is with you. We are talking about a world such as this. And people criticize me for being grim? Or angst-ridden? I am sorry, but I could not do a 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert,' because that is not my reality. I love that film. But it doesn't exist in my realm."

"A lot of the gay people saw that someone could come out and do this on this scale. I'm hoping that this will establish a model, so that people can continue doing it. They can always say, 'Kutlug Ataman did it, and nothing happened to him. So I can do it too.'"

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Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEWS

Burned out on mussels

by KATHREEN LEE

If there is a season in Houston for outdoor dining, it's now. **SABROSO GRILL**, burrowed in one of Rice Village's retail suites, provides a small, isolated patio for customers to relax over one of its popular frozen margaritas.

The balmy Friday evening my companions and I visited, we had no problems finding an outside table. The idyllic atmosphere lent a leisurely and comfortable pace to an evening conducive to good conversation and what we hoped would be good food. Our unhurried sense was furthered by our absentee waiter, who only occasionally checked on us.

Unfortunately, our dining oasis was shattered by our meal. Unlike the surroundings, the food was anything but inspiring.

The Saute Mussels (\$6.95) had a distinct burnt taste which did nothing to detract from the excessively buttery base sauce of jalapenos, tomatillos, garlic, cilantro and white wine. One companion described his Grilled Chorizo (\$4.95) and accompanying saffron rice as pedestrian, and asserted that when prepared correctly, the saffron rice and chorizo, taken together, should complement each other. Instead, he found Sabroso's rendition lacking.

But not all of us found our appetizers disappointing. One companion described his Light Shrimp Soup (\$3.95) as having the perfect complement between a strong soup

Our dining oasis was shattered by our meal. Unlike the surroundings, the food was anything but inspiring.

base and the light shrimp morsels. The South American Guacamole (\$4.95), served with fried plantains, was an interesting surprise that was spicy and tangy.

The entrees also had one or two surprises. One companion noted that the Sabroso chili sauce in his Fajita Sabroso (\$13.50) failed to saturate the steak, and left two components seeming more out of place than part of a complete dish.

Similar sentiments were made about the Pescado Del Sol (\$14.95), which had an enveloping salsa del sol that did nothing to accentuate the rather bland grilled red fish.

For the seafood lover, I recommend Seafood Fettuccine Al Fresca (\$15.50), a combination of sautéed shrimp, red fish, mussels and calamari. While I would have preferred the carapace taken off my sautéed shrimp and a more hearty helping of seafood, the blend of garlic, onions and herbs with the fettuccine rounded out the dish well. The Grilled Shrimp Quesadillas (\$7.95) turned out so ordinary and average that there's not much to say, other than to just shrug and wash it down with frozen margarita.

But the Sabroso Chicken Breast (\$11.95) was tender and succulent. Unlike the previous fajita dish, the Sabroso chili sauce permeated the soft and luscious meat, making each bite thoroughly enjoyable.

After an insufficient meal, we wanted to redeem Sabroso through dessert. The Flan (\$3.95) was well prepared with a rich and delicious raspberry and citrus ganache. The Chocolate Mousse Cake (\$4.95) had a great blend of mousse and cake, without being overly sweet. But the Mango Cheesecake (\$4.95) did not have any hint of mango, tasting more like plain cheesecake.

The message here: If the quality of food is not high on your list of priorities, then Sabroso's is a great place to hang out for a leisurely evening with friends. But if you're looking for more substance than ambiance, try elsewhere.



Sabrosa Grill

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BOOK NEWS

Rich gay Miss. history hindered by academia

by AL COTTON

Academic writers are the toughest nut for the typical reader to crack. People who publish in order not to perish in their competitive jobs know that their books are not going to crack the general reader's market, and therefore have no incentive to find the extra time it takes to strip the academic jargon out of their prose. And that jargon can be a vast impediment to readership.

Gay academics have taken it a step further, with the extra added syntactic of figuring out the lingo of Queer Studies departments and professors. Certainly, many a book filled with insight about queer interpretations of "I Love Lucy" or "Bewitched" have slid right past me because I didn't want to take the time to figure out what the writer is saying.

