

Tens of thousands attended, but now up to \$1 million might be missing from the coffers of the Millennium Festival, held in conjunction with the massive march last month. The FBI has launched a probe. Page 5



There's Mo, Lois, Clarise and Sparrow—all creations of lesbian cartoonist Alison Bechdel, who's been penning her queer comic strip since 1983. For her, it's a vehicle to express her socially-conscious values. Page 19



## Addicted to sex

Experts say the secrecy and shame associated with sexual orientation may make gays more vulnerable to sexual addictions

by LAURA BROWN

Raised the son of a strict Southern Baptist minister, told being gay makes him an aberration condemned to hell, a young man turns 18 and flees to New York City. He steps off the subway, gets approached for sex in a men's bathroom, and becomes convinced that "this is what it means to be gay."

And so he continues, having sex in "tearooms" and clubs again and again, "unhappy the whole time."

Joe Amico, the openly gay president of the National Council on Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity, recounts the story as typical of the cases of gay sexual addiction he saw in 10 years of work with the Pride Institute, a treatment program dedicated to gay and lesbian addicts.

Researchers believe about 10 percent of the general population to be addicted to drugs or alcohol, but the number jumps as high as 33 percent among gays, Amico said.

And although little research or hard data exists on gay sexual addiction, at the Pride Institute, "about 40 percent of our clients with alcohol and drug addiction were also sexually compulsive," Amico said.

> Continued on Page 16

Are you a sex addict?  
Page 16



A new book by 'Dr. Laura' Schlessinger blasts gays and calls homosexuality 'deviant,' just days after the popular radio host denied in a CNN interview that she had used the term for gays.

Page 11



If you're inclined to select an evening's entertainment by title alone, you'd be in for quite a surprise with 'As Bees In Honey Drown.' Backed by the resources of the powerful Alley, our reviewer says it's a play produced with a high sheen.

On Stage, Page 20



Eve Beglarian doesn't mind trading summer in New York City for the heat and stifling humidity of Houston. The critically-acclaimed lesbian composer is coming to town for a unique opportunity to become a 'soulmate' with the Bayou City.

Page 19

## Lesbian-only conference draws big names

Hundreds of lesbians are expected in Houston May 19-21 for the annual Texas Lesbian Conference

by KAY DAYUS

A few hundred lesbians from around the region are expected in Houston next week for the annual Texas Lesbian Conference, and organizers promise something for everyone.

Everyone except for men, that is. The conference is for women only.

This year's event, "Power in Motion," promises to be exciting, informative and diverse in nature, said Christine Burchette, conference co-chairwoman.

"We are trying to do our best to reflect our community and have the whole community represented," Burchette said.

The three-day event has attracted a diverse mix of speakers and workshops, including Urvashi Vaid, activist, author and former executive director of the

A 'dyke to watch out for'  
Page 19

National Gay & Lesbian Task Force.; Latina comic Marga Gomez; cartoonist Alison Bechdel; and writer and performer Ntozake Shange.

*Time* recently named Vaid one of the nation's 50 most promising leaders under the age of 40. Although a respected leader in the fight for gay and lesbian civil rights, Vaid has moved beyond her childhood days as a self-described geek.

"I wore thick Coke bottle glasses," Vaid said in a recent telephone interview from New York. "I had straight, thick Indian hair down to my waist. I was chunky and completely non-athletic. I read books all

> Continued on Page 10



Diversity is the keyword for organizers behind the upcoming Texas Lesbian Conference in Houston, said co-chairwoman Christine Burchette.



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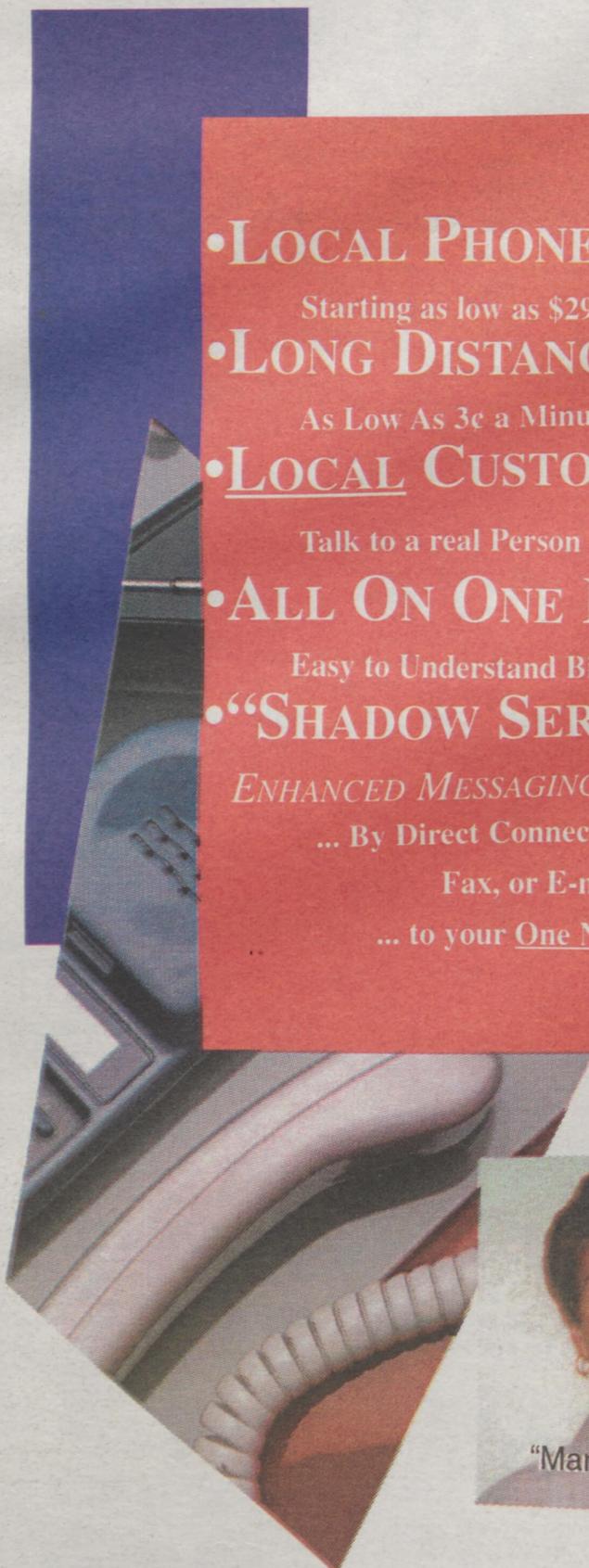
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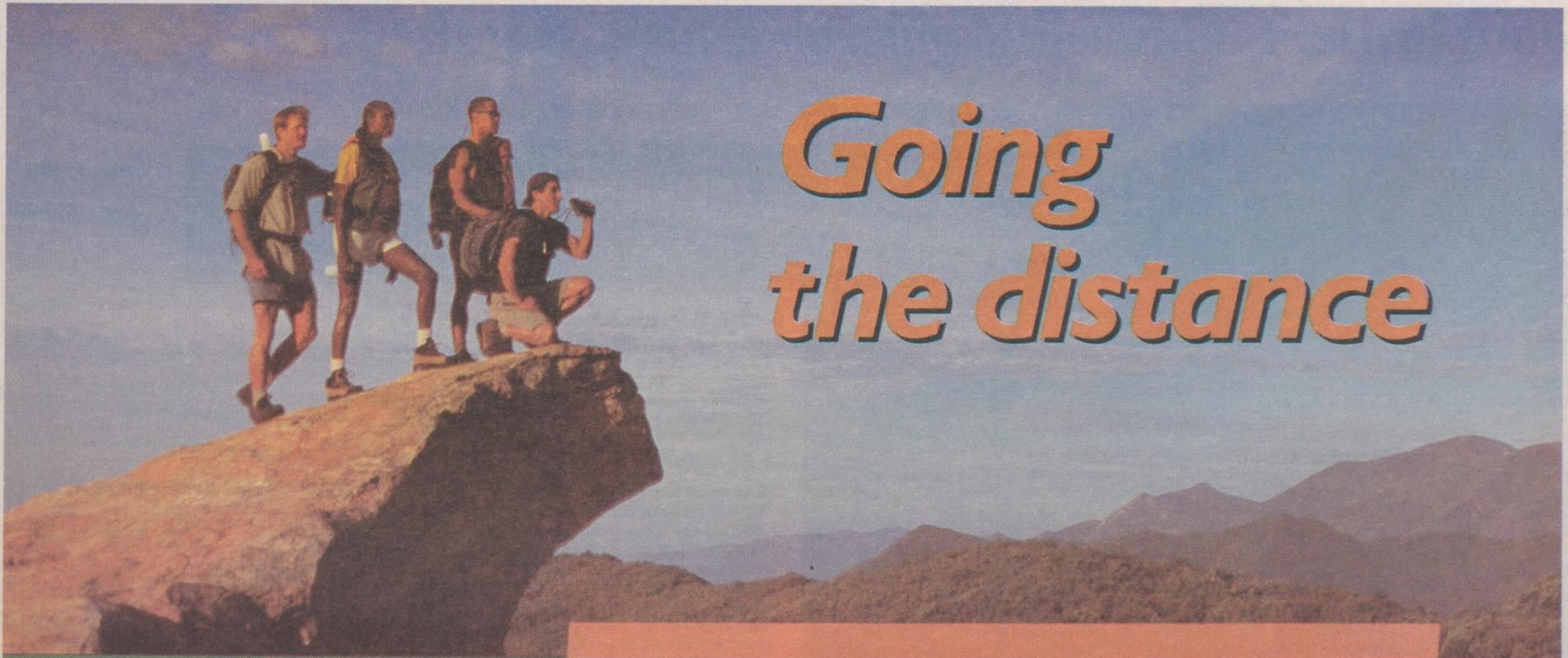
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#### ■ HIGHLY EFFECTIVE THERAPY

CRIXIVAN in combination with antiretroviral agents is a powerful protease inhibitor that fights HIV and is among the preferred treatments for HIV in federal healthcare guidelines.<sup>1</sup> CRIXIVAN can help reduce the chance of illnesses and death associated with HIV; CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 T-cell count, as shown in studies over a one-year period. Some patients may not experience these effects. CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.

#### ■ DURABLE RESULTS

In a landmark study, over 90% of 31 patients receiving a combination of CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC reduced their serum viral load below the limit of detection after 24 weeks. Importantly, the limited number of patients who chose to stay with the study for longer periods of time maintained these results through the one-year mark. In a separate study, 30% of 261 patients receiving dual therapy of CRIXIVAN and AZT had serum viral loads below the limit of detection at 48 weeks. In another landmark study, 43% of 40 patients receiving combination therapy with CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC had plasma viral loads below the limit of detection at 40 weeks. In this study of over 1,000 patients, the group of patients receiving CRIXIVAN along with 3TC and AZT achieved a reduction in deaths and AIDS-defining illnesses over those taking 3TC and AZT alone. Overall, the number of deaths was inadequate to assess the impact of CRIXIVAN on survival. Blood viral loads were measured by available tests and the virus may still be present in other organ systems.

#### ■ THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CRIXIVAN

CRIXIVAN can be taken with a light meal or on an empty stomach. Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN may develop kidney stones. For some, this can lead to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of water each day may help reduce the chance of forming a kidney stone. Other side effects reported include rapid breakdown of red blood cells and liver problems.

As with other protease inhibitors, changes in body fat, increased bleeding in some patients with hemophilia, and increased blood sugar levels or diabetes have been reported. Additionally, severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients also taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." There are some common medications and AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVAN. Discuss all medications you are taking or plan to take with your doctor.

For more detailed information about CRIXIVAN, please read the information immediately following this advertisement.

<sup>1</sup>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), May 5, 1999.

**Remember to ask your  
doctor about CRIXIVAN.**

**CRIXIVAN<sup>®</sup>**  
(indinavir sulfate)  
Capsules



## Patient Information about CRIXIVAN® (KRIK-sih-van)

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection  
Generic name: indinavir (in-DIH-nuh-veer) sulfate

9024510

Please read this information before you start taking CRIXIVAN. Also, read the leaflet 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 CRIXIVAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRIXIVAN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

### What is CRIXIVAN?

CRIXIVAN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). CRIXIVAN is a type of HIV drug called a protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor.

### How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

CRIXIVAN is usually prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also called AZT), 3TC, ddI, ddC, or d4T. CRIXIVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor about how you should take CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN has been studied in adults. The safety and effectiveness of CRIXIVAN in children and adolescents have not been established.

### How should I take CRIXIVAN?

There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

1. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every day as prescribed by your doctor.** Continue taking CRIXIVAN unless your doctor tells you to stop. Take the exact amount of CRIXIVAN that your doctor tells you to take, right from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRIXIVAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays". If you don't take CRIXIVAN as prescribed, the activity of CRIXIVAN may be reduced (due to resistance).
2. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, every day.** It may be easier to remember to take CRIXIVAN if you take it at the same time every day. If you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you.
3. **If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.** However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRIXIVAN at any one time.
4. **Take CRIXIVAN with water.** You can also take CRIXIVAN with other beverages such as skim or non-fat milk, juice, coffee, or tea.
5. **Ideally, take each dose of CRIXIVAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal.** Or you can take CRIXIVAN with a light meal. Examples of light meals include: dry toast with jelly, juice, and coffee (with skim or non-fat milk and sugar if you want) or corn flakes with skim or non-fat milk and sugar. Do not take CRIXIVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and protein (for example — a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRIXIVAN, these foods can interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect.
6. **It is critical that you drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquids (preferably water) throughout the day, every day. CRIXIVAN can cause kidney stones.** Having enough fluids in your body should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

### Does CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS?

CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. Although CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses, including death, associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

### Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

CRIXIVAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

### Who should not take CRIXIVAN?

Do not take CRIXIVAN if you have had a serious allergic reaction to CRIXIVAN or any of its components.

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

Talk to your doctor if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRIXIVAN. We do not yet know how CRIXIVAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
  - You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRIXIVAN.
- Also talk to your doctor if you have:
- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis.
  - Problems with your kidneys.
  - Diabetes
  - Hemophilia
  - High cholesterol and you are taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins".

Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

**This medication was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep CRIXIVAN and all medicines 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.**

This leaflet provides a summary of information about CRIXIVAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CRIXIVAN or HIV, talk to your doctor.

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### Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?\*\*\*

#### Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN:

SELDANE® (terfenadine)      HISMANAL® (astemizole)  
VERSED® (midazolam)      HALCION® (triazolam)  
PROPULSID® (cisapride)      Ergot medications (e.g., Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as irregular heartbeat or excessive sleepiness).

In addition, you should not take CRIXIVAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN®, RIFAMATE®, RIFATER®, or RIMACTANE®.

#### Drugs you can take with CRIXIVAN include:

RETROVIR® (zidovudine, ZDV also called AZT)      EPIVIR™ (lamivudine, 3TC)  
ZERIT® (stavudine, d4T)      isoniazid (INH)  
BACTRIM®/SEPTA® (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole)      DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole)  
BIAXIN® (clarithromycin)      ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35® (oral contraceptive)  
TAGAMET® (cimetidine)      Methadone

VIDEX® (didanosine, ddI) — If you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEX®, take them at least one hour apart.

MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin) — If you take CRIXIVAN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust both the dose of MYCOBUTIN and the dose of CRIXIVAN.

NIZORAL® (ketoconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with NIZORAL®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

RESCRIPTOR® (delavirdine) — If you take CRIXIVAN with RESCRIPTOR®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SPORANOX® (itraconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SPORANOX®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SUSTIVA™ (efavirenz) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SUSTIVA™, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

**Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.**

### What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs, CRIXIVAN can cause side effects. The following is **not** a complete list of side effects reported with CRIXIVAN when taken either alone or with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN developed kidney stones. In some of these patients this led to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure or inflammation of the kidneys. Drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) each day should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had rapid breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) which in some cases was severe or resulted in death.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had liver problems including liver failure and death. Some patients had other illnesses or were taking other drugs. It is uncertain if CRIXIVAN caused these liver problems.

Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors. In some of these patients, this led to ketoacidosis, a serious condition caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients required adjustments to their diabetes medication. Others needed new diabetes medication.

In some patients with hemophilia, increased bleeding has been reported.

Severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors, including CRIXIVAN, together with some of the cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." Call your doctor if you develop severe muscle pain or weakness.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking protease inhibitors. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs and arms may also happen. The cause and long term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

#### Clinical Studies

Increases in bilirubin (one laboratory test of liver function) have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a person may develop yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

Side effects occurring in 2% or more of patients included: abdominal pain, fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid regurgitation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, dizziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow occurred rarely.

#### Marketing Experience

Other side effects reported since CRIXIVAN has been marketed include: allergic reactions; severe skin reactions; yellowing of the skin and/or eyes; heart problems including heart attack; abdominal swelling; indigestion; inflammation of the kidneys; inflammation of the pancreas; joint pain; depression; itching; hives; change in skin color; hair loss; ingrown toenails with or without infection; crystals in the urine; painful urination; and numbness of the mouth.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical attention.

### How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°-86°F).
- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules dry by leaving the small desiccant "pillow" in the bottle. Keep the bottle closed.



**CRIXIVAN®**  
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Capsules

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## CLASSIFIEDS .....