Take John Howard's **MEN LIKE THAT: A SOUTHERN QUEER HISTORY**. Howard, holder of a Ph.D. from Emory University in American Studies, as well as a B.A. in Economics from the University of Virginia, has written a by-and-large interesting, sometimes fascinating study that recounts many of the famous gay incidents in Mississippi between 1945 and 1985.

But every time you get up a good head of steam into a paragraph, a sentence comes along to knock you off the tracks. On page 98,

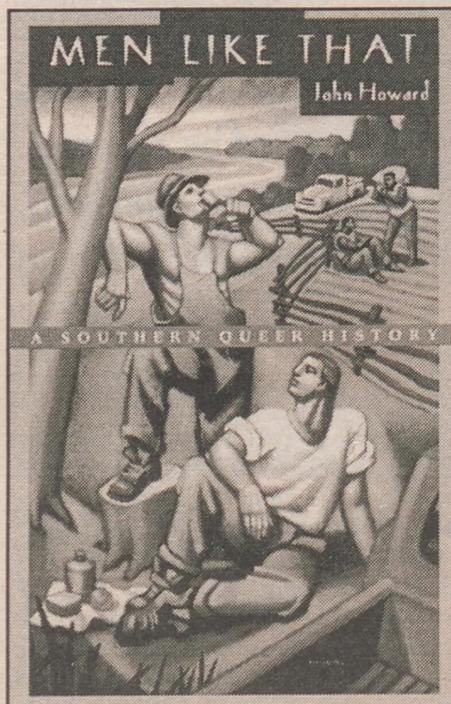
the author tells us that "A blurred hetero/homo dyad functioned in decidedly spatial and temporal ways." We later read that "Determining what constituted queer-ness and queer sex across time and place is a useful, multifaceted ethnohistorical project."

Or my favorite, "The memory of the continuing reality of racial segregation—the daily interaction of whites and blacks in hierarchical work settings; the nightly division of whites and blacks into partitioned residential sectors—informed the creation and maintenance of libidinally segregated spaces, of heteronormative terrain, and what Gordon Brent Ingram calls 'queerscapes.'"

These sentences are virtually impenetrable without special academic knowledge, if you're reading at a normal speed. One way to deal with them is just to ignore them, trying to glean the context from the next sentence, which couldn't really be more impenetrable. At least about 70 percent of the time.

It's a shame, too, because once you cut through the prose with your syntactical machete, there are gems waiting for you. One of the main thrusts of Howard's argument—the idea that life for queers in Mississippi was fine in the '50s because the brouhaha over Joseph McCarthy's hearings were hardly a blip on the radar screen here.

It was in the '60s, when queer became con-



flated with commie, beatnik, free-loving, and race-mixing, before the average gay person felt the consequences of oppression directly.

There are fascinating stories here that Howard tells cleanly, because he has so much information that he doesn't have time or room to "queerly expound."

The way the Jackson Police Department handled the 1955 murder of John Murrett, a gay man killed by two soldiers in a hotel room, where the "homosexual panic" defense was perhaps first used, is a great example of how gay people didn't always get lesser treatment from Mississippi authorities.

The cultural context for "Ode to Billie Joe" is dissected at length, with great information, crisply delivered.

The fact that two white men were forced to leave Mississippi for having gay sex (or "homosex," as Howard calls it), but a black man who was central to the civil rights movement was allowed to continue running his pharmacy, points up situational complexities that belie the "simplicity" of Mississippi gay life.

Gay pulp author Carl Corley, doctor to Jackson's transsexuals, Benjamin Folk, and fey newspaper columnist William Haines (the latter two murdered in their homes), bring home the dangers gay people still face.

The most amazing case is the gubernatorial candidacy of William Allain in 1982. Allain was outed as a man who had sex with three black transsexuals in Jackson, and still managed to get elected as governor by a 16 percent margin. In Mississippi?

Take a shot at this book if you feel up to it—once decoded, reading it can be surprisingly rich and enlightening experience of how Mississippi treated its gays over a time-period fraught with change and improvisation.

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INFO
**Men Like That:
 A Southern Queer
 History**
 by John Howard
 University of Chicago Press, \$27.50

What your neighbors are reading . . .

- 1 **Lessons from the Light**
by George Anderson, \$12.95
- 2 **Whole Lesbian Sex Book**
by Felice Newman, \$21.95
- 3 **When All the Children Get Together**
by R. Bryan Smith, \$14
- 4 **Skin Deep**
by Nicole Foster, \$12.95
- 5 **The Brethren**
by John Grisham, \$27.95
- 6 **The Men's Room**
by Michaelangelo Scroggs, \$14
- 7 **Best Little Boy in the World Grows Up**
by Andrew Tobias, \$12
- 8 **The Sex Squad**
by David Leddick, \$12.95
- 9 **Way to Go, Smith**
by Bob Smith, \$24
- 10 **Breathe Again**
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Gays target Exxon Mobil for second rally, boycott

by KAY DAYUS

Exxon Mobil is under fire again from the Equality Rally Team, a Houston group protesting the company's refusal to add sexual orientation to its non-discrimination policy and for ending domestic partner benefits for gay employees when Exxon recently merged with Mobil.

"The purpose of the equality rally is to demonstrate our feelings on the issue in a peaceful manner," says Ray Hill, a long time activist and a founding members of the Equality Rally Team. "We want to see our place at the family table."

Billed as Equality Rally II, the group is launching its official start of a boycott against Exxon Mobil at a rally Feb. 29 in Antioch Park, 1400 Smith in downtown Houston. In conjunction with the rally, a mass commitment ceremony for couples wishing to celebrate their domestic union is planned, says Deborah Bell, community activist and Equality Team member.

"We want to bring attention to the fact that if we could marry, we would be entitled to specific benefits married people would have," Bell said. "Of course, it is not an official marriage. It is just the visualization."

Equality Rally II comes after 70 people gathered in a downtown park Jan. 28 to protest the oil company's refusal to adopt

Mobil's more specific non-discrimination statement and domestic partner benefits for employees when the two companies joined. After the rally, protesters marched several blocks to Exxon Mobil's headquarters.

At issue is the fact that prior to the merge of the two oil giants, Mobil had policies that specifically protected gays from discrimination and offered same-sex domestic partner benefits. After the merger, the Exxon policies took precedent. Exxon doesn't include sexual orientation in its non-discrimination policy and has ended domestic partner benefits for gay employees.

"It is unfortunate that Exxon Mobil is being made a target," said Tom Cirigliano, an Exxon Mobil spokesman. "Maybe it is based on misinformation, because our policy is broader than any company's and broader than the U.S. government's."

Cirigliano said that Exxon Mobil is in over 200 countries and that they offer straight or same-sex couples benefits if the law in any particular country says they should, like the company already provides in the Netherlands.

Mobil employees who were receiving same-sex benefits at the time of the merger still do, Cirigliano said.

"Our policy is clear and straightforward. We do not discriminate on sexual orientation and have established a comprehensive



MATTHEW A. HENNING

Some 70 people protested Jan. 28 the policies of newly-merged Exxon Mobil, which dropped sexual orientation from its non-discrimination statement as well as domestic partner benefits.

training program to be sure this policy is followed throughout our worldwide organization," he said.

Equality Rally organizers disagree.

"Exxon Mobil has taken a giant step backward withdrawing same-sex benefits," said Dan DiDonato, Equality Rally president. "While other companies are starting to go this route of offering same-sex benefits, Exxon Mobil is digging its heels in by refusing."

DiDonato pointed out that Houston-based Continental Airlines recently

approved domestic partner benefits for gays.

Sean Carter, president of the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus, said it's not just a gay-related issue, but an economic one for employees.

"Benefits are part of salary, no matter how you look at it," Carter said. "So you get two people getting paid differently when one gets benefits and one doesn't. All employees should be treated equally. Equal pay for equal work."

The proposed boycott of Exxon Mobil is an effort that organizers hope reaches beyond Houston so the impact hits the company financially.

"This is the official start to the boycott, not just in Houston, but nationwide," Carter said.

Keynote speaker at the rally will be Patrick Vachon, a well-known Houston psychotherapist specializing in Imago therapy for couples and singles.

"The more we can get the message out, the more we can create change," DiDonato said.