# FBI investigates missing Millennium Festival funds

## MMOW organizers stay mum on financial standing

by GIP PLASTER

Law enforcement officials have launched a criminal investigation into missing proceeds from the Millennium Festival, a two-day street festival that was scheduled to donate the bulk of its proceeds to the Millennium March on Washington, festival organizers said Tuesday.

The festival "has been victimized by theft" amounting to a "substantial six-figure loss," and organizers are "providing documentation and information to applicable authorities," according to a press release from Millennium Productions LLC, the festival's producer.

"We feel terrible that we are unable to meet all the financial responsibilities associated with the festival," said Jose Ucles, Millennium Productions executive director.

The press release said the group would not release "more detailed information" about the alleged criminal activity because it "would impede the investigation."

On Monday, Michelangelo Signorile, an editor-at-large for Gay.com, reported that Millennium March organizers had asked the FBI to investigate as much as \$1 million missing from the Millennium Festival.

Michael Boucher, general counsel for the MMOW, and march board members Michael Armentrout and Margaret Conway met with special agents from the FBI's white collar crime unit to discuss the missing funds, according to the report.

Signorile quoted an FBI spokesperson confirming the beginning of the investigation. Boucher said three people related to the Millennium March are suspects.

Those attending the enclosed street fair received wrist bands to enter after paying a mandatory \$5 "donation."

"There are wristbands that are unaccounted for, and there is money that is missing," Boucher reportedly told Signorile, claiming the amount could range from \$250,000 to \$1 million.

### MMOW clouded by \$ problems?

Even before Signorile broke the news of the reported FBI investigation, many official MMOW organizers were unwilling to address lingering questions about the financial health of the event.

Millennium March and Millennium Festival organizers were tight-lipped about last-minute financial bailouts—possibly totaling \$800,000—that kept the events afloat when asked by a reporter this week.

But one event seems to have done well. The Human Rights Campaign's Equality Rocks concert will likely net more than \$750,000 to share with march organizers and other organizations, according to HRC's spokesman.

More rumors than facts are circulating about march and festival shortfalls and bailouts as well as possible soft drink vendor pullouts that left festival-goers thirsty, but the confirmed facts seem to support rumors that the march and festival organizers went into the weekend's activities on shaky financial ground.



The crowds turned out for the Millennium March on Washington, as well as its accompanying festival and the Equality Rocks concert. But organizers still needed last-minute loans to pull off the event.

The G&L Internet Bank, a gay-run bank that aims for the gay and lesbian market, confirmed that it provided a bridge loan to the march, but Don Kuehn, the bank's senior lending officer, declined to provide the amount of the loan or its terms.

"I would say a bridge loan is right," he said. "It was a short-term loan that we expect to be repaid in 30 to 45 days."

Dianne Hardy-Garcia, the Millennium March executive director, declined to confirm the loan from G&L, but said that MMOW board members were asked to make last-minute donations—not loans—to the event to help cover expenses.

"Every board member was asked to donate," said Hardy-Garcia, who is on leave from her permanent position as executive director of the Texas Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby. "That's fair. Everyone in the community was asked to donate."

Board members, including co-chairs Ann DeGroot and Duane Cramer, that were contacted did not return calls.

"We're not going to know all of our financial outcomes for the next two or three weeks," said Hardy-Garcia, adding that the accounting could take even longer.

She said she hopes to shut down the MMOW office in Washington, D.C., by the end of May and close out the event's books by June 30.

Malcolm Lazin, a former co-executive director of the march who left earlier this year after a dispute with its board, said the march itself—excluding the festival, which was run by a separate organization—required last-minute loans totaling \$400,000.

Lazin said that, in addition to the G&L loan, other organizations and at least two individuals made substantial loans to the march.

Lazin himself made an unrelated loan of \$400,000 to the Millennium Festival, an enclosed area featuring booths from vendors and organizations.

"Certainly I made a loan to the festival at a critical time, and without that loan there

would not have been a Millennium Festival," Lazin said.

Festival organizers did not return repeated requests for interviews, but the Washington Blade has reported that an April 19 statement from Millennium Productions confirmed that Lazin advanced the funds to "help cover expenses associated with a festival of this magnitude."

Millennium Productions had anticipated that it would be able to cover the initial costs for putting on the festival.

In an agreement with MMOW organizers, the firm had agreed to donate 70 percent of the festival's proceeds to the march, according to the Blade.

Ucles, the festival's executive director, said the march was expected to cost \$1.8 million, and the festival was expected to generate more than \$1 million in revenue.

The remaining 30 percent of the festival revenues was expected to go to Ucles and his company.

### Equality pays off

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation was more forthcoming with information about its Equality Rocks concert on April 29 at RFK Stadium.

The event, which featured performances by singers Melissa Etheridge, George Michael and Garth Brooks, among others, played to a crowd of 45,000. The event was almost sold out, according to HRC communication's director David Smith.

The concert grossed \$2.75 million and is expected to bring in \$750,000 over expenses. Smith said the financial information is still preliminary.

Proceeds benefit the Human Rights Campaign Foundation and will also be shared by the Millennium March and other organizations.

"Some of that will go to the march and some of it will go to other organizations, like the Matthew Shepard Foundation, but all of those details haven't been worked out yet," he said.

## Issue 1020

**houston  
voice**

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**NGLTF**  
POLICY INSTITUTE



## WELCOMES URVASHI VAID • SATURDAY, MAY 20

### COMMUNITY CENTER 'WELCOME TO HOUSTON' RECEPTION

**What:** Community reception honoring Urvashi Vaid - Director of The Policy Institute of the NGLTF, one of the nation's premier think tanks.

Urvashi will be signing copies of her book "Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay & Lesbian America"

**Who:** Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, in conjunction with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute.

**When:** Saturday, May 20, 2000; 2 - 4pm

**Info:** Call 713-524-3818

### HOUSTON COCKTAIL RECEPTION FOR NGLTF'S URVASHI VAID

**What:** Cocktail Reception Fundraiser honoring Urvashi Vaid - Director of The Policy Institute of the NGLTF, one of the nation's premier think tanks.

Urvashi will be signing copies of her book "Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay & Lesbian America"

**Who:** Honorary Chair: Council Member Annise D. Parker, and The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute.

**When:** Saturday, May 20, 2000; 5 - 7pm

**Info:** Tickets \$50; Call 713-861-8238

## RESURRECTION MCC

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# Around the South

For more news coverage: [www.houstonvoice.com](http://www.houstonvoice.com)

## Bush refuses to call gays 'sinners' in Barbara Walters interview

WASHINGTON (AP)—Republican presidential hopeful George W. Bush told Barbara Walters May 5 that he considered himself "a sinner" but would not label gays as sinners. "As I say, we're all sinners. Far be it from me to try to differentiate between my sins and others," he said. Bush's comments were the latest in a series of efforts on the part of his campaign to move him toward the political center after a primary campaign for the Republican presidential nomination where he refused to meet with the Log Cabin Republicans. Since the campaign, Bush has also met with a group of gay Republican supporters. Elsewhere in the interview, Bush said he would consider women and pro-choice Republicans, specifically Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge, for his running mate.

## Gay couple adoption ban signed into law by Mississippi governor

JACKSON, Miss. (AP)—Gov. Ronnie Musgrove made Mississippi the third U.S. state with a law banning gay couples from adopting, signing a plan May 3 that is expected to be challenged in court. Florida and Utah already have laws forbidding gay couples from adopting. The ACLU vowed to file suit on behalf of an unidentified Mississippi gay couple planning an adoption. Supporters said the bill was spurred in part by Vermont's recognition of gay unions. "We need to put up a firewall and say, 'This is not going to happen here,'" said Mike Crook, state director for the Tupelo-based American Family Association. Legislative opponents said there was no reason for the state to get involved in the issue. "It's a part of the get 'em mentality. They have to be getting somebody," said Democratic Rep. Jim Evans. The law, which takes effect July 1, says "adoption by couples of the same gender is prohibited." The ban had divided religious groups. The state's top Episcopal leader urged the defeat of the ban. Baptists and Methodists lobbied for it.

## A California full moon shines for Braves' Rocker on road trip



An unidentified fan is carried off the field by security personnel after mooning Braves pitcher John Rocker May 1 at Dodger Stadium.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Atlanta Braves relief pitcher John Rocker was "moonied" by a fan who ran onto the field in the ninth inning of the Braves' May 1 game against the Los Angeles Dodgers. Rocker was one out from a save that would give his team a franchise-record 14th straight victory when a fan ran on the field. With the crowd of 28,790 roaring, the man faced Rocker, turned around and dropped his shorts. "He got moonied, let's hope that's as bad as it gets," Braves manager Bobby Cox said, shaking his head in disbelief. Rocker was smiling as he rushed into the trainer's room after the game. "Sorry, no," he said when asked for comment. "I thought it was one of the funniest

things I've seen in my life, I was laughing my butt off," third baseman Chipper Jones said. Rocker was booed loudly when he entered the game at the start of the ninth with the Braves leading 2-0. Several objects were thrown on the field, prompting a warning from the stadium announcer. Rocker's woes continued Monday night, when he became the first National League pitcher since 1993 to balk home the winning run in the ninth inning.

## Ark. children's doctor with AIDS virus settles lawsuit with clinic

LITTLE ROCK (AP)—A settlement has been reached in a lawsuit challenging the 1998 firing of a children's doctor infected with HIV. Terms of the agreement reached May 3 are to remain under seal. Dr. Terry Jefferson alleged he was fired from the Little Rock Children's Clinic because he had contracted HIV, and that the clinic intentionally allowed his health insurance to lapse. The lawsuit claimed Jefferson's firing violated the American with Disabilities Act and was a breach of contract. The clinic denied the allegations.

## Tires slashed, slurs painted on Kentucky gay couple's cars

FRANKFORT—The slashing of tires and painting of anti-gay slurs on the cars of two Kentucky gay men is being investigated as a hate crime, the *Lexington Herald-Leader* reported May 3. Jeff Edwards and Dan Whitcomb awoke May 2 to find the words "fag," "queer" and other slurs painted in white on the couple's cars parked outside their home. Also, seven of the tires had been slashed. Frankfort police Maj. Mark Wilhoite said that the case will be reported to Kentucky State Police as a hate crime. "This is no different than burning a cross on someone's lawn or shouting out anti-Semitic remarks," said Edwards. Whitcomb wondered if the Millennium March on Washington may have been the trigger for the incident. "After the big march this weekend, I wonder if someone saw that and ran with it," Whitcomb said.

—From staff and wire reports

# Around the Nation

For more news coverage: [www.houstonvoice.com](http://www.houstonvoice.com)

## Judge says state must pay for Mass. transsexual's breast surgery

BOSTON (AP)—A Boston judge ordered the state of Massachusetts to pay for a transsexual's breast reconstruction surgery after defective breast implants had to be removed. The ruling reversed a decision by the state's Division of Medical Assistance to deny Bernaine Beger's request for the operation in August. "Ms. Beger was denied basic medical care simply because she is transsexual, despite the fact that she is medically and legally a woman," said Jennifer Levi, Beger's attorney. Beger, 50, had undergone sex-reassignment surgery in 1975. After treatment last year for a possible cyst in her breast, doctors said the implants had to be removed because of calcification and leakage. Because she is part of the state-administered Medicaid program, the state paid to remove the implants, but balked at paying for breast reconstruction, citing a rule barring Medicaid payments for sex-reassignment surgery. Superior Court Judge Maria I. Lopez ruled that the Medicaid rule applies "only to those surgeries and treatments that accomplish sex-reassignment." Lawyers with the Division of Medical Assistance have not yet decided if they will appeal.

## San Franciscans argue about how many colors are in gay rainbow

SAN FRANCISCO—A dispute has broken out over an effort by the designer of the rainbow gay pride flag to add back in the colors he was forced to omit from the flag in 1978, *SF Weekly* reported May 3. When Gilbert Baker created the first gay pride flag, he originally had eight stripes instead of six—in addition to red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple (but not indigo), Baker's flag had fuchsia and turquoise stripes. But when Baker took his prototype to a factory, he found out that it cost too much to use all eight colors, and the right shade of fuchsia was not available. Now, Baker wants to add the colors back in. Using \$3,000 in donations from last year's Castro Street Fair, Baker bought enough material to make a new flag to replace the giant six-color version that flies in Harvey Milk Plaza. "I love the eight-color flag; the fuchsia is lovely and very gay, and I find the turquoise quite magical," Baker says. "They don't call me the gay Betsy Ross for nothing." But the new-old flag, which was unfurled with no fanfare or explanation on Valentine's Day, has left many Castro residents and tourists puzzled.

## Buchanan slams gays; McCain to speak at Log Cabin GOP meeting

WASHINGTON—After calling homosexuality a "disorder" and insisting gays wouldn't serve in his cabinet if elected president, Reform Party presidential hopeful Pat Buchanan has back-pedaled from his stance, the *San Francisco Examiner* reported May 5. Now Buchanan says he would welcome openly gay individuals in his administration below the cabinet level so long as they lived an "honorable" life. Without defining what honorable means, Buchanan said May 4 that gays in his administration would need to keep their sexuality private and not advocate gay rights. "I won't go and look into people's personal backgrounds," he said. "If they pass the FBI background clearance, then that's all I need." Buchanan called homosexuality a disorder that can be handled with therapy. "I know that people have used religious groups to successfully help treat the problem," he said.

Meanwhile, Republican Sen. John McCain will address leaders and top donors of the Log Cabin Republicans, the GOP's leading gay organization, later this month at the group's annual Washington meeting. The Log Cabin Republicans endorsed McCain when Bush refused to meet with them during the Republican primary campaign.



Reform Party presidential candidate Pat Buchanan is back-pedaling from his vow never to hire openly gay people in his administration.

## California Assembly backs protection for gays serving as jurors

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—The California state Assembly voted May 4 to protect the right of gay men and lesbians to serve as jurors, affirming a precedent-setting court decision granting gays a new shield against discrimination, Reuters news service reported. The Assembly voted 41-13 to support a bill by openly lesbian state Representative Carole Migden that would ensure people are not excluded from jury service based on sexual orientation. Migden's bill, which now goes to the state Senate, seeks to codify as law a state appeals court decision in January that found that gays had the same rights as women and members of racial minorities to serve on juries. The decision by the state Court of Appeal in Santa Ana was the first in the nation to prohibit discrimination against gays from jury service.

## Christian workers allege discrimination at N.M. government lab

ALBUQUERQUE (AP)—Sandia National Laboratories has been sued by a Christian group that alleges it has been denied rights and privileges given to gay workers. The lab in 1995 granted official recognition to an employee group called the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Networking Group, according to the lawsuit filed May 1 in federal court. But when Christians asked for similar recognition, Sandia refused, saying that the Christian workers had "not established the existence of workplace barriers based on religion."

—From staff and wire reports

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## STAFF

**Associate Publisher**  
Mike Fleming  
mike@houstonvoice.com

**Editor**  
Matthew A. Hennie  
editor@houstonvoice.com

**Production**  
Bethany Bartran - Senior Graphic Designer

**Contributors**  
Rich Arenschioldt, Kay Y. Dayus,  
Trayce Diskin, Earl Dittman,  
D.L. Groover, Robert B. Henderson,  
Kathreen Lee, Gip Plaster, Ella Tyler

**Photographers**  
Dalton DeHart, Kim Thompson,  
Terry Sullivan

**Advertising Sales**  
Ken Burd  
Tom Robbins

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Classifieds & Directory**  
Marshall Rainwater

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**National Advertising Representative**  
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## EDITORIAL

# March made history—and waves

by MELINDA  
SHELTON

"People ask, 'Why is the Byrd Family here? It's simple. We share one desire—to have the opportunity, the right, to live peacefully in a diverse society.'" —Darrel Byrd, nephew of James Byrd Jr., an African American man dragged to death by white racists in the summer of '98.

"Matthew spoke of the horror of the Byrd murder, little knowing that two months later he would be a victim." —Dennis Shepard, father of the Wyoming college student who in October '98 was pistol-whipped, tied to a fence and left to die by two men who claimed he made a pass at them.

"One minute I'm, like, euphoric because everywhere I look there are gays and lesbians and transgendered people and families and they are just like me! I want to shout to the world, 'Why won't you treat us equally? We pay taxes, we have families, we go to school, we go to church, we want the same things out of life you do! Why do you fear us?' Today is so important. We're daring to stand up, be out and be proud. It's the most important day in my life—so far." —Elizabeth Keithley, 23, Birmingham, Ala.

"God created AIDS to kill fags like you! You're going to burn in hell, every one of you abominations of nature! You should all die, just like that fag Matthew Shepard." —An anti-gay white male who refused to give his name, protesting on the National Mall.

Last weekend's Millennium March on Washington, D.C., was historic, to say the least. Anytime upwards of 300,000 members of the LGBT community and their supporters partake in a mass action, and untold hundreds of thousands of viewers tune in to C-SPAN to watch the event as it unfolds, history is made.



MELINDA SHELTON

Equality Rocks! rolled out big name stars like Ellen Degeneres

Even March naysayers were taken aback by the sheer numbers; their campaign of divisive politics failed in making the March a failure.

Face it, the March was the ultimate don't miss gay party, the perfect outlet for the politically astute, an invaluable training ground for up-and-coming activists who either were too young or too afraid to partake in the '93 gay rights march.