INFO

Equality Rally II
Feb. 29, 5 p.m.
Antioch Park
1400 Smith
713-498-8556
equality@wt.net

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community calendar

saturday, feb. 19

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 Chain Gang Bicycle Club. 713-863-1860.
Rainbow Fishing Club. 713-526-7070.
Houston Lesbian and Gay drop-in hours from noon to 4 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
Montrose Writer's Project. 3 to 4:30 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-956-1866.
Houston Outdoor Group (HOG). 9 a.m. 713-529-2691.

sunday, feb. 20

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.
The Women's Group. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.
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.
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-868-5039.
Montrose Ice Picks. Galleria. 5 p.m. 713-629-1432.
PFLAG-Woodlands. 2 p.m. 1370 North Millbend Dr. 713-867-9020.
PFLAG-Galveston. 2 p.m. 1405 39th Street. 713-867-9020.
Pride Regional Conference. 10 a.m. 2700 Albany. 713-529-6979.
Lesbians over Fifty (LOAF). Meeting. 2 p.m. 713-8689-1482.

monday, feb. 21

Gay Fathers/Fathers First support group, 8 p.m. 713-861-6181.
Calendar/Computer workshop for Pride Week, 7 p.m. 713-529-1223.
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.
AIDS Foundation Houston Creative Writing Class. 3 p.m. 713-623-69796.
gayDAR. Wellness community. 7 p.m. 713-526-1017 X211.
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. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. 7 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

tuesday, feb 22

Helping Cross Dressers Anonymus. 7 p.m. 239 Westheimer. 713-495-8009.
Gay Men HIV+ Psychotherapy. 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.

wednesday, feb. 23

Free HIV Testing at Thomas Street Clinic at 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2015 Thomas Street 713-793-4026.
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.
HAMS Motorcycle Club meets for coffee. 713-688-1300 or hams1999@yahoo.com
Rainbow Ranglers free C&W dance lessons at the Brazos River Bottom. 7 p.m. 713-880-0670.
Houston Pride Band. All skill levels. 7:15 p.m. 713-522-4282 or www.houstonprideband.org.
Hospital Volunteer Training. Kolbe Project. 1 to 4 p.m. 713-861-1800.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

thursday, feb. 24

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.
Twenty Something Rap Session. 7:30 p.m. 713-315-6786.
Open Mike Night at Cafe Artist. 8 p.m. 713-528-3704.
Community Gospel. 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.
Yoga at Body Positive. 6:30 p.m. \$5. 713-524-2374.
Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston (GLOBAL) meets at 4 p.m. 713-743-7539.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. 713-524-3818.
Lesbian Movie Night. 7 p.m. Pot luck and "Better Than Chocolate." 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
PrimeTimers. Dine Arama. 7:30 p.m. 713-867-3903.

friday, feb. 25

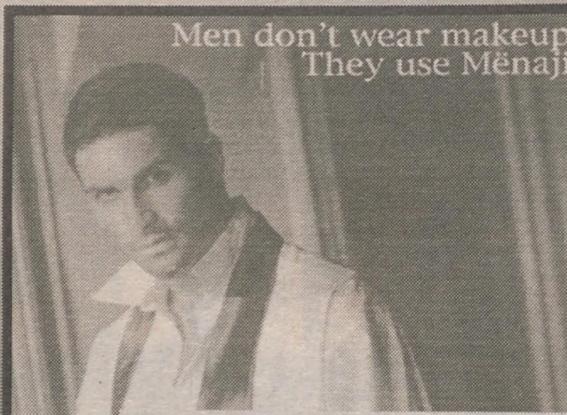
Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) meets. 713-942-7002.
Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center at 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
Lesbian Avengers. Cafe Toopees, 1830 W. Alabama at 7 p.m. Q-Patrol walks the streets at 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
Kolbe Project. Morning Prayer at 10 a.m. 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. "Spartacus" 713-522-8182.
Life Begins at 40. Pot luck dinner and discussion. 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.
Men's Coming Out Group. 7 p.m. 713-524-3818.
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.
Gay and Lesbian Unitarian Universalists Pot Luck. 5200 Fannin. 713-526-5200.

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.



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Occasions



The one and only Pool Bear rings in another year on Feb. 22.