It also was the perfect PR venue for groups looking for members, money and visibility.

There were enough of the Human Rights Campaign's signature gold bars on blue to the point of overkill. Hats, posters, shirts, decals, khakis, books, key chains—you name it and HRC's logo was on it. It also sponsored, along with PlanetOut, the Equality Rocks concert that absolutely rocked with 45,000 fans who paid from \$35 to more than \$1,000 a seat.

Amazing for a group that vowed during the March wars that it was simply a supporter of the event.

PlanetOut became PlanetIn. Gay.com stock must have skyrocketed. The

Advocate's special MMOW issue, with hunks Melissa Etheridge and George Michael on the cover, was pure PR genius. Ditto the Washington Blade's press overrun of, oh, at least one hundred million copies.

And let's not leave out the March itself. Some planning fanatic put up blocks of chain link fencing, with only a couple of entrances, and charged \$5 admission. Oh, yes, the multitudes came—that's where the organizational tables (at \$3,000 a pop) were, along with the over-priced food and booze. Many of us felt like caged animals waiting for a zealot nutcase to open fire. Good for money, bad for safety.

There were March souvenirs to be had, on the Mall and at a store near DC's gay-friendly Dupont Circle, but HRC one-upped the March at both places with better locations and more goodies to sell.

The gay pundits will have a field day—months of field days—analyzing and re-analyzing the "marketing of the gay movement." Was it a sell-out or was it good business at a time when gays are regarded as an untapped niche market? Should there have been corporate March sponsors or should participating organizations—non-profits particularly—have helped pay the multi-million-dollar bill?

There also will be, must be, an examination of why the gay movement continues to be a predominantly white affair. People of color were conspicuously under-represented, which reflects the need to reach out to minorities, particularly in our own communities.

Criticisms aside, the Millennium March on Washington must be declared a success on many levels. It should galvanize the gay vote in this critical election year. There were new activists born, tired activists re-invigorated. Hate crimes took center stage. Gay rights became civil rights, equal rights.

Yes, there was fund-raising. But there also was immense consciousness raising—gay and straight alike.

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





VIEWPOINT

# Gay ghettos are quickly losing their allure

by JENNIFER VANASCO

In July, I hope to move into the ghetto.

The gay ghetto, that is—or rather, the lesbian ghetto, since the Chicago neighborhood where I'm looking for apartments, Andersonville, is where the girls are.

This is a city of many vibrant neighborhoods, but almost every lesbian I know lives in Andersonville or its environs, and so I wasn't considering any place else.

Until my girlfriend e-mailed me and asked why.

"You are sure you want to be in Andersonville," she wrote. "I wanted to be there, too, when I moved [to Chicago], even though I had never spent two days in a row in the neighborhood. I was just thinking about how lively [other neighborhoods] are, and whether we are doing ourselves a disservice by excluding non-gay areas in which to live."

She has a point. What is it about the "gay ghetto" that draws us? And does this exclusivity hurt us in some way? In my case, moving to Andersonville makes little logistical sense—prices are higher than where I live now, housing is farther away from the lovely Lake Michigan shoreline, and I don't have as many friends as in my own neighborhood. So why move?

The reason I'm considering Andersonville is the reason so many of us move into mostly gay areas: We know we'll find people like us. We know we'll feel comfortable walking the streets, that we'll find shops and bars catering to our needs, that we'll see fellow travelers window shopping. We know we'll be visible, counted, understood.

These are solid, valid concerns. They are the reasons why minorities of every stripe have founded their own pocket communities within cities. And yet, now



I told a straight friend about my discomfort over moving to a gay ghetto, but she unilaterally supported the idea. 'But wait,' I asked her. 'You're Jewish. Would you want to live in a mostly Jewish neighborhood?'

that I'm thinking about it, the thought of the gay ghetto makes me uneasy.

After all, most minority groups, though they start off huddled together, eventually spread out into society. Take Italians as an example. My Italian grandparents, when they immigrated to the U.S. in the 1920s, moved into an Italian neighborhood in Brooklyn.

But that neighborhood is long gone now, as the Italians who once lived there have moved into other areas of the city and the suburbs. Once Italians were considered undesirable neighbors; but now there are so many of us everywhere that no one notices the surname when an Italian moves next door.

The gay community has also blos-

somed into maturity. We're more accepted in society now than we've ever been. The movies, the news, local conversations all buzz with our issues.

And we know for a fact that straight people who know a gay man or lesbian are more likely to support our rights. So shouldn't we start looking for other kinds of commonalities with our neighbors besides sexual orientation?

I tried to explain my discomfort to a straight friend recently. She, however, unilaterally supported the idea of gay neighborhoods. "But wait," I asked her, "you're Jewish; you're a member of a minority. Would you want to live in a mostly Jewish neighborhood?"

I don't think of myself as a minority

either. The neighborhood I live in now is a liberal academic community; I hold my girlfriend's hand when we walk down the street and no one looks twice.

There are no rainbow flags, except on the churches, but we are welcome. Being a lesbian, in this neighborhood, is just part of a quilt of diversity.

There might seem to be strength in numbers, but the opposite might be true in the case of gay ghettos. A pair of social scientists writing in the *Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide* (formerly the *Harvard Gay & Lesbian Review*) noted that, "the gay population in large cities would be easy to access through random sampling, but then the results would tend to overestimate its size if generalized to the whole population."

I find this interesting—by staying together, we are making it impossible for social scientists, marketers, the government and others to accurately count us.

As we all know from the census push, counting is important because (in this case at least) large numbers mean more power. We'll get our rights faster if our legislators know that we are 10 percent of the population—or five percent of the population—instead of one percent.

So the short lesson is that, to show there are a lot of us, we need to stop living so close together.

And yet—as my straight friend said, "Hey, I would want to live in a gay neighborhood, too. They're just cooler."

So maybe that's the answer. Instead of striking out further into straight communities, we should just keep building trendy communities where straight people want to live. Then instead of going to them, they can come to us.

Jennifer Vanasco can be reached through this publication or send e-mail to [j-vanasco@uchicago.edu](mailto:j-vanasco@uchicago.edu).

## Dykes To Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel

This is an archive episode from February, 1998. The cartoonist is taking a brief rest stop.



## Veteran activist, author leads lesbian conference

> Continued from Page 1

the time and I had a thick Indian accent."

By her own admission, she lived a lot in her head, but she said, "I had an imaginative life around politics and social change. Stupid and adolescent, but meaningful to me at the time."

Nowadays, she says she's an extrovert.

Born in India, Vaid's parents moved to the U.S. when she was eight years old. She was politically active at an early age, taking part in an antiwar march at age 11. In 1972, she gave a speech praising Democratic presidential nominee George McGovern.

Educated at Vassar and Northeastern University's law school in Boston, Vaid joined the ACLU's national prisoners project in Washington, D.C. She became involved with the NGLTF in 1985 when she served on its board of directors.

"I was barely making \$22,000 a year and there I was serving on a national board," she said with a laugh. In 1986, she handled media relations for the task force and was named executive director three years later.

In 1992, she quit to move to Provincetown, Mass., with her partner, comedian Kate Clinton. While there she wrote "Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gays and Lesbians."

After the book was published in 1995, the couple moved to New York where Vaid returned to the task force to direct its think tank.

"As we say at the task force, it's not just a job, it's a life sentence," Vaid, 42, said with a laugh.

But her current stint with the policy institute—where issues rang from aging and racial justice or gay people of color—Vaid says she's returned to her geeky past.

"I'm a data queen. I think I've returned to my nerd Coke bottle thick glasses thing," she said.

And Vaid is quick to rattle off some of those numbers: Only 11 states have some sort of protection for gay men and lesbians; 19 still have sodomy laws; most school systems don't teach tolerance to students.

"Our relationships are still essentially illegal," she said. "We've achieved visibility, but we haven't achieved comprehension on the part of straight people. We have to tackle that cultural uneasiness; the cultural homophobia in our daily life."

During her visit to Houston, Vaid plans to tell attendees at the conference about additional problems lesbians face as they try to gain equality—and as women.

On Saturday, cartoonist and author Alison Bechdel, who pens the comic strip "Dykes to Watch Out For," will speak. On Sunday, gay Latina comic Marga Gomez joins the conference.

Gomez's humor quickly shines through. Making people laugh is one of the many things she likes, she said in an interview from her apartment in Brooklyn; another is pizza.

"I'd eat it every day if it didn't have so many calories," Gomez said. "So my second favorite food is sushi."

She likes her new apartment in Brooklyn, her Jack Russell Terrier, Tabasco, and her home entertainment center. She says she's "turning into an eccentric bachelor with all her things around her."

The Texas Lesbian Conference will mark Gomez's first trip to Houston, though she has made stops in San Antonio and El Paso.

But making an appearance to a roomful of lesbians is exciting, she said with a laugh.

"I'm always looking for someone to date. It definitely helps if there's a dating pool at the show," Gomez said. "I get as much fun out of getting a big white guy to laugh as much as a bunch of lesbians."

As well as doing her stand up routine across the country, Gomez has appeared on Rosie O'Donnell's "Stand Up Spotlight" and "Comic Relief" on HBO. She was a featured performer with Lily Tomlin, Harvey Feinstein and Robin Williams in a benefit to raise funds for the filming of "The Celluloid Closet."

The daughter of a Cuban comedian and a Puerto Rican showgirl, Gomez says her first gigs were in her parents' comedy sketches on the stages of Manhattan's legendary Latino theaters. She later studied acting and creative writing. She also said, tongue in cheek, "I considered becoming a ventriloquist, but I have this big gap between my front teeth."

For the future, Gomez plans to continue stand-up acts, which include "Memory Tricks," "Marga Gomez is Pretty, Witty and Gay," which played to great reviews from San Francisco to Key Wes, and "A Line Around the Block."

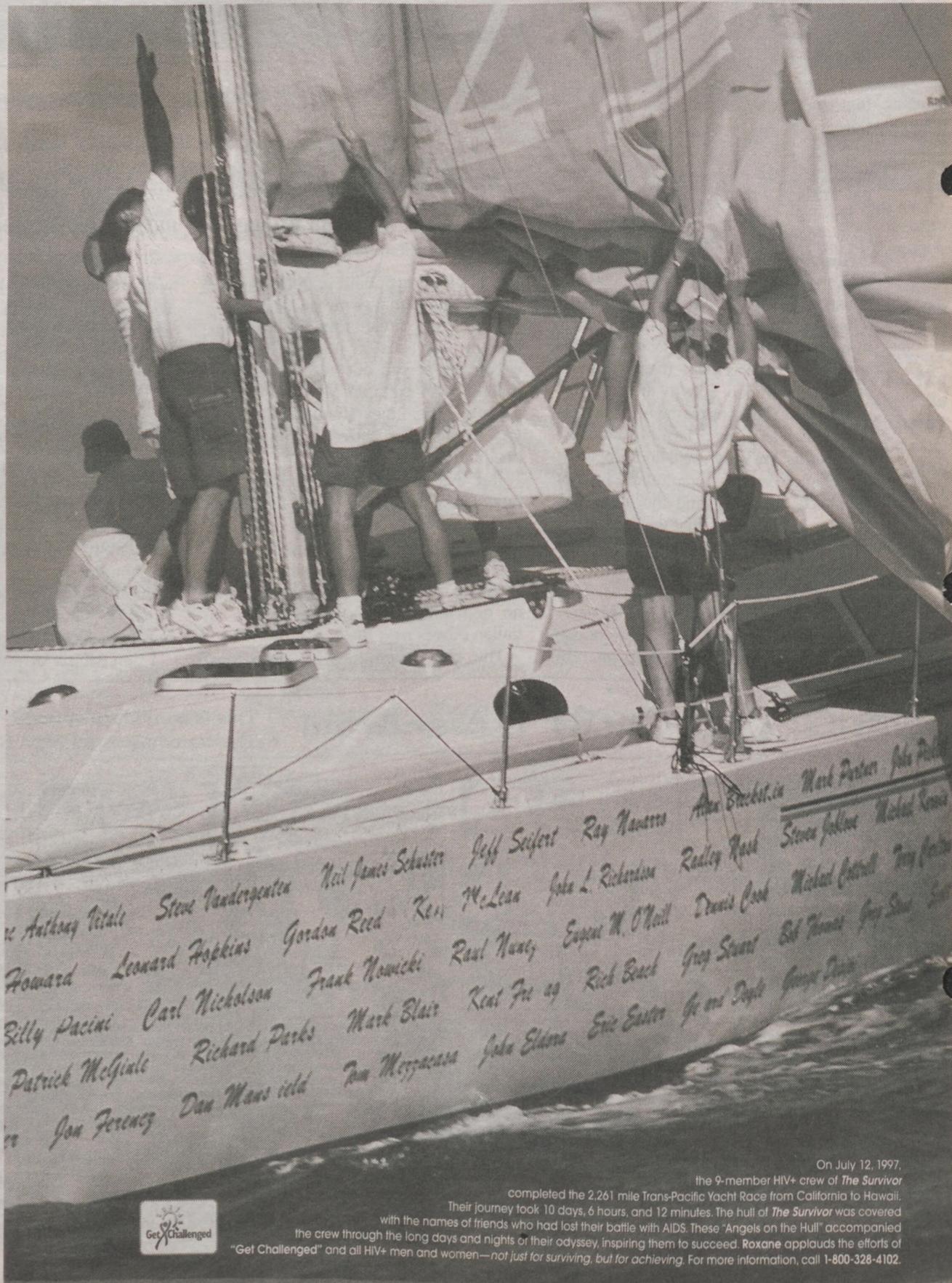
Workshops at the conference cover a variety of topics, including two by Joyce Gayle, author of the "Dating Dance"—"Flirting 101 for Lesbians" and "50 Ways to Have a Lover." Psychologist and Houston activist Maria Minicucci will lead "The Erotic Self: Discovering Our Power."

Other workshops include health care for lesbians, les-



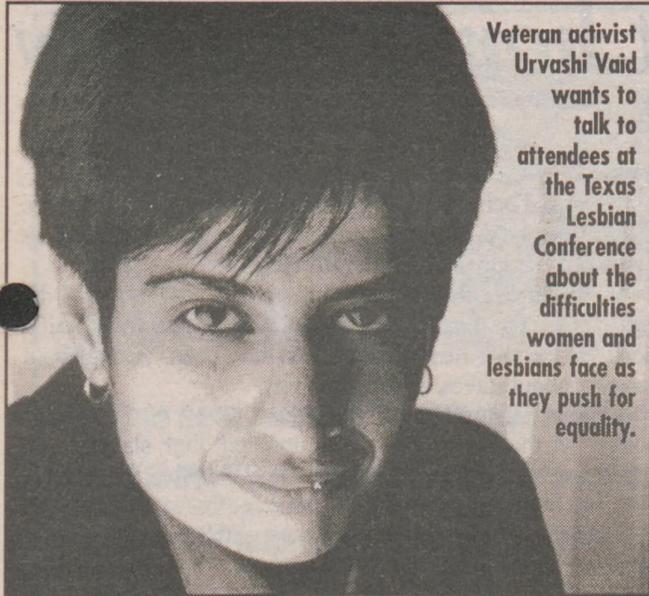
Latina comic Marga Gomez, always on the hunt for a date, said her appearance in Houston before a crowd of lesbians on May 21 could be romantically rewarding.

CLAY MCBRIDE



On July 12, 1997, the 9-member HIV+ crew of *The Survivor* completed the 2,261 mile Trans-Pacific Yacht Race from California to Hawaii. Their journey took 10 days, 6 hours, and 12 minutes. The hull of *The Survivor* was covered with the names of friends who had lost their battle with AIDS. These "Angels on the Hull" accompanied the crew through the long days and nights of their odyssey, inspiring them to succeed. Roxane applauds the efforts of "Get Challenged" and all HIV+ men and women—not just for surviving, but for achieving. For more information, call 1-800-328-4102.

Get Challenged



**Veteran activist Urvashi Vaid wants to talk to attendees at the Texas Lesbian Conference about the difficulties women and lesbians face as they push for equality.**

bian mothers, writing the lesbian novel and selling and buying a home. Also, Older Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC) will host a panel discussion on issues facing older lesbians.

Closing out the conference is African-American playwright and poet Ntozake Shange, a resident of Houston. Her critically-acclaimed play, "For Colored Girls, Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf," hit Broadway and was nominated for several awards. Shange's work portrays African-American life in today's America.

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## New 'Dr. Laura' book blasts gay parents

Schlessinger calls gays 'deviant,' just days after denying she's used the term

by PAIGE PARVIN

Gay activists are calling it the last straw.

As protests mount against her TV show in cities nationwide, "Dr. Laura" Schlessinger is planning a tour to tout her new book, "Parenthood by Proxy: Don't Have Them If You Can't Raise Them."

The book argues that the traditional family is the only healthy environment for children, and includes many of the anti-gay barbs that have energized protests of her planned show.

In the book's introduction, according to a report in USA Today, Schlessinger writes:

"The agenda of homosexual activists has moved past the demand for tolerance and respect to demanding acceptance of homosexuality as healthy, normal and equivalent in every way to heterosexuality.

"Necessary to advancing this agenda is undermining the significance of the traditional definition of family as husband, wife and children."

Later, Schlessinger repeats her opposition to gay marriage, repeating her characterization of homosexuality as "sexual deviancy."

"Political activists have successfully repositioned sexual deviancy as a constitutionally protected 'lifestyle' equivalent in every way to heterosexuality," she writes.

"This is not about discrimination against homosexuals. Same-sex marriage affects the child's right to have a parent of both sexes. These children are not tragically fatherless or motherless, but purposely fatherless or motherless. How dare a society condone or encourage such loss!"

This report comes after Schlessinger told CNN's Larry King on May 3 that she has never called gays "deviant."

"I have never called anyone a name," she told King. "People who have an emotionally-packed point of view and an agenda unfortunately often misrepresent, misconstrue and frankly downright fib about what somebody with a different position has to say, and I'm afraid I got caught in the crossfires of all that."

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# Methodists reaffirm stand against homosexuality

CLEVELAND—In a session disrupted by peaceful gay-rights protests, United Methodist Church leaders voted Thursday to reaffirm the church's stand against homosexuality, calling more attention to an issue that has proven to be the hottest topic at the conference.

Delegates to the church's General Conference, held every four years, began debating and voting today on a series of resolutions that are among the most contentious of the policy-making meeting, which is held every four years and ends Friday.

Representatives of the nation's third-largest denomination, with 8.4 million U.S. members and 1.2 million overseas, voted 628-337 to maintain its doctrine that homosexuality is "incompatible with Christian teaching."

As the meeting took up a measure on barring gay and lesbian clergy, protesters sang "We Shall Overcome" and other hymns. About 50 gay rights supporters then came into the

meeting hall, forcing an adjournment. Some left when asked, but others, joined by delegates, stood at the front of the hall with hands on each other's shoulders.

After some negotiations, the meeting resumed with a resolution on gay ordination still to be debated. Church law bars gays from the clergy and forbids ministers from performing same-sex marriages. The General Conference appeared unlikely to change the church's stance on those issues.

Nearly 200 protesters were arrested Wednesday for blocking a driveway to the convention center where the meeting was taking place.

The Souforce gay-straight alliance, which sponsored Wednesday's protest, said it would announce more plans to "show solidarity" with its allies in the church leadership. No details were provided.

Besides the gay clergy bill, the conference faced a decision

today on an even more controversial policy barring ceremonies for same-sex couples.

During deliberations, Rev. J. Philip Wogaman of Washington, D.C., presented an alternate proposal in which the denomination would simply admit it cannot agree on the issue.

Wogaman said that through "the continuing witness of the Holy Spirit, we must be willing to acknowledge our limitations." In the past, he said, Christians have been "wrong about women, about slaves, about monarchy."

But Rev. William Hinson of Houston, pastor of the nation's largest Methodist congregation, insisted that slavery and women's issues were different matters. "The Bible, the Word of God, has freed more people from bondage than anything else."

Hundreds of clergy members have publicly committed to defying the same-sex ceremony ban, and three church trials since 1998 for clergy who have flouted it have had mixed results.

A related ruling from the church's Judicial Council stated that local Methodist units may not "legally negate, ignore or violate" policy of the national denomination, even on grounds of conscience.

The impact of the ruling is unclear because Methodist rules still give local units full control of clergy discipline. Conservatives are furious that clergy in California were able to break the same-sex ban with impunity.

## Protests take center stage

Representatives from Souforce met with four UMC bishops on Monday, the same day delegates to the General Conference voted to reject a policy requiring all United Methodist pastors to sign a statement against homosexuality.

"I do not believe that homosexuality is God's perfect will for any person. I will not practice it. I will not promote it. I will not allow its promotion to be encouraged under my authority," read the statement rejected by a 705-210 vote, according to the United Methodist News Service.

Meeting with the bishops, Souforce leaders asked that every time a gay issue was raised at the conference, a gay person be allowed to address it, and they asked that Souforce supporters be allowed on the conference floor during debates to put a visible face on the gay issues being discussed.

The bishops, who released a statement calling the meeting "fruitful" and "constructive," offered to put the issue to a vote where it would have required a two-thirds margin to pass.

But Souforce leaders rejected the plan, opting to continue civil disobedience, including daily prayer vigils and a larger demonstration on Wednesday morning.

The General Conference had already been the target of a mass demonstration on May 6 organized by the Reconciling Congregations Program, a group that promotes welcoming church members of all sexual orientations.

The United Methodist denomination claims 8.4 million U.S. members in 36,170 congregations, as well as another 1.2 million members overseas. Less than 200 congregations have designated themselves as "Reconciling" congregations.

At the Saturday protest, more than 400 participants carried crosses and rainbow signs, then joined hands to create a "circle of love" around the Cleveland Convention Center, where the conference is being held, the Methodist news service reported.

Two days later, three "former homosexuals" held a press conference to urge the United Methodist Church to keep its policies against homosexuality, and budget money for ministries devoted to "relational brokenness."

## Will the church split?

With all the controversy over homosexuality, many observers feel the church is heading for a split over the issue.

American Christianity periodically chooses sides over major issues. Slavery, mission work, ecumenism and divorce have divided denominations during the last 200 years, Rev. Lyle Schaller, a consultant on church growth and a Methodist, told the *Dallas Morning News*.

"Now we're in the early stages of the churches rethinking what we traditionally call marriage," he said. "What do Christians like to do? Choose up sides and fight."

—From staff and wire reports

## VIRAMUNE® (nevirapine) Tablets VIRAMUNE® (nevirapine) Oral Suspension

### Brief Summary

**WARNING:**  
SEVERE AND LIFE-THREATENING SKIN REACTIONS (STEVENS-JOHNSON SYNDROME, TOXIC EPIDERMAL NECROLYSIS), INCLUDING FATAL CASES, HAVE OCCURRED IN PATIENTS TREATED WITH VIRAMUNE®. (See WARNINGS)  
SEVERE AND LIFE-THREATENING HEPATOTOXICITY, INCLUDING FATAL HEPATIC NECROSIS, HAS OCCURRED IN PATIENTS TREATED WITH VIRAMUNE®. (See WARNINGS)  
RESISTANT VIRUS EMERGES RAPIDLY AND UNIFORMLY WHEN VIRAMUNE® IS ADMINISTERED AS MONOTHERAPY. THEREFORE, VIRAMUNE® SHOULD ALWAYS BE ADMINISTERED IN COMBINATION WITH ANTIRETROVIRAL AGENTS.

**INDICATIONS AND USAGE:** VIRAMUNE® (nevirapine) is indicated for use in combination with other antiretroviral agents for the treatment of HIV-1 infection. This indication is based on analyses of changes in surrogate endpoints. At present, there are no results from controlled clinical trials evaluating the effect of VIRAMUNE® in combination with other antiretroviral agents on the clinical progression of HIV-1 infection, such as the incidence of opportunistic infections or survival.

Resistant virus emerges rapidly and uniformly when VIRAMUNE® is administered as monotherapy. Therefore, VIRAMUNE® should always be administered in combination with at least one additional antiretroviral agent.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS:** VIRAMUNE® is contraindicated in patients with clinically significant hypersensitivity to any of the components contained in the tablet or the oral suspension.

**WARNINGS:** Severe and life-threatening skin reactions have occurred in patients treated with VIRAMUNE®, including Stevens-Johnson syndrome and toxic epidermal necrolysis. Fatal cases of toxic epidermal necrolysis have been reported. VIRAMUNE® must be discontinued in patients developing a severe rash or a rash accompanied by constitutional symptoms such as fever, blistering, oral lesions, conjunctivitis, swelling, muscle or joint aches, or general malaise. (See PRECAUTIONS, Information for Patients; ADVERSE REACTIONS) VIRAMUNE® therapy must be initiated with a 14-day lead-in period of 200 mg/day (4 mg/kg/day in pediatric patients), which has been shown to reduce the frequency of rash. If rash is observed during this lead-in period, dose escalation should not occur until the rash has resolved. (See DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION)

Severe or life-threatening hepatotoxicity, including fatal fulminant hepatitis (transaminase elevations, with or without hyperbilirubinemia, prolonged partial thromboplastin time, or eosinophilia), has occurred in patients treated with VIRAMUNE®. Some of these cases began in the first few weeks of therapy and some were accompanied by rash. VIRAMUNE® administration should be interrupted in patients experiencing moderate or severe ALT or AST abnormalities until these return to baseline values. VIRAMUNE® should be permanently discontinued if liver function abnormalities recur upon readministration. Monitoring of ALT and AST is strongly recommended, especially during the first six months of VIRAMUNE® treatment. (See PRECAUTIONS, Information for Patients; ADVERSE REACTIONS; DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION)

**PRECAUTIONS:** General: Nevirapine is extensively metabolized by the liver and nevirapine metabolites are extensively eliminated by the kidney. However, the pharmacokinetics of nevirapine have not been evaluated in patients with hepatic or renal dysfunction. Therefore, VIRAMUNE® should be used with caution in these patient populations.

The duration of clinical benefit from antiretroviral therapy may be limited. Patients receiving VIRAMUNE® or any other antiretroviral therapy may continue to develop opportunistic infections and other complications of HIV infection, and therefore should remain under close clinical observation by physicians experienced in the treatment of patients with associated HIV diseases.

When administering VIRAMUNE® as part of an antiretroviral regimen, the complete product information for each therapeutic component should be consulted before initiation of treatment.

**Drug Interactions:** The induction of CYP3A by nevirapine may result in lower plasma concentrations of other concomitantly administered drugs that are extensively metabolized by CYP3A. (See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY) Thus, if a patient has been stabilized on a dosage regimen for a drug metabolized by CYP3A, and begins treatment with VIRAMUNE®, dose adjustments may be necessary.

**Rifampin/Rifabutin:** There are insufficient data to assess whether dose adjustments are necessary when nevirapine and rifampin or rifabutin are coadministered. Therefore, these drugs should only be used in combination if clearly indicated and with careful monitoring.

**Ketoconazole:** VIRAMUNE® and ketoconazole should not be administered concomitantly. Coadministration of nevirapine and ketoconazole resulted in a significant reduction in ketoconazole plasma concentrations. (See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY, Drug Interactions)

**Oral Contraceptives:** There are no clinical data on the effects of nevirapine on the pharmacokinetics of oral contraceptives. Nevirapine may decrease plasma concentrations of oral contraceptives (also other hormonal contraceptives); therefore, these drugs should not be administered concomitantly with VIRAMUNE®.

**Information for Patients:** Patients should be instructed that the major toxicity of VIRAMUNE® is rash and should be advised to promptly notify their physician of any rash. The majority of rashes associated with VIRAMUNE® occur within the first 5 weeks of initiation of therapy. Patients should be instructed that if any rash occurs during the two-week lead-in period, the VIRAMUNE® dose should not be escalated until the rash resolves. Any patient experiencing severe rash or a rash accompanied by constitutional symptoms such as fever, blistering, oral lesions, conjunctivitis, swelling, muscle or joint aches, or general malaise should immediately discontinue medication and consult a physician. Patients should be instructed that abnormal liver function tests and cases of clinical hepatitis, including fatal fulminant hepatitis, have been reported with VIRAMUNE®. Liver function tests should be monitored, especially during the first six months of therapy. VIRAMUNE® administration should be interrupted in patients experiencing moderate or severe liver function test abnormalities, until liver function tests return to baseline values; VIRAMUNE® should be permanently discontinued if liver function abnormalities recur upon readministration. Patients should be instructed to consult their physicians immediately should symptoms of hepatitis occur.

Oral contraceptives and other hormonal methods of birth control should not be used as a method of contraception in women taking VIRAMUNE®. (See PRECAUTIONS, Drug Interactions)

Patients should be informed that VIRAMUNE® therapy has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV-1 to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. The long term effects of VIRAMUNE® are unknown at this time. VIRAMUNE® is not a cure for HIV-1 infection; patients may continue to experience illnesses associated with advanced HIV-1 infection, including opportunistic infections. Treatment with VIRAMUNE® has not been shown to reduce the incidence or frequency of such illnesses; patients should be advised to remain under the care of a physician when using VIRAMUNE®. Patients should be informed to take VIRAMUNE® every day as prescribed. Patients should not alter the dose without consulting their doctor. If a dose is missed, patients should take the next dose as soon as possible. However, if a dose is skipped, the patient should not double the next dose. Patients should be advised to report to their doctor the use of any other medications.

**Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility:** Long-term carcinogenicity studies of nevirapine in animals are currently in progress. In genetic toxicology assays, nevirapine showed no evidence of mutagenic or clastogenic activity in a battery of *in vitro* and *in vivo* assays including microbial assays for gene mutation (Ames; Salmonella strains and *E. coli*), mammalian cell gene mutation assays (CHO/HGPRT), cytogenetic assays using a Chinese hamster ovary cell line and a mouse bone marrow micronucleus assay following oral administration. In reproductive toxicology studies, evidence of impaired fertility was seen in female rats at doses providing systemic exposure, based on AUC, approximately equivalent to that provided with the recommended clinical dose of VIRAMUNE®.

**Pregnancy:** Pregnancy Category C. No observable teratogenicity was detected in reproductive studies performed in pregnant rats and rabbits. In rats, a significant decrease in fetal body weight occurred at doses providing systemic exposure approximately 50% higher, based on AUC, than that seen at the recommended human clinical dose.

The maternal and developmental no-observable-effect level dosages in rats and rabbits produced systemic exposures approximately equivalent to or approximately 50% higher, respectively, than those seen at the recommended daily human dose, based on AUC. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. VIRAMUNE® should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

**Nursing Mothers:** Preliminary results from an ongoing pharmacokinetic study (ACTG 250) of 10 HIV-1-infected pregnant women who were administered a single oral dose of 100 or 200 mg VIRAMUNE® at a median of 5.8 hours before delivery, indicate that nevirapine readily crosses the placenta and is found in breast milk. Consistent with the recommendation by the U.S. Public Health Service Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that HIV-infected mothers not breast-feed their infants to avoid risking postnatal transmission of HIV, mothers should discontinue nursing if they are receiving VIRAMUNE®.

**Pediatric Use:** Safety was assessed in trial BI 882 in which patients were followed for a mean duration of 33.9 months (range: 6.3 months to 5.3 years, including long-term follow-up in 29 of these patients in trial BI 892). The most frequently reported adverse events related to VIRAMUNE® in pediatric patients were similar to those observed in adults, with the exception of granulocytopenia which was more commonly observed in children. Serious adverse events were assessed in ACTG 245, a double-blind, placebo controlled trial of VIRAMUNE® (n = 305) in which pediatric patients received combination treatment with VIRAMUNE®. In this trial two patients were reported to experience Stevens-Johnson syndrome or Stevens-Johnson/toxic epidermal necrolysis transition syndrome. Cases of allergic reaction, including one case of anaphylaxis, were also reported. The evaluation of the antiviral activity of VIRAMUNE® in pediatric patients is ongoing.

Table 1 summarizes the marked laboratory abnormalities occurring in pediatric patients in Trial BI 882 and in follow-up Trial BI 892.

Table 1: Number of Pediatric Patients (%) with Marked Laboratory Abnormalities in Trials BI 882 and BI 892 Combined.

	No. (%) of Patients n=37
<b>Hematology</b>	
Decreased Hg (<8.0 g/dL)	7 (19)
Decreased platelets (<50,000/mm <sup>3</sup> )	4 (11)
Decreased neutrophils (<750/mm <sup>3</sup> )	14 (38)
Increased MCV (>100 fL)	13 (35)
<b>Blood Chemistry</b>	
Increased ALT (>250 U/L)	4 (11)
Increased AST (>250 U/L)	5 (14)
Increased GGT (>450 U/L)	4 (11)
Increased total bilirubin (>2.5 mg/dL)	1 (3)
Increased alkaline phosphatase (>2x ULN)	19 (51)
Increased amylase (>2x ULN)	6 (16)

**ADVERSE REACTIONS:** Adults: The most frequently reported adverse events related to VIRAMUNE® therapy were rash, fever, nausea, headache, and abnormal liver function tests.

The major clinical toxicity of VIRAMUNE® is rash, with VIRAMUNE®-attributable rash occurring in 17% of patients in combination regimens in Phase II/III controlled studies. Thirty-seven percent of patients treated with VIRAMUNE® experienced rash compared with 20% of patients treated in control groups of either ZDV+ddi or ZDV alone (Table 2). Severe or life-threatening rash occurred in 7.6% of VIRAMUNE®-treated patients compared with 1.2% of patients treated in the control groups.

Rashes are usually mild to moderate, maculopapular erythematous cutaneous eruptions, with or without pruritus, located on the trunk, face and extremities. The majority of severe rashes occurred within the first 28 days of treatment; 25% of the patients with severe rashes required hospitalization; and one patient required surgical intervention. All patients recovered. Overall, 7% of patients discontinued VIRAMUNE® due to rash.