This is Ivana, a regal tortoise/tabby mix. She's about 4 months old, an indoor cat, and has medium to long hair. For more information, contact the Houston Humane Society at 713-434-5538 or mail@houstonhumane.org.

Birthdays

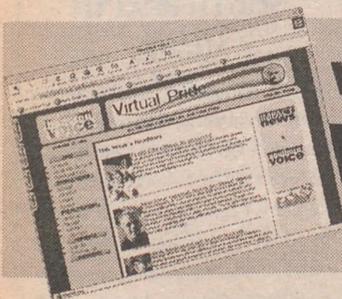
Lovely Lesbian Betty McGee blows out her birthday candles on Feb. 18.

Kyle, the studious one, adds another year on Feb. 21.

Jay F. of the CCCC turns his birthday steering wheel on Feb. 23.

Former Houston Voice staffer Matt Pennington celebrates his birthday on Feb. 27.

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.



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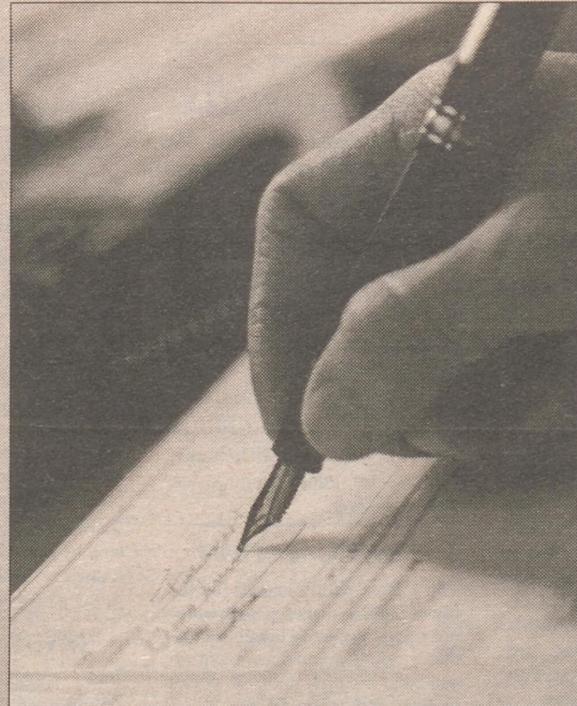
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Classifieds

Announcements

Body Positive Wellness Center

is a non-profit organization that seeks to empower those with HIV infection, through nutrition chiropractic services, yoga, and peer counseling. If you are interested in participation or volunteering, we want to speak with you! Visit our website at www.bodypositive.org or call 713.524.2374.

RYAN WHITE PLANNING COUNCIL

is looking for volunteers to serve on the council. The primary responsibility of the council is to determine what services are most needed. Last year's Council received over \$17 million from the federal government for use in the greater Houston area. Your participation DOES make a difference. Contact Tori Williams at 713.572.3724 or email www.rwpc.org.

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GAY & LESBIAN SWITCHBOARD

Volunteer classes now forming. Reserve your space online or call 713.529.9615 • www.gayswitchboardhouston.org

gayDAR

Dream • Affirm • Restore: A new wellness community for persons 18 to 29 years old who are interested in making healthy connections meets every Monday at 7 p.m. at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold. For more information, call Russ Robinett at 713.526.1017 X211.

The PFLAG/HATCH Scholarship Foundation's dinner and celebration will be held on Friday, March 1 at the Warwick Hotel. The evening will include a social hour with a silent auction, followed by dinner and presentations by some of the scholarship recipients. The fund raising goal for the millennium year is \$100,000. For more information about the Foundation and the scholarship program see www.pflaghouston.org/scholarship.htm.

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INTERNATIONALLY

Family to Family Adoption Services is a social service agency in partnership with non-profit international agencies. We offer free workshops each month on how to adopt from China, India, Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Honduras, Columbia, Vietnam, Korea, and Guatemala. Single men, women, and couples from ages 25 to 57 are eligible to adopt. Call 713-219-1472 or email Fam2fam@aol.com for information on our next workshop.