Table 2: Percentage of Patients with Rashes in Adult Controlled Trials<sup>a</sup>

	ACTG 241 <sup>b</sup>		BI 1037		BI 1011		COMBINED DATA	
	NVP+ZDV+ddi	ZDV+ddi	NVP+ZDV	ZDV	NVP+ZDV	ZDV	NVP	CONTROL
n	197	201	30	30	25	24	252	255
Rash events of all Grades and all causality	39.6%	23.9%	26.7%	6.7%	32.0%	4.2%	37.3%	20.0%
Grade 3 or 4 rash events, all causality	8.1%	1.5%	3.3%	0%	8.0%	0%	7.6%	1.2%

<sup>a</sup> At recommended dose of one 200 mg tablet daily for the first 14 days followed by one 200 mg tablet twice daily  
<sup>b</sup> Trial ACTG 241 was designed to report Grade 3/4 (severe or life-threatening) events, except for several pre-specified events including rash for which all grades are reported

Table 3 lists treatment-related clinical adverse events that occurred in patients receiving VIRAMUNE® in ACTG 241 and in Trials BI 1037 and BI 1011.

Table 3: Comparative Incidence of Selected Drug-Related Events in Adult Controlled Trials

	ACTG 241		Trial BI 1037 and BI 1011	
	Grade 3/4 events		All severities	
	NVP+ZDV+ddi	ZDV+ddi	NVP+ZDV	ZDV alone
Number of patients	197	201	55	30
Overall incidence of related adverse events	31%	23%	42%	33%
Rash	8	2	20	3
Fever	3	3	11	3
Nausea	5	4	9	3
Headache	3	3	11	0
Diarrhea	2	2	0	0
Abdominal pain	1	2	2	0
Ulcerative stomatitis	0	0	4	0
Peripheral neuropathy	0	2	0	0
Parosmia	1	0	2	0
Myalgia	1	0	2	7
Hepatitis	1	0	4	0

Laboratory Abnormalities: Table 4 summarizes marked laboratory abnormalities occurring in three controlled studies.

Table 4: Percentage of Adult Patients with Marked Laboratory Abnormalities

	Data combined for controlled trials ACTG 241, BI 1037 & BI 1011	
	VIRAMUNE® n=252	Control n=255
<b>Hematology</b>		
Decreased Hg (<8.0 g/dL)	1.2%	2.0%
Decreased platelets (<50,000/mm <sup>3</sup> )	0.8	0.8
Decreased neutrophils (<750/mm <sup>3</sup> )	11.1	10.2
<b>Blood chemistry</b>		
Increased ALT (>250 U/L)	3.4	3.5
Increased AST (>250 U/L)	2.0	2.4
Increased GGT (>450 U/L)	2.4	1.2
Increased total bilirubin (>2.5 mg/dL)	0.4	1.2

Asymptomatic elevations in GGT levels are more frequent in VIRAMUNE® recipients than in controls. Because clinical hepatitis has been reported in VIRAMUNE®-treated patients, monitoring of ALT (SGPT) and AST (SGOT) is strongly recommended, especially during the first six months of VIRAMUNE® treatment. (See WARNINGS)

**Pediatric Patients:** The most frequently reported adverse events related to VIRAMUNE® in pediatric patients were similar to those observed in adults, with the exception of granulocytopenia which was more commonly observed in children (See PRECAUTIONS, Pediatric Use). The safety profile of VIRAMUNE® in neonates has not been established.

**OVERDOSAGE:** There is no known antidote for VIRAMUNE® overdosage. Cases of VIRAMUNE® overdose at doses ranging from 800 to 1800 mg per day for up to 15 days have been reported. Patients have experienced events including edema, erythema nodosum, fatigue, fever, headache, insomnia, nausea, pulmonary infiltrates, rash, vertigo, vomiting and weight decrease. All events subsided following discontinuation of VIRAMUNE®.

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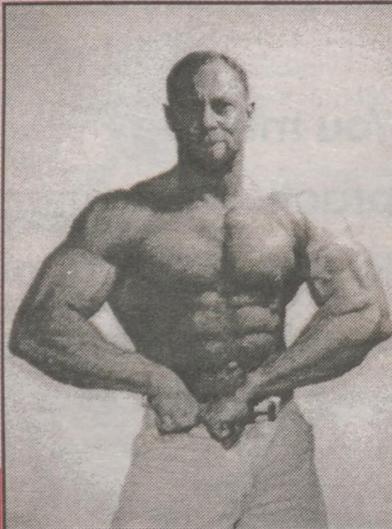


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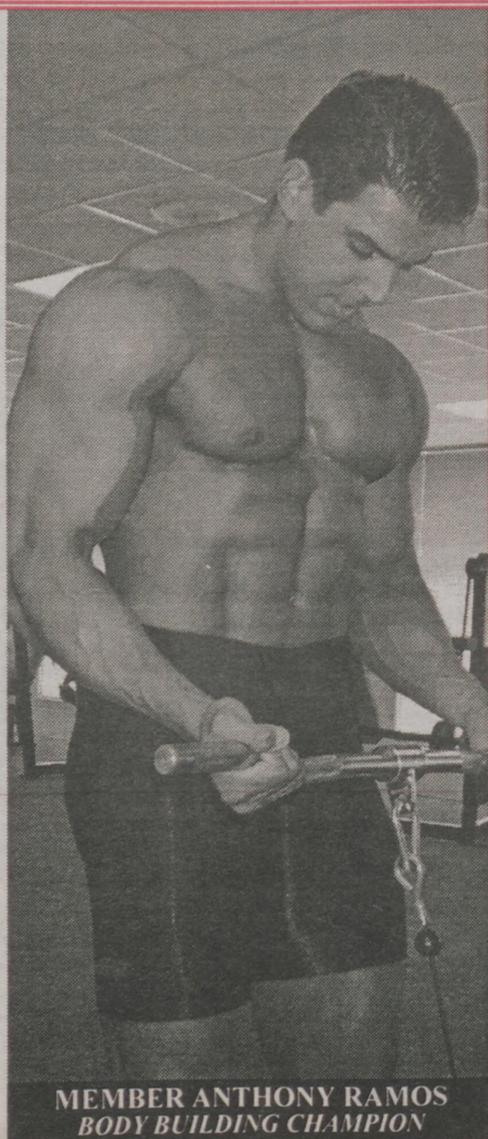
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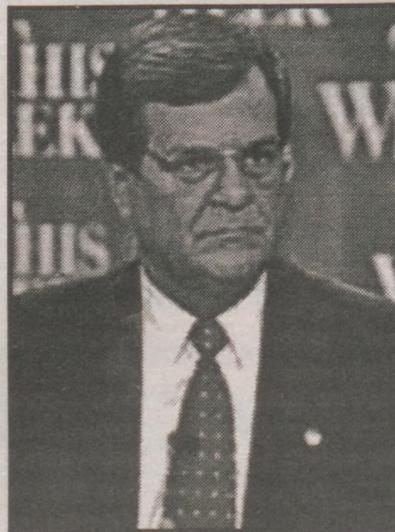


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# Health Briefs

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## Lott draws fire for criticism of naming AIDS a threat to security



**Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) said the White House declared AIDS a national security threat because 'the president is trying to make an appeal to, you know, certain groups.'**

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright suggested May 3 that Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott was "stuck in the past" in not recognizing AIDS as a threat to national security. Lott, a Mississippi Republican, said earlier the administration's declaration that the disease was a threat "is just the president trying to make an appeal to, you know, certain groups." Albright said that with millions of people around the world succumbing to the disease, "AIDS is a national security issue." She said the administration was asking for another \$100 million next year for prevention education programs, and "it is very important for all those in leadership positions to understand what the new threats to our societies are in the 21st century." U.S. Health Secretary Donna Shalala also defended the Clinton administration's decision, saying on a Sunday morning political show that Lott's reaction was "tragic and dangerous." She pointed out that "infectious diseases know no borders, that they can affect this country, and in this case it is both in our economic interest and in our national security interest to work on these infectious diseases abroad."

## Drinking, exercise and body type may play role in male impotence

ATLANTA—Drinking, exercise and body type are factors that can affect whether or not a man will become impotent, CNN reported May 3. Researchers found men that had any one of the following conditions increased the likelihood of impotence: a large waist, too little exercise, not drinking any alcohol, or drinking too much alcohol. Eric Rimm of the Harvard School of Public Health, one of the study's researchers, said high cholesterol, which restricts blood flow, may be the common condition. "Much like factors that lead to atherosclerosis, or factors that impede blood flow to the heart, we think that similar factors may impede blood flow to the genital area," Rimm said. Studies have shown that people who have one or two drinks a day have lower cholesterol, and therefore better blood flow, than those who don't drink at all, or those who drink to extreme. The results were reported at the American Urological Association's annual meeting in Atlanta.

## Senate aide to lead AIDS Action after November election is over

WASHINGTON (AP)—Jamie Fox, who has been running the Democratic campaign effort for the U.S. Senate as a top aide to New Jersey Sen. Robert Torricelli, will become executive director of a national network of AIDS services organizations later this year. Fox will remain executive director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee through the November elections. "I have long been haunted by the nation's forgotten populations affected by HIV and AIDS," Fox said in a statement released by AIDS Action, a network of 3,200 AIDS service organizations founded in 1984. The group advocates federal policies that address AIDS prevention and treatment. Fox will succeed Daniel Zingale, who left AIDS Action in January to direct California's new Department of Managed Care.

## New York to allow needle purchases without doctor's prescription

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—In a move aimed at inhibiting the spread of the AIDS virus, New Yorkers will soon be able to buy hypodermic needles without a prescription in a move aimed at inhibiting the spread of the AIDS virus. "This is going to save tens of thousands of lives by virtually eliminating needle sharing," said Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, a Manhattan Democrat. "It's a tragedy we weren't able to do this a decade ago." New York will become the 42nd state to allow the practice when the law takes effect Jan. 1. The law drew criticism from Assemblyman Robert Stranieri, a Republican from Staten Island, who referred to it as a "quantum leap forward for the legalization of drugs in New York." Marty Algaze, a spokesperson for the Gay Men's Health Crisis, said there have been 139,063 cases of AIDS reported in New York state, with 84,065 deaths. More than half of current cases were caused by the sharing of contaminated syringes or sexual contact with a person who was infected through sharing needles.

## New delivery system may increase effectiveness of HIV vaccine

LONDON—Biotech firm PowderJect Pharmaceuticals said May 3 that pre-clinical studies on its DNA vaccine against HIV showed it might protect against infection when delivered by PowderJect's needle-free system, Reuters news service reported. The company said two studies, based on work on a monkey version of the disease known as simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV), had demonstrated important advances in the development of a vaccine to combat HIV. PowderJect's novel vaccination system uses a jet of helium gas rather than a needle to deliver a dry powder formulation into the skin.

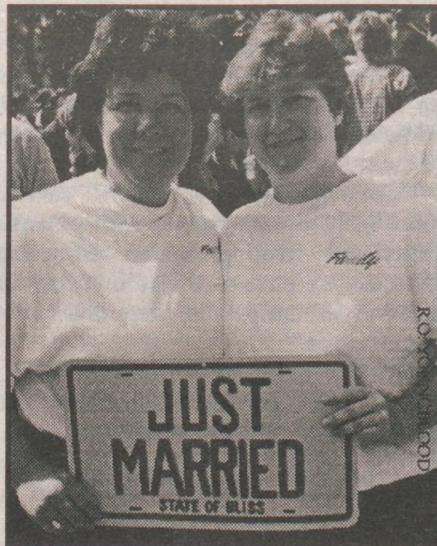
—From staff and wire reports

# Police Beat

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## Gay pastor charged with faking hate crime to influence Vt. debate

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP)—A Vermont pastor who claimed his car had been set on fire April 7 because of his sexual orientation is now facing criminal charges, state police said. Dwight Walker, who is gay and an outspoken proponent of civil unions, admitted to police that he himself set fire to his 1999 Honda Accord earlier in April. "I set the fire because I wanted people to see me as a victim," Walker reportedly told police. Walker, 36, now faces charges of third-degree arson, false reports to law enforcement officers and burning to defraud an insurer, police said. Walker is scheduled for arraignment June 6.



Amid the celebration over the passage of a civil unions bill in Vermont (right), a gay minister has admitted faking a hate crime.

## Prisoner strangled because of his sexual orientation, police say

MUSKEGON, Mich. (AP)—A Michigan prisoner has been accused of strangling his cellmate because he was gay. Authorities issued an arrest warrant charging Michael Glenn Keep, 29, with the April 12 murder of Paul Edward Chmiel. Authorities say Chmiel, who was openly gay, died after he tried to trade sex for a cigarette. "It's extremely disturbing that it appears the sole motive is the sexual [orientation] of the victim," said Muskegon County Prosecutor Tony Tague. Michigan does not have a hate crimes law that covers murders committed because of sexual orientation. Tague said Keep objected to being lodged with a gay person and found Chmiel offensive because of his sexual orientation. Michigan State Police Detective Sgt. Gary Miles said Keep admitted the killing in a written confession. He told authorities he grabbed Chmiel's chest, breaking three ribs, before pushing the victim's neck up against a bunk railing, strangling him, then dropping him to the floor. Chmiel lay dying in the cell for about an hour before Keep dragged his body into the hallway and walked outside to smoke a cigarette. "It was a pretty vicious death," Miles said.

## Chat room murder suspect pleads guilty in killing of N.J. man

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—A New Jersey man, accused of the 1996 killing of an acquaintance he met through a gay "chat" room on the America Online computer service, pleaded guilty to aggravated manslaughter, prosecutors said. George "Chip" Hemenway, 43, had been accused of luring Jesse M. Unger, 38, into his basement and shooting the Hamilton, N.J., man three times in the head with a .22-caliber rifle on Jan. 3, 1996. Hemenway confessed the killing to police during his bail hearing. He apparently was angry with Unger for having sex with a male teenager the previous month. "We believe that this plea agreement is the appropriate resolution of the case. We have discussed this plea with Mr. Unger's family and they concur," said Prosecutor Daniel G. Giaquinto.

## Openly gay 15-year-old undergoes brain surgery following beating

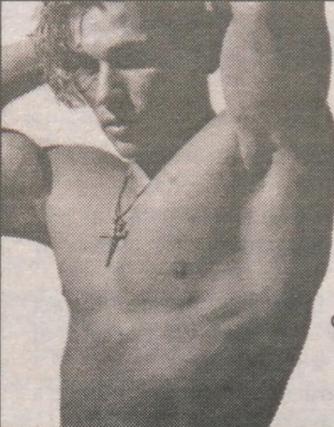
AQUA HARBOUR, Va.—A 15-year-old Virginia youth underwent brain surgery after a 17-year-old youth struck him in the head with a lead pipe, the *Washington Blade* reported. According to Stafford County Sheriff's Detective George Bond, the incident occurred while the 15-year-old male and a female friend were walking through a park April 20. Bond said the female friend told authorities two other teenagers followed the 15-year-old into the park. One of them ran up behind the victim and struck him in the head with a pipe, Bond said. The 15-year-old was flown to a Fairfax County hospital, where he was listed in stable condition. His family and friends identified the youth as being openly gay and said they believe the motive for the attack was anti-gay bias. "That's the direction we're looking toward," Bond told the *Blade*. He said authorities charged the 17-year-old with separate felony counts of attempted murder, aggravated malicious wounding, and unlawful wounding while committing a felony. Virginia law does not include a provision defining anti-gay bias under its hate crimes.

## Fla. man claims more than 100 victims from chat room robberies

WEST KENDALL, Fla.—A man arrested last month in connection with two Dade County robberies confessed to more than 100 similar crimes targeting gay victims, the *Miami Herald* reported May 4. Orenthal James Green, 29, is a convicted sex offender who preyed on men he met through an adult chat line and lured with the promise of sex. Detective Sheldon Shapiro said that after Green's arrest on April 14, he laughed about targeting gays. "He said the reason he did it was because the victims rarely report this type of crime," Shapiro said. "He said he's done over 100 of these." Green was detained by police after a March 18 robbery in which he pulled a butcher knife on his victim. The Overtown, Fla. man who handed over \$70, refused to press charges after police hauled in Green. The two had met on an adult chat line, police said.

—From staff and wire reports

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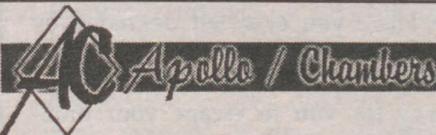
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To take the entire test, and see your answers compared to those of both sex addicts and those without sexual addictions, visit Dr. Patrick Carnes' web-site at [www.sexhelp.com](http://www.sexhelp.com).

### Some questions from the SAST:

- Have you stayed in romantic relationships after they become emotional-ly or physically abusive?
- Do you often find yourself preoccupied with sexual thoughts or romantic day dreams?
- Does your spouse or significant other ever worry or complain about your sexual behavior?
- Do you have trouble stopping your sexual behavior when you know it is inappropriate?
- Has your sexual behavior ever created problems for you and your family?
- Has anyone been hurt emotionally because of your sexual behavior?
- Have you ever participated in sexual activity in exchange for money or gifts?
- Do you have times when you act out sexually followed by periods of celibacy (no sex at all)?
- Have you made efforts to quit a type of sexual activity and failed?
- Have you ever felt degraded by your sexual behavior?
- Has sex or romantic fantasies been a way for you to escape your problems?
- When you have sex, do you feel depressed afterwards?
- Do you feel controlled by your sexual desire or fantasies of romance?
- Do you ever think your sexual desire is stronger than you are?

INFO

### Sexual Addiction Screening Test

[www.sexhelp.com](http://www.sexhelp.com)

• Click "Take the SAST."