PWA COALITION

The PWA Coalition needs the following items: dishes • silverware • pot • pans • sheets • towels • furniture • small appliances • We are available for pick up. Call Wilson or Terry at 713.522.5428.

Employment

EXEC. DIRECTOR NGLTF

National Gay & Lesbian Task Force • America's oldest progressive organization advocating on behalf for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people • Executive Director will manage a growing organization with a budget in excess of \$4 million and 36 employees • Candidates should have commitment to working with state and local organizations, share NGLTF view of its role in the broader social justice movement • They should have experience in leadership role in a not-for-profit organization, successful experience raising funds, political awareness, demonstrated ability to lead, superior representational skills and excellent strategic skills. Minority and female candidates are encouraged to apply. Resumes should be forward to • Tom Goodwin • Goodwin & Company • 1159 Connecticut Ave. • Suite 200 • Washington, D.C. • 20036.

HIV Intermediate care home seeks night staff • Resident interaction, housework, and clerical • Understanding/sensitivity of HIV/AIDS and experience a plus • EOE • Send resume to Executive Director • PO Box 131303 • Houston, Texas 77219-1303.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

to give four (4) hours per month for in-home care visits to people living with HIV/AIDS • For more information on Bering's Sentry Program call Craig Overstreet at 713.523.7110 EXT 119.

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Experienced person for production and manufacturing for leather goods. Apply in person at Black Hawk Leather • 3814 S. Shepherd • Mon-Sat • 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

HELP WANTED

Budget Signs (a woman-owned business) is currently hiring for 2 positions: Front Counter Sales & Sign Assembly. If interested, please stop by in person at 2509 Sul Ross (corner of Sul Ross & S. Shepherd) or fax a resume to 713.526.8327.

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Window Media, the publisher of Southern Voice (Atlanta), Houston Voice (Houston) Impact News (New Orleans) and eclipse magazine is experiencing unprecedented growth with ambitious plans for the future. Talented, hard-working, creative and dedicated individuals are constantly in demand as opportunities arise within our publication areas: Sales, Administration, Circulation/Distribution, Editorial, Design/Production. If you are interested in a career path with a growing organization, please submit your resume to: Window Media, Attn.: Human Resources Dept., 1095 Zonolite Road #100, Atlanta, Ga., 30306.

WAIT STAFF

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Nightingale Employment Services (Division of NADC) is a non-profit organization that provides job seeking skills training and placement assistance for persons with HIV. For more information call 713.981.1543.

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Looking for a home on the North side? Call Bernie Johnson, Agent Keller-Williams Realty your Real Estate specialist. 281.364.4862.

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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.

Web-sites

www.houstonvoice.com

www.sovo.com

www.impactnews.com

www.montrosesoftballleague.com

www.iblhouston.net

www.gayswitchboardhouston.org

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For fleet pricing, call Diana the Huntress, "Your Best Friend in the Car Business" at Sterling McCall Toyota, 713.270.3900 ext. 3833. Ask how to win a digital camera!

'98 Oldsmobile Silhouette GLS • Leather, 4 Captain's chairs, rear air, and much more! A must see! • \$18,888 • Call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'98 Chevrolet Tahoe LT • Leather, Low miles, warranty, great vehicle! • For more information and a test drive, contact Don Massey Pre-Owned, 713.524.3870.

Deal directly w/ a manager, Diana Huntress, "Your Best Friend in the Car Business" at Sterling McCall Toyota, 713.270.3900 x 3833. Ask how to win a digital camera!

'97 Honda Accord EX • Auto, 4-door, PW, PL, and much more, great vehicle! • \$13,588 • Contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'97 Nissan Sentra GXE • 21K low miles, 4-door, auto, PW, PL. A great vehicle, must drive! • Only \$8,888 • Contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

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'97 Honda CX EX • Auto, sunroof, excellent condition, lots of fun to drive, go anywhere! • Only \$11,900 • For your test drive, call Don Massey Pre-Owned at 713.524.3870.

'99 Nissan Altima GXE • Leather, low miles, ready to go with lots of equipment! • \$15,800 • For more info., see Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'97 Nissan Maxima GLE • Auto, leather, sunroof, and much, much more! Fantastic car! • \$14,888 • To test drive, call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'99, '98 '97 Cadillac DeVilles • Low miles, warranty, 30 to choose, drive today in luxury, Be the talk of the town! • To select yours, call Don Massey Pre-Owned at 713.524.3870.