## Secrecy, shame and addiction

> Continued from Page 1

The growing world of cybersex offers similarly high numbers of gay sex addicts, according to a study presented May 5 as the NCSAC held its national conference, "Turning Sexual Tragedy into Triumph," in Atlanta last weekend.

In one study of Internet sex, gays made up 16 percent of those found to be sexually addicted, despite being only seven percent of the study's sample.

"Shame promotes addiction," said Dr. John Sealy, a psychiatrist with extensive experience treating sexual addictions. "Because we have a culture that demeans gay and lesbian people, there is a built-in shame factor."

"We try to get away from that pain in healthy ways as well as unhealthy," said Sealy, who is gay. "Hopefully, you do it in healthy ways, which is to connect and join a community. But others get caught up in a desperate attempt to connect that leads to [sexually addictive] behavior."

### 'Sex negative'?

While experts believe sexual addiction may be more common among gays, in part because of reactions to social condemnation of homosexuality, the topic has also proved controversial.

"Sexual addiction" is not currently recognized as an official diagnosis in the American Psychiatric Association's listing of disorders, known as the Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-

IV), although experts say the illness follows the model of alcohol, drug and other addictions.

"People say 'compulsive eating,' we can see that, 'compulsive gambling,' we can see that, but as soon as you start talking about sex, it becomes politicized," said Dr. Patrick Carnes, a pioneer in the field of recognizing and treating sexual addictions.

"In the sexology community, there was such a battle we had to go through to get homosexuality taken out of the list [of mental disorders], that there is a fear about pathologizing anything connected to sex," Carnes said.

"In some early discussions, some in the gay community were very against looking at the idea of sex addiction, because they saw it as 'sex negative.'"

But gay sexual addiction experts insist that the field isn't about telling people how to have sex, or telling them not to.

"This is not a moral issue: It's not about me sitting in judgment saying it's bad to go cruising in the parks, it's not okay to go cruising in the bars," Amico said. "To me it is always about what negative consequences do you have, and are you doing this behavior despite having tried to stop?"

While certain activities may spring to mind in the stereotype of a sex addict—anonymous sex, cruising, extensive cybersex—Sealy said particular behaviors are not in and of themselves signs of a problem.

"Sex addiction isn't about who you have sex with, how frequent it is or how bizarre

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May 21 "A Gift More Precious Than Gold Or Silver"

May 28 "How To Deal With Opposition"

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For Gay Pride Month, join us for this class and learn that God loves you just the way you are! The Bible is your friend, not your enemy! June 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th at 7pm in the Educational Bldg. Free admission, and everyone is welcome.

### "Circle of Chairs"

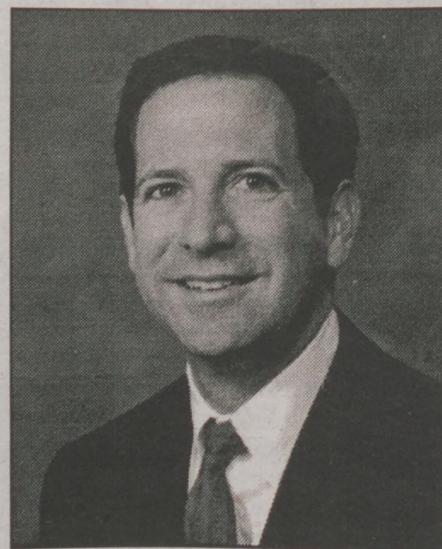
A new recovery support group, is being held at 5pm in the Blue Room of the Educational Building. Christian support for every addiction. Everyone is welcome.

Bible Study begins at 5:30pm and nursery is available. Mid-week "Home Group" services on Tuesdays and Wednesdays

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or strange it may seem to other people. That's irrelevant," he said. "What makes it a sexual addiction is there are negative consequences to the behavior that are unable to be controlled by the person."

Sealy likened the situation to a person who believes he is not an alcoholic because he only has one drink per day. In most cases, that may be true, but "if it is causing you to lose your job, your health is deteriorating and you've lost your relationship, then you might want to take a look at that one drink a day."

"The key is adverse and escalating consequences," he said.

### Gender, sexual orientation as addiction factors

While as many as 80 percent of sexual addicts are male, women can also be sexually addicted, and the numbers are growing, Sealy said.

One assessment tool, the "Sexual Addiction Screening Test" offers different versions for "heterosexual men," "gay men," and "women," without differentiating among women with different sexual orientations.

Although Sealy didn't devise the test, he said male cases of sexual addiction differ more by sexual orientation because "gay men have a different culture than heterosexual men, so you have to take that into consideration," while heterosexual women and lesbians tend to be more alike than different.

"To say, 'Sure, I go on the Internet and meet people'—that doesn't make one a sex addict in the gay world, but for a heterosexual man who is married, meeting people on the Internet might imply something quite more addictive," Sealy said.

"The gay lifestyle is different from the heterosexual in terms of the openness and freedom of sexual experience," he said.

While he acknowledged the information is "terribly general" due to lack of extensive research, Sealy said both lesbians and straight women tend to suffer more often from "love addiction" than sexual addiction.

"The addiction is needing to love or be needed, more so than the sexual act itself," he said.

Transgendered people also have a disproportionately high rate of sexual addiction, Amico said, with prostitution being a common behavior for acting out.

Prostitution may be viewed as an economic option to transgendered people who have difficulty finding jobs, and who may be faced with high medical bills for transition-related care like hormones or surgery often not covered by insurance.

But that doesn't mean it can't become a sexual addiction, Carnes said, because "you still are making a choice about how to earn money."

### Reconnecting and recovering

Sexual addiction may be fodder for political debate for some activists, but it can be a "life or death" struggle for some sufferers, experts said.

Sexual addicts may lose their jobs and families due to hours spent trolling bars or the Internet for sexual contacts, and they may put themselves in situations where they risk sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, as well as physical violence.

Sexual addiction proves destructive emotionally as well, Sealy said.

"Very few people grasp the amount of pain this addiction creates. I hear people

say, 'Oh, if I had to have an addiction, that's the one I want to have,' he said.

"It sounds like a lot of fun, but trust me, the number one word that describes this addiction, like all addictions, is loneliness. Profound loneliness."

A high proportion of sex addicts have suffered "serious trauma in their backgrounds," like sexual abuse or physical abuse, Sealy said. Compulsive sexual behavior becomes a way to disassociate from the pain, much like using drugs or alcohol, and it is quite common for sexual addicts to have those addictions as well.

Since the addiction is about disconnecting from pain, recovery is about reconnecting—"through 12-step programs, therapy and eventually through an intimate relationship," Sealy said. For those diagnosed with depression or bipolar disorder, prescription medications may also help.

Overall, recovery "is about establishing intimacy as opposed to intensity, and it's a life-long process," he said.

Some 12-step programs have a strong focus on God, which can be a problem for gay men and lesbians who have been subjected to discrimination from those with strong religious views, Sealy acknowledged.

"But the only thing you really have to know about God is this: You're not it," he said.

While being "in recovery" from alcohol and drug addiction almost always means completely abstaining from those chemicals, recovery from sexual addiction doesn't mean giving up sex totally, Carnes said.

In fact, one form of sexual addiction, known as "sexual anorexia," occurs when a person becomes obsessed with not having sex, he said.

"Some people try to portray clinicians as sex police, and they are misunderstanding us," Carnes said. "What we are trying to do is have healthy sex; sex that is not so out-of-control that it is self-destructive, or so shut-down that a person cannot be sexual with someone at all."

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### Co-Dependents of Sex Addicts

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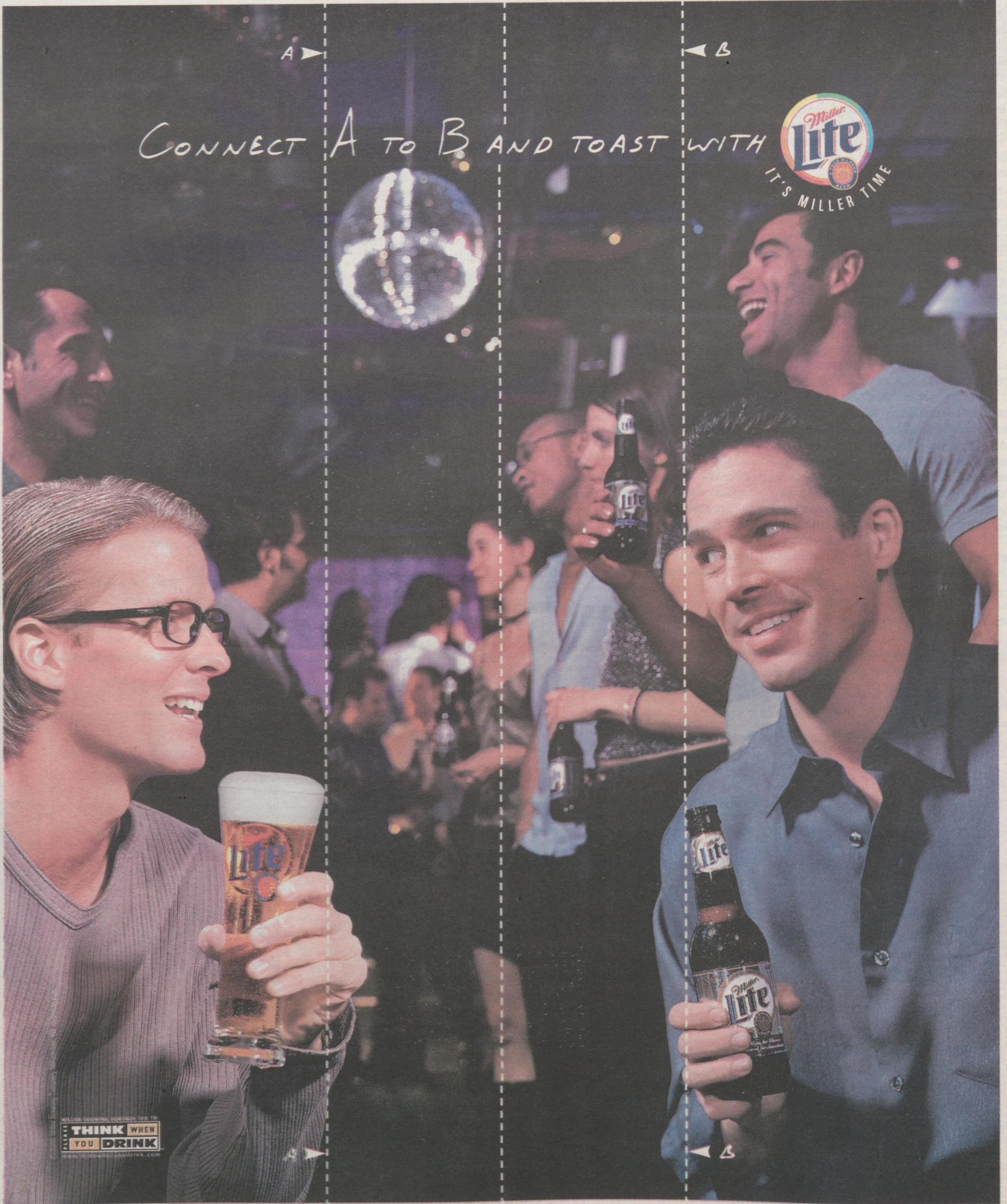
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# Out on the Bayou

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## talking with Alison Bechdel

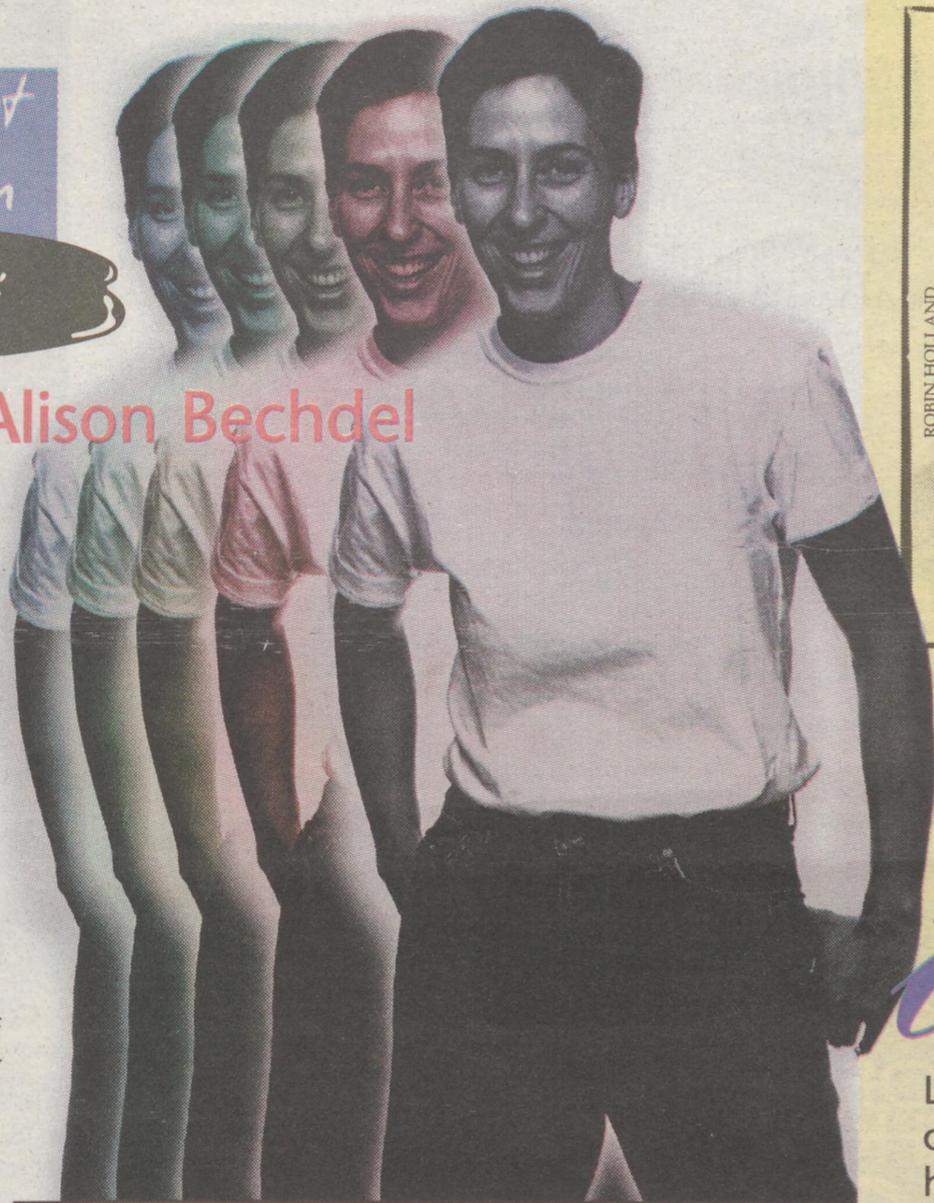
by LUCAS J. MIRE

I know she's been asked this tired question a million times before, but I can't resist. I try to sneak it amongst other "important" questions: "So, are there any characters that you might strongly resemble?"

Alison Bechdel answers: "Mo." It was the answer fans expect from the cartoonist whose socially and politically satirical "Dykes To Watch Out For" strip has been running in gay and lesbian papers around the country since 1983.

Mo, short for Monica, is the striped-sweater-wearing anchor character of the strip—a socially-conscious every-lesbian. For the uninitiated: Bechdel's characters—Mo, Lois, Clarise, Sparrow, Ginger, Toni, Jezanna, and

> Continued on Page 23



ROBIN HOLLAND

Swapping summer in the Big Apple for the Bayou City, composer Eve Beglarian is ready to bring her take on the classics to town.

## A fearless classic

Lesbian composer Eve Beglarian comes to the Bayou City to put her classical spin on a poetic piece that she hopes will capture the flavor of the city

by EARL DITTMAN

While many of her New York City contemporaries will spend the better part of summer soaking in its sun-filled days in leisure, classical composer Eve Beglarian will be busy fighting off the Bayou City's oppressive heat and ferocious mosquitoes.

But the openly-gay artist is not about to let a little humidity and some pesky bugs spoil what promises to be an exciting time.

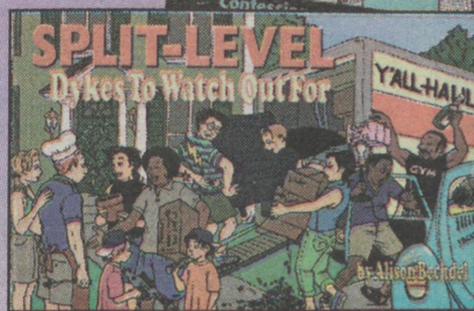
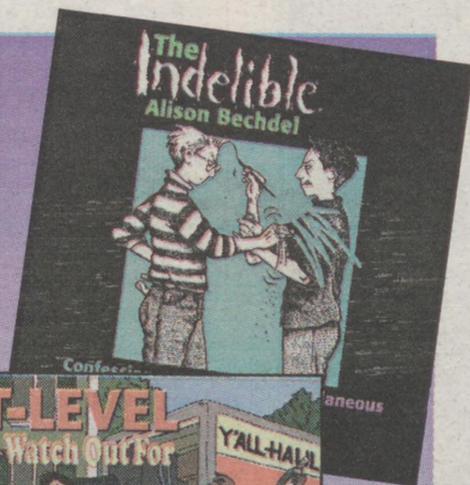
"I've already packed some light clothing and a couple cans of Off!, so I'm ready to roll," said Beglarian, 41, during a phone interview from her New York City loft. "I've been to Houston before and the weather and mosquitoes aren't as bad as everyone makes them out to be. Anyway, it doesn't matter, I'm so hyped about coming down there and working, nothing could dampen my spirits."

So what has Beglarian, a critically-acclaimed lesbian composer, ready to take on Houston? According to her, it's

> Continued on Page 27

## Bechdel at her best

Thank Goddess for **SPLIT-LEVEL DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR** and **THE INDELIBLE ALISON BECHDEL**. I came late to the "Dykes" party, joining Mo and her gal pals' adventures 9 or 10 years after the streamers had been strung. Imagine my delight at discovering "Split Level," a "Dykes" collection (the 8th such gathering) that starts off when Sydney, rabelrouser extraordinaire, hits the scene. Bechdel's novelistic storytelling and well-drawn (pun intended) characters come alive when you can devour the whole gang's recent exploits in a night or two of bedtime reading. For a more in-depth—and ingenious—display of rampant creativity and sidesplitting laughs, check out "Indelible." You'll find a handy timeline that traces all the "Dykes" characters back to the beginning, as well as highlights from Bechdel's impressive body of other work, and a fascinating glimpse into the life and mind of this intriguing artist.—LJM



Bechdel's books can be found at [firebrandbooks.com](http://firebrandbooks.com).

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## On Stage

### The flash of rhinestones and cocktails

by D.L. GROOVER

If you're inclined to select an evening's entertainment by title alone, you'd be in for quite a surprise with *AS BEEES IN HONEY DROWN*.

Saddled with a most inappropriate title, Douglas Carter Beane's play at the Alley Theatre sounds heavy and significant, perhaps something from Eugene O'Neill. But "Bees" is a light, frothy boulevard comedy, whose intersecting streets could be Melrose Place, Rodeo Drive, Madison Avenue and the Yellow Brick Road.

Strikingly written, complete with theatrical devices like flashbacks, directly addressing the audience and multiple casting to get its delicious effects, the play is a mystery of sorts—just who is this whirlwind creature Alexa who can hoodwink both men and women out of their dreams and their cash? This comedy of manners is lovingly produced and flawlessly acted.

Telling the fairy tale rise and rise of the consummate con artist, Alexa Vere de Vere, "Bees" is lighter than a fine soufflé and as insubstantial as cotton candy, melting in your mind as soon as its over. It is slick, enormously entertaining and instantly forgettable.

With the resources the Alley offers, "Bees" is produced with a high sheen. Directed by the Alley's own James Black, the staging hums along as if on casters. The production is an 8" by 10" glossy with immaculate design, lighting by Kevin Rigdon and oh-so-chic costumes by Jeanne Button.

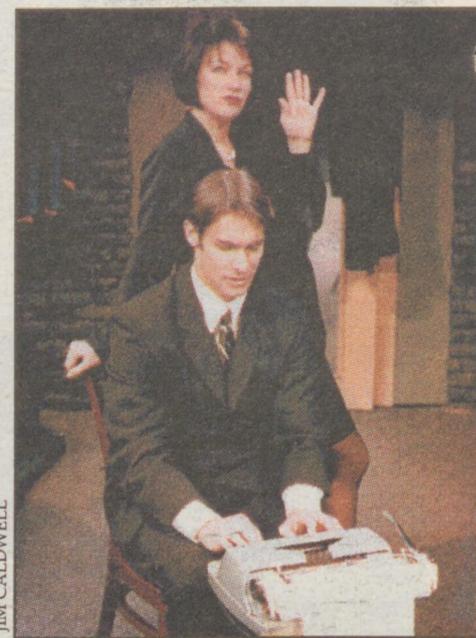
The morning-after bedroom scene arrives with its own morning shadow; the Staten Island ferry evoked by a railing with life preserver attached; the tiny lounge of a boutique hotel personified by a chrome encrusted cocktail table. The production, polished as the play, dazzles us with sparkle and brilliance.

Carol Linnea Johnson portrays Alexa with a surgeon's precision. With her helmet of jet-black hair, tailored suits, jungle red fingernails, studied hyper attitude and a pronunciation guide stolen from watching videos of Bankhead, Rosalind Russell as Auntie Mame, and that "other" Hepburn, Alexa is a velvet spider.

She can ensnare up-and-coming wannabes behind the smoke screen from her jeweled cigarette lighter. Suave and sneaky, Alexa supplies them with their own longing for instant success and fame, while deftly depleting their bank accounts. Of course, her ultimate con has been herself, creating Alexa from little Barbara Gelb of West Reading, Penn., but that's another story, fit for Act II.

The great fun in all of this: We share in the guilt of her conquests, we support and root for her ruthless antics. We like her and can't wait to see what happens next.

Act I leaves us hanging with the thud of betrayal and a whiff of revenge. In large part, we applaud Alexa Vere de Vere because of Johnson's sublime, "fabulous"



Carol Linnea Johnson and her gay underling Ty Mayberry in a richly produced and acted 'As Bees in Honey Drown' at the Alley.

performance. Nobody could intone "coffee and croissant, please" with the same pinpoint accuracy, nor flick a stole over her shoulder with such over-the-top panache and lacquered sophistication. She is confection.

As her latest foil, the gay "hot" writer Evan Wyler, Ty Mayberry with his dark matinee idol looks and four-star physique is the perfect naive fly caught in Alexa's seductive web. Through Alexa's grooming, Evan tastes the banquet of high life that awaits him.

Getting fitted for his first suit, Mayberry glows giddy with anticipation of what lies in store for him and his career. Under Alexa's magnetic tutelage, it's not too much of a stretch that this gay young man falls in love with her.

She has succeeded in making him over so completely that Evan doesn't realize that his very nature has also been resuited. When Alexa abruptly departs, Evan is devastated, struck dumb with writer's block and out for revenge. Mayberry brings the right amount of gullibility and star-struck aspiration to the role of gay rube lost in an Oz of his own making.

Playing everybody else: a rock singer named Skunk, female violinist, oily Hollywood producer, Alexa's first willing victim—the nice as pie painter Mike, the remaining cast of four skewers the pretentious, the lackeys, the hangers-on with wonderful insight.

"Bees" pricks the balloon of "sticky sweet success" with sass, and the Alley mounts it in a setting of flashy rhinestones. It's a smart cocktail to be savored with not a hangover in sight.

#### As Bees in Honey Drown

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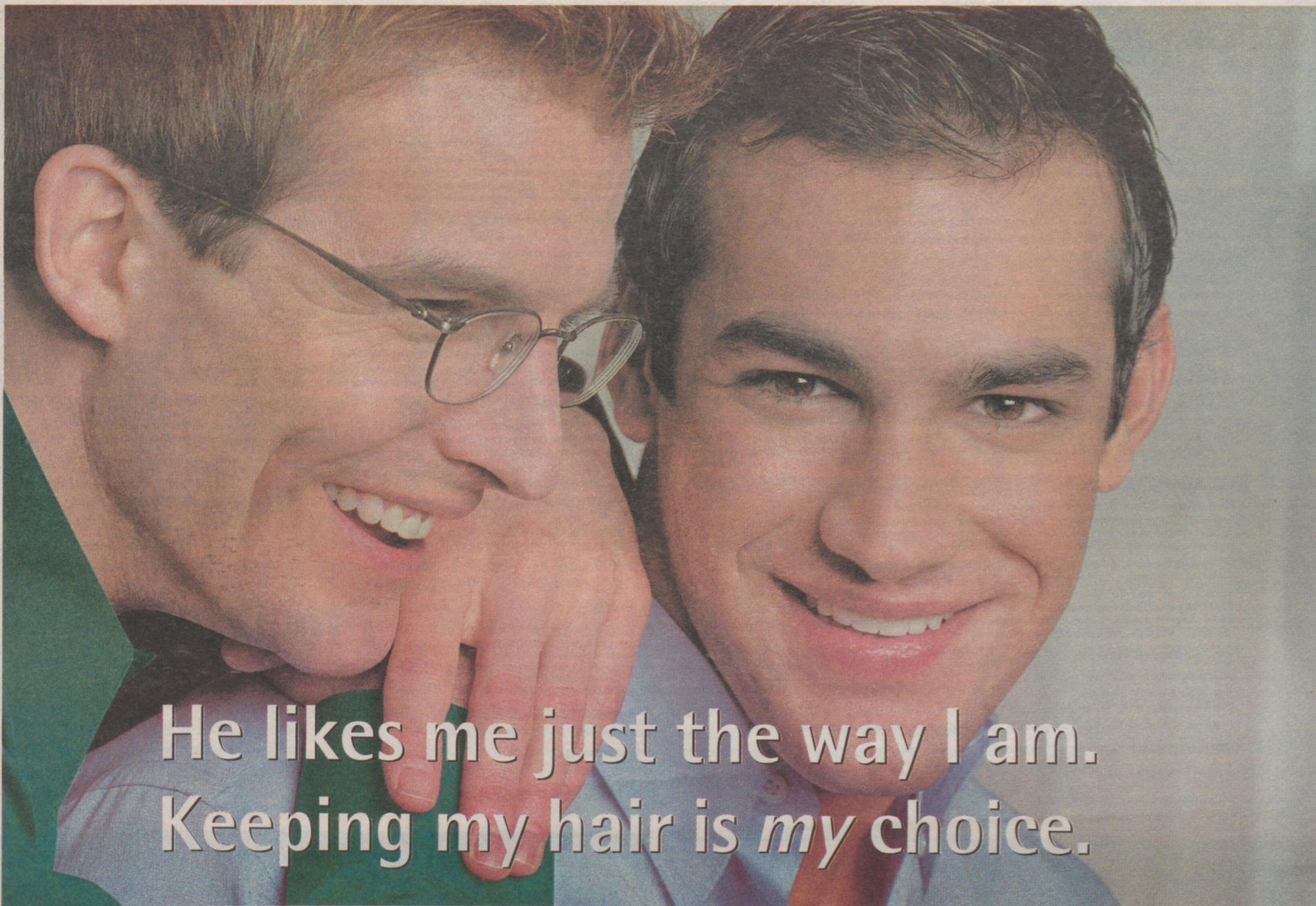
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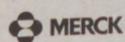
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#### What is male pattern hair loss?

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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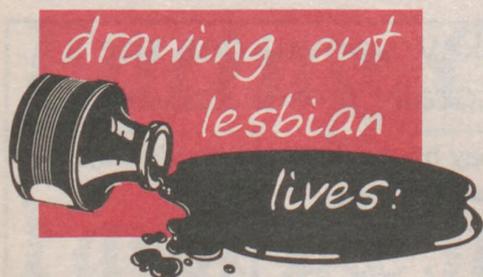


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## Talking with Alison Bechdel

> Continued from page 19

Sydney—spew statistics, rant in politically correct mumbo jumbo, revel in popular culture, and clash over current events. No subject is off limits, no position untaken, no opportunity to wink at the camera missed.

"I feel that I'm very lucky that my chosen work is a vehicle for me to express my values," says Bechdel, 39, who comes to Houston May 20 for the Texas Lesbian Conference. "I get to vent about everything that's going on in the world in my work. I don't think of that as on par with those people who are doing legislative reform, but it's not as bad as working for Exxon."

Still, it's clear that through "Dykes," which is printed twice a month in about 65 queer papers (including the *Houston Voice*) and a couple of alternative weeklies, Bechdel hopes to enlighten, entertain and stir up socially-conscious conversations among her readers. Almost every panel of every strip brims with skillfully and painstakingly rendered hidden treasures: side-splitting book titles on book shelves, changing newspaper headlines, wittily-adapted product and store names,

and other, ahem, more personal accoutrements of the lesbian lifestyle.

Growing up in central Pennsylvania, Bechdel aspired to be a cartoonist, but didn't think it was a viable career possibility.

"When I was in high school and college I didn't take it seriously," Bechdel explains. "I thought I'd be a graphic designer or a book designer, then I happened into cartooning."

When Bechdel was in her junior year of college, she made an equally important life discovery: she realized she is a lesbian. It took her about a semester to come out, then she "went from 0 to 60, from being totally clueless to being librarian of the gay union" at her college. By 1983, Bechdel had her degree, was living in New York City and volunteering at a feminist monthly. She drew a few cartoons for fun, and unexpectedly, the paper decided to publish one of her lesbian-oriented drawings.

Bechdel says the early cartoons were not her best, but lesbians were so excited to see their lives represented that her work flourished. When 1990 rolled around, the "Dykes" strip, which had employed the popular novelistic serial-format and recurring cast of characters since 1987, was bringing in enough revenue for Bechdel to quit her other jobs to focus full-time on the strip. By that time the strip was a taking up a lot of time anyway: two 50 hour work weeks to produce one strip.

"I work on two [strips] at a time," Bechdel explains. "It takes two weeks: one week to write it and one week to draw it. I'm always trying to streamline, but the longer I do it, the longer it seems to take me. I used to be totally unable to organize my time. I was on this binge/purge working cycle. I'd drive myself into the ground and take a week to recover, but

over the past couple of years, I've whipped myself into shape and gotten on a schedule."

Perhaps some of Bechdel's desire for a normal routine comes from her seven-year relationship with Amy Rubin, who teaches playwriting to children. Rubin is Bechdel's most important sounding board, offering help with the witty, incisive dialogue "Dykes" is revered for, as well as crucial feedback on each strip as it progresses.

When you've been writing storylines for the same characters for 12 years, keeping track of who's done what and who's done whom can be a tall order. Not for Bechdel.

"I have a complicated Virgo-like system," she laughs. "I have a spreadsheet with my characters in one column and each episode number at the top. When something happens, I put that in and I use that to help me plot where everyone's going and what's going to happen next."

Friends don't hound Bechdel about what's going to happen next because Bechdel insists she doesn't know. She also proclaims that her characters and events don't come directly from her circle of friends or social life.

"I don't really have much of a social life," Bechdel chuckles. "All I do is work. If I were taking this stuff from my social life, it would be extremely dull."

What's not dull is the diet of newspapers, magazines and web-sites Bechdel needs to stay abreast of trends, current events and popular culture. *The New Yorker*, *the Nation*, *The New York Times*, *salon.com*, *slate.com*, and those 60 or so queer papers that print her strip, arrive on her rural Vermont doorstep to give her plenty of inspirational fodder.

But when it comes to who's reading *her* work, Bechdel—who calls "Dykes" a "queer

'For better or For Worse' but spicier"—says her tune has changed drastically since "Dykes To Watch Out For" first came out.

"I used to think—I assumed—I was writing for other lesbians like me, as far as age and socio-economic background," Bechdel offers. "Increasingly, I feel like I'm writing for everyone. I used to be very afraid of the outside world. I really lived my adult life in the queer subculture. Now I'm feeling like the world is my home, not just this little subsection of it. The more I take on issues that aren't lesbian and gay specific, the more characters like Stuart—the straight man—creeps into the strip."

To those readers who wonder why certain aspects of lesbian culture—especially seniors—aren't represented in her work, Bechdel says, "I have no excuse. The strip represents how I live, and in my experience, people keep to their own generation. There's not as much mingling in the different ages."

"I'm actually trying to make the comic strip my day job so I can work on this other thing I'm doing," Bechdel confesses. "I'm working on an autobiographical memoir about my relationship with my father. Comic, but much more personal."

It's just more proof that like her beloved characters, Bechdel too is one dyke to keep watching out for.

### Alison Bechdel

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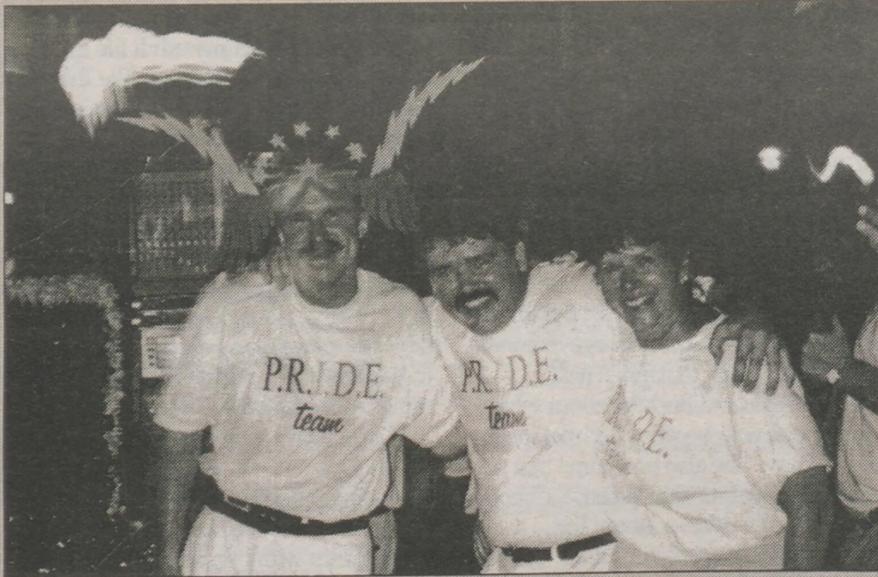
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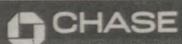


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# Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEWS

## Favor the fresh

by TRAYCE DISKIN

When it comes to Latin cuisine, some Houstonians favor the fresh, authentic and cheap over the trendy and sleek. Don't let EL PUEBLITO fool you.