'97 Chevrolet Blazer S-10 • PW, PL, tilt, cruise, and much more! • Only \$14,888 • For your test drive, contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'94 Jeep Grand Cherokee • PW, PL, tilt, cruise, nice SUV, Drive anywhere! • \$10,480 • For all the details, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

Don't wait for special sales! Call Diana Huntress at Sterling McCall Toyota, 713.270.3900 x3833 for fleet prices year round. Ask how to win a digital camera!

'99 Volkswagen Beetle G/S • 1 Owner, low miles, mint condition, let this beauty take you back! • \$15,900 • For all the details, call Don Massey Pre-Owned at 713.524.3870.

'98 Volkswagen Beetle • Only 17K miles, black, 5-speed, PW, PL, bring back the memories! • \$16,888 • To test drive, call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'98 Ford Escort • Auto, 4-door, great driving, economical vehicle! At this price, won't stay around long • Only \$7,888 • Call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

2000 Cadillac Escalade • Leather, GPS, 4X4, the true Cadillac of sport utilities, well-equipped, save thousands! • Only \$39,995 • Call Don Massey Pre-Owned at 713.524.3870.

'97 Nissan Pathfinder LE • Leather, CD, PW, PL, P-Seat, very nice sport utility vehicle! • Priced to sell at \$18,588 • Contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'97 Ford Mustang GT • Black, Very nice car with low miles, sporty! • \$15,870 • For information, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'98 Ford Expedition Eddie Bauer • Low miles with all the extras! *Step Up* • \$27,500 • For more info. and a test drive, call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'97 Ford Ranger Extended Cab Sport Side • Only 31K low miles, sleek black, the perfect truck! • \$10,888 • Call Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

If there is something special you are looking for, let us know! We'll do the homework & get it for you! • Call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'99 Oldsmobile Intrigue • 4-Door, auto, spoiler, PW, PL, very nice vehicle! • \$14,977 • Contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

'97 Ford F-150 Lariat Extended Cab • Really nice, great driving truck, many great features! • \$19,460 • Call Henry Craft at Archer Motor Sales, 281.445.6400.

'98 Ford Contour • 4-Door, auto, PW, PL, a must see nice car! • Only \$8,777 • For your test drive, contact Frank Love at Lonestar Nissan-Oldsmobile, 281.243.8600.

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Deadline for ad submission is: MONDAY at 12 NOON

1 PICK YOUR CATEGORY

FREE: Call for guidelines
 ___ HIV Services & Education
 ___ Volunteers
 ___ Non-Profit Organizations

INDIVIDUAL RATE \$7:
 ___ Announcements
 ___ Auditions
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 ___ Pets-Free or Lost & Found
 ___ Roommates
 ___ Personal Websites

BUSINESS RATE \$12:
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 ___ Business Opportunities
 ___ Entertainment
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 ___ Help Wanted-Seeking
 ___ Home Improvement
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 ___ Moving Services
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 ___ Real Estate For Sale

Call 713-529-8490 for other categories

2 WRITE YOUR AD
 Please print clearly

CATEGORY: _____ # OF ISSUES: _____

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

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TEXT: _____

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Giant headline: 5.00 (per week)

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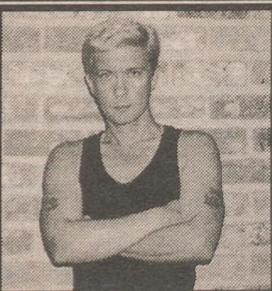
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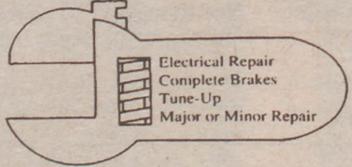
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My Stars!

YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

by JILL DEARMAN

Feb. 18 - 24

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

An old lover could try to come back into your life. You may be tempted, so tread carefully or risk looking like a sap. Listen to the subtle messages your unconscious is sending you: you can be flexible for once. A Taurus is enamored by your versatility.

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

You are about to experience a burst of good luck through your friends. You've taken care of so many people; now they are about to throw some fantastic opportunities your way. Take more chances and give less power to the know-it-alls. A Scorpio can boost your confidence—and your sex drive.

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

Jupiter is teaching you to be more psychic and less cerebral. Learn your lessons well. How many times can your intuition send you blinding flashes of insight? Spend less time surfing the Internet and more time promoting a clear, focused agenda. If anyone can whip you into shape, it's a Taurus. You need discipline.

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

Venus is moving through your marriage house, so I suggest you give some serious thought to saying, "I do"—or at least, "I'll think about it." A Capricorn can't wait forever and neither can you. Reconnect to your sense of adventure.

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

You are on the verge of a physical breakthrough that can lead to a spiritual one: your body is turning into a better receiver for your psyche. In business, find a partner you trust; this "me and me against the world" attitude has grown tired. A Gemini is there for you.

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

Love will come to you in many forms as February winds down. Accept them all. Healing begins when you admit how much you've lost, and what you really, really want. Of course, if you work on the friendship part of your relationship with a Pisces, love could develop all the sooner.

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

This is a great time for you to take yourself and your work seriously. Venus, your ruler, is transiting your house of creativity, so put some energy into an artistic baby of yours. Nurture it and love it, and it will grow up to love you. Be extra lovey-dovey with a Cancer who needs your cuddles.

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

Your pompousness brings out a love-hate reaction in most people, but luckily, lots of warm love will come your way in late February. But for God's sake, get out of the house. Clubs, parties and other attention-grabbing places are calling you. A Gemini wants to call you to bed.

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

It's a wonderful time to re-do your house, get back on friendly terms with a moody family member, and try to bring some peace back into your life. People are picking up on the gentle side of your personality. Who knew you had one? An Aries is beginning to trust you. Don't blow it.

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

Mars in your house of home and family suggests you may have to fight a few battles before you can get the peace you desire with relatives, roommates and lovers. Try to express all your brilliant ideas clearly: people do want to listen. An Aries is very attentive.

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

You are on the verge of a financial breakthrough; you just need to stay the course. Avoid making abrupt changes and last-minute turns just for the sake of shaking things up. In romance, it's time to get sexy and serious. A Cancer needs some real passion from you.

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

Now that the stars are lining up to serve you, focus your energy on the one lover, the one career project, and the one spiritual matter that mean the most to you. Don't let the tedious details of everyday life distract you. Share your life force. And share your shower with a Cancer.

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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Ordinary people, not athletes, doing the AIDS Ride? Impossible.

In fact, most have never done anything like this in their lives. Many don't even own bikes when they register. It's not a race. It's not competitive. It's cooperative.

Raising millions of dollars to fund AIDS programs from a bike ride? Impossible.

Since 1994, Tanqueray's AIDS Rides USA have sent over \$62 million directly back to AIDS charities. The money you raise in 2000 will benefit AIDS service organizations throughout the Lone Star State. You will be funding hotlines, outreach, caring counselors, educational programs, and life-sustaining HIV medications. You will be making life possible again for so many people.

Me, living in a tent, roughing it, in the great outdoors? Impossible.

Wait'll you see our spectacular Mobile CitySM, the place you call home. We haul your luggage, provide your tent, and supply everything from hot showers, volunteer massage and chiropractic services to delicious breakfasts and dinner. And we help you get through each day—with roving bike techs at pit stops, where water, snacks, and lunch also await. People have consistently said that the AIDS Ride is the best-organized event they've ever been part of.

I don't think I could even ride 25 miles. 325 miles? Impossible.

The Ride's not easy. You'll have to train. But we'll help you with that. And the fact that the Ride is tough and challenging is where most people find the meaning in it.

Sounds impossible. I'll have to think about it...

The decision will never get easier. Nothing's going to change three days from now. Come on, don't you want to be out there on a training ride? One phone call, one visit to our website, opens up a whole new chapter in your life. And the life of someone living with AIDS.

Tanqueray's Texas AIDS Ride

October 12-15, 2000

(888) 780-RIDE
www.aidsride.org

Also sponsored by:



Benefiting AIDS service organizations throughout the Lone Star State.

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