From its perch on Richmond, its yellow brick facade and dusty parking lot don't reflect the immaculate charm of the inside. With a patterned Mexican tile floor and colorful booths, a casual neighborhood haunt is created where the staff fusses over each customer to assure comfort and a good meal. The small concrete patio transforms a rather unremarkable block of Richmond into something homey and festive.

Although El Pueblito offers some Mexican dishes like the Texas Burrito (\$5.50), the menu is distinctly Caribbean and

Central American. Proof enough is in the complimentary pineapple salsa (served with chips and a separate, less exciting pico de gallo). The ripe crushed pineapples are slightly sugary. Blended with flecks of fresh cilantro, the pulpy mixture is addictive and is a nice compliment to anything on the menu.

The Fried Plantains (\$2.75) are sweet, thick, moist slabs. Although I tried to wipe away some of the sour cream dropped in a lump on the plate, by the last plantain I was hooked on the combination.

The Quesadillas Vegetariana (\$5.75) include fresh spinach, but it's the added mushrooms that give the dish its unique, smoky flavor. The cheese is gooey, which doesn't help to hold together everything else. But what's sacrificed in manageability is made up for in taste. With the sides of

The guacamole makes for a strong companion. The chunky, ripe mash of avocados, lemon and what tastes like a trace of chili powder is gorgeously fresh. Like the pineapple salsa, it deserves to be slathered on every piece of your meal.

rice, beans and guacamole, the platter is a feast of vibrant, fresh ingredients.

The Quesadillas Locas (\$5.95) pack in both beef and chicken with Monterey jack and cheddar. The combination of meats can be heavy, but the peppery seasonings are great.

The Tacos Poblano (\$4.95), served with a choice of chicken or beef, offers two small tacos and an even smaller scoop of pico de gallo. The diced chicken creates a soft, chewy texture. With a side order of guacamole, these tacos make a great appetizer or light dinner.

For more filling dishes, head straight for the fish. Although the Snapper Santa Monica (\$8.25) and Caribbean Snapper (\$8.25) make excellent choices, don't forgo the Pez de Dioses (\$7.95). The rainbow trout is fresh and sizzling, with a simple marinade of olive oil and lemon that don't override the flavor of the fish. The generous topping of roasted almonds only adds to the rich, yet delicate taste.

The El Costeno Plate (\$6.95) is a true bargain. Similar to beef Fajitas, the meat tended to be a bit dry and tough. The black pepper seasoning coated each piece thoroughly.

The devilishly smooth Cocktail Latino (\$7.95) features a chilled dish of baby octopus and shrimp in a spicy tomato-lemon juice. The juice is vinegary and tangy, and while the octopus isn't as tender or stellar as the other dishes, the avocado pico de gallo makes the dish sing.

The guacamole also makes for a strong companion. The chunky, ripe mash of avocados, lemon and what tastes like a trace of chili powder is gorgeously fresh. Like the pineapple salsa, it deserves to be slathered on every piece of your meal.

The Flan (\$2.25) makes a great shared dessert with its crispy, burnt caramel topping. It goes well with an after-dinner glass of Negra Modelo beer. The Tres Leches (\$3.50) is adequate as well—the rather small, round portion was appreciated after a huge meal.

As you relax outside, you'll hardly even notice the sirens from the nearby fire station and other traffic on Richmond just a few yards away. It'll just be you, friendly neighbors and staff, and wonderfully fresh food.

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# Out In Print

BOOK NEWS

## A novel of love, ambition and nuclear waste

by MICAH McCOIN

James Conrad's semi-epic debut novel supersedes improbable and potentially laughable plot constructs through sheer literary ambition.

The gaudy book jacket for **MAKING LOVE TO THE MINOR POETS OF CHICAGO** loudly proclaims the book "a novel of love, ambition, poetry and nuclear waste." As much as this conjures images of Jackie Collins after an extended subscription to *Scientific American*, further reading reveals otherwise.

The novel's heroine, Joanne Mueller, is a popular poet-in-residence at tiny Lake Bluff College, just outside of Chicago. Her overbearing mentor, Vivian Reape, corrals Joanne into a scheme to establish an official poet for a nuclear waste site in Nevada, to help warn generations to come (10,000 years of generations, to be exact) of the danger of the site.

Students and faculty at Lake Bluff College fill out the cast of characters, all searching for love and poetic inspiration as Conrad seeks a way to weave all of them into his nuclear narrative.

If the plot has lost you already, keep in mind the trick here is that Conrad builds

### INFO 'Making Love to the Minor Poets of Chicago'

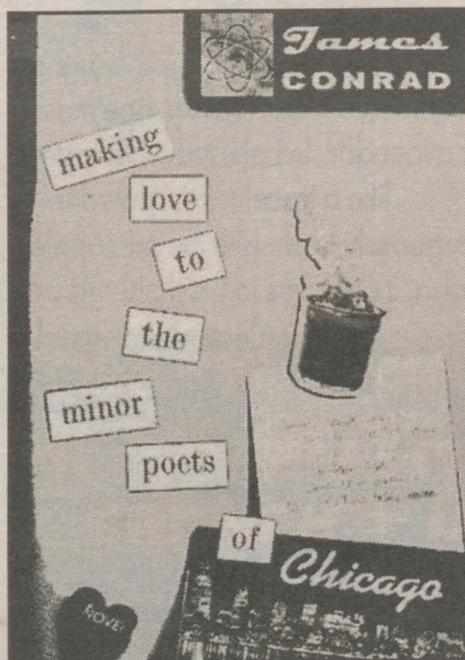
by James Conrad  
St. Martin, \$25.95

this implausible sinking ship, only to plug up all the holes with his literary flair. Packed with dead-on imagery, imaginative similes and complex characters, the novel never loses its pace or its capacity for surprise.

Conrad's use of chronology is particularly astute. He darts forward and backward in time effortlessly, splitting scenes in two, telling the last half first for maximum dramatic effect.

His characters are similarly complex. His depiction of Joanne, in fact, veers close to confusing; she's characterized as the shy, naïve student in Vivian's presence, as sexually aggressive in her personal relationships, as the nurturing teacher in her classes, and as a sophisticated career woman in her business dealings.

Still, Conrad avoids two-dimensional renderings of any of his characters. This is particularly admirable given the number of unseasoned 20-year-olds with which he must populate the campus. Vivian Reape,



as unscrupulous and back-stabbing as Conrad colors her, has sympathetic motives underneath her venom.

One of the most intriguing characters in the novel is Chicago itself. Conrad gives life to the city, describing its lakeside, its skyline and its temperamental climate, all of which play vital roles in the unfolding of the plot and the actions of the character.

Whether it's Joanne's meditative commuter drives from city to suburbs or the stunning high-rise downtown apartment of her fellow faculty member Alex Dupree, Conrad's descriptions enrich every corner of "Minor Poets" with the presence of the city.

One of the oddest aspects of the novel, besides the storyline, is the significant gay male presence. A clear majority of the male characters are gay or bisexual, which under normal circumstances would only qualify "Minor Poets" as gay fiction.

Sexuality, however, is a theme that must compete (and lose) with themes of personal growth, the art of writing and the environment. Making Joanne, who shows no trace of same-sex attraction, the central character further distances Conrad from standard gay fiction. Joanne and Conrad's world is full of gay men, but it does not revolve around them.

Conrad's novel is one large flourish of virtuosity. It's very difficult to believe that this is his first published effort in the field. He leaves the largest flourish, however, for the last two chapters. The penultimate chapter is a series of letters to and from all the main characters in the novel, finalizing or redefining their relationships as a way of tying up the loose ends.

Joanne, who has built her literary reputation in the novel as a short story writer, writes the last chapter herself in the form of a short story. Her postscript is a welcome change of perspective and a step inside her head that provides just the sort of closure a semi-epic novel deserves.

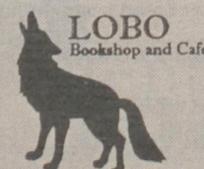
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# A fearless classic

> Continued from Page 19

the irresistible chance to work closely with a group of elite musicians, Orchestra X at DiverseWorks, and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to become a "soulmate" with an entire metropolitan city.

"I've been commissioned by the American Composers Forum, a national composers organization, to write a piece for and about Houston," she said. "It's an incredibly ambitious project that I feel honored to be a part of."

Christened "Continental Harmony" by the ACF, the project is a national initiative which will bring music into the service of the community to affirm the importance of community life and the vitality of the arts. DiverseWorks and Orchestra X approached Beglarian with an offer to musically represent the Space City.

"I was chosen by these two groundbreaking organizations and I think the fit is probably pretty good, because they were looking for something that would be sophisticated in terms of technology as well as for an orchestra," she said. "So I'll be doing something that's very multi-media. The cool thing about this project is that it is a residency program. That's one of the reasons I am coming down to Houston for the next few weeks—to initiate this orchestra piece with everybody involved. We can talk about the ideas and work them out together."

While the piece is still in its infancy, Beglarian and her Orchestra X partners have already decided what it's not going to be represent.

"Initially, all the pieces were going to be about the millennium and were going to be done on July 4th—a millennial celebration kind of thing," Beglarian said. "I'm not into that at all, I'm pretty much Y-2K'd out. My thought was, 'Been there, done that, who needs it?' So I decided to write an anti-millennial piece."

"I found this poem by Mark Strand that's really, really beautiful. It's about the texture of daily life, from doing errands to cooking and cleaning. I wanted to highlight the sense of eternal time that happens in the midst of taking the kids to soccer camp or whatever. What it will basically say is that the real apocalyptic moments are really these tiny bits of insight that get you by while living ordinary life," she said.

While in Houston, Beglarian plans to soak-up as much of the city's atmosphere as possible to ensure her piece, which will premiere at Miller Outdoor Theatre in September, truly represents the diversity of the Bayou City.

"One of my goals is to collect as many ambient sound recordings of daily life in Houston as I possibly can," she said. "And hopefully, I'll also be doing some interviews with regular Houstonians talking about everyday life that we'll incorporate into the piece. I mean, how can you really represent a city without including the most important part of it in your work—the people that live in it."

To mark her May 20 arrival, Orchestra X will perform a retrospective concert of Beglarian's past compositions at DiverseWorks. Beglarian will be present to

interact with the audience and answer any questions about the upcoming project.

And if all goes as planned, she'll do a little performing with Orchestra X.

"One of the works that Orchestra X will be doing is an odd cover of a Barry White tune, and somebody has to do the vocals on it and it'll probably be me," Beglarian said. "But, by and large, it is going to be the musicians

of Orchestra X performing my chamber music. I am pretty jazzed about this because it's the first retrospective of my work."

As a prominent contemporary composer, Beglarian's list of accomplishments include commissions from the California EAR Unit, Relache, the Paul Drescher Ensemble, the Crosstown Ensemble and the New York New Music Ensemble; along with collabo-

rations with Hildegur's Ordo Virtutum, Chen Shi-Zheng with the China National Beijing Opera Theatre and Terry O'Reilly with Mabou Min.

But her contribution to a compilation album featuring American lesbian composers was the most instrumental in gar-

> Continued on Page 28

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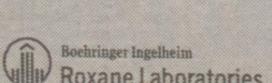
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# A fearless classic

> Continued from Page 27

nering Beglarian a substantial, grateful following of fans from the gay community.

"After doing that album was really when I started getting response from gay women and men," she recalled. "I would get e-mails from people around the country, saying things like, 'Thank you for being open about your sexuality and doing this, because it means a lot to me.' I was real-



ly taken with that, because in some ways I live in an environment where being gay doesn't cost me very much. It doesn't cost me as much as it does somebody like Melissa Etheridge, really.

"I'm not in the mainstream world, so it would be very hard for me to say how I've been slowed down by being openly gay. Someone like Melissa has good reason to be worried that being 'out' is going to impact negatively on their career, but I never thought of it as a big deal. And I only realized, in retrospect, that it was a big deal when I started getting letters from people thanking me," she said.

For Beglarian, coming out not only affected her personal well being, but it also gave her a license to forge her musical identity.

"When you're gay, there's a process we all go through of getting comfortable with not being 'regular,'" she said. "It's like you have to invent your own way of living in the world. And that experience is very similar to inventing your own way of being a composer. They are similar experiences, because I always had the feeling of, 'Well, I'm not going to fit into any models that I see around me, so I'll just make up my own and figure out what I'm doing as I go.'"

And as fans of her work will testify, she has never been afraid to take classical music to uncharted territories.

"I'm certainly not your typical classical composer, not by a long shot," she said with a laugh. "Of course, I have classical background and I can write for an orchestra, but I'm always doing things that expand beyond the conventional idea of what an orchestral piece should be. The lines between classical forms of music making and expanded ideas of how to deal with sound is what I'm all about."

But Beglarian insists she doesn't turn classical music on its head just for the sake of shocking its traditionalists.

"I don't set out with the idea of 'Let me do something new and different. Or maybe something weird,'" she said. "If I did that, I would just be faking it. I just set out to do something that I think will be unique. For instance, I love the poem for the Houston piece, and I want to make it happen in a really strong way so that other people will feel the emotion of it. So I'll use whatever technique I can think of to make that happen. Of course, it could end-up breaking conventional boundaries of what it means to write an orchestral piece, but that's the way it should be. Music, of all types and forms, should constantly be in a state of evolution."

Beglarian puts her proverbial money where you mouth on "Play Nice," her new album as part of the experimental duo Twisted Tutu.

"'Play Nice' really represents my more recent work and has been a real growth for me as a performer and not just as a composer," she said. "It's not really a classical album per se. I would say that it is more about the relation between pop music and experimental music—what those lines really are and what they mean, if anything at all. There are songs on the record that can definitely be played in a club and things on it that are in the tradition of avant-garde. There's even a cover of a Duke Ellington tune. It really covers the waterfront, and I'm very excited about it."

In addition to the Houston piece, Beglarian is anxious to get back to work on writing a full-scale opera based on a story by her friend, novelist Stephen King.

"I've done the music for several of Stephen's audiobooks, but this is a whole different animal," she said. "This gives me a chance to test my abilities in a totally new way, and I'm really ready for that. It's an opera based on the story 'The Man In The Black Suit,' which was published in The New Yorker. Believe it or not, it's just a beautiful story. It's terrifying, but it's not blood and guts, it's more spiritual-terrifying. It's about the devil coming to visit this little boy. It's scary."

Beglarian should be more afraid of the workload that lies ahead of her. But instead of unsettling her, it has her completely energized.

"I've been working my entire life for these chances I've just been given, so this is an incredibly happy time for me," she said. "I'm a very lucky person. I get a chance to make the music I want, I'm a gay woman who has been completely embraced by fans and the classical community and I'll be spending part of my summer in Houston working to make the city and myself proud. I may just be naive, but I'm pretty fearless at this point in my life. And you know what? It feels good."

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#### INDICATIONS AND USAGE

Marinol (dronabinol) is indicated for the treatment of:

1. anorexia associated with weight loss in patients with AIDS; and
2. nausea and vomiting associated with cancer chemotherapy in patients who have failed to respond adequately to conventional antiemetic treatments.

#### CONTRAINDICATIONS

Marinol (dronabinol) is contraindicated in any patient who has a history of hypersensitivity to any cannabinoid or sesame oil.

#### WARNINGS

Patients receiving treatment with Marinol should be specifically warned not to drive, operate machinery, or engage in any hazardous activity until it is established that they are able to tolerate the drug and to perform such tasks safely.

#### PRECAUTIONS

**General:** The risk/benefit ratio of Marinol (dronabinol) use should be carefully evaluated in patients with the following medical conditions because of individual variation in response and tolerance to the effects of Marinol.

Marinol should be used with caution in patients with cardiac disorders because of occasional hypotension, possible hypertension, syncope, or tachycardia (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY).

Marinol should be used with caution in patients with a history of substance abuse, including alcohol abuse or dependence, because they may be more prone to abuse Marinol as well. Multiple substance abuse is common and marijuana, which contains the same active compound, is a frequently abused substance.

Marinol should be used with caution and careful psychiatric monitoring in patients with mania, depression, or schizophrenia because Marinol may exacerbate these illnesses.

Marinol should be used with caution in patients receiving concomitant therapy with sedatives, hypnotics or other psychoactive drugs because of the potential for additive or synergistic CNS effects.

Marinol should be used with caution in pregnant patients, nursing mothers, or pediatric patients because it has not been studied in these patient populations.

Marinol should be used with caution for treatment of anorexia and weight loss in elderly patients with AIDS because they may be more sensitive to the psychoactive effects and because its use in these patients has not been studied.

**Information for Patients:** Patients receiving treatment with Marinol (dronabinol) should be alerted to the potential for additive central nervous system depression if Marinol is used concomitantly with alcohol or other CNS depressants such as benzodiazepines and barbiturates.

Patients receiving treatment with Marinol should be specifically warned not to drive, operate machinery, or engage in any hazardous activity until it is established that they are able to tolerate the drug and to perform such tasks safely.

Patients using Marinol should be advised of possible changes in mood and other adverse behavioral effects of the drug so as to avoid panic in the event of such manifestations. Patients should remain under the supervision of a responsible adult during initial use of Marinol and following dosage adjustments.

**Drug Interactions:** In studies involving patients with AIDS and/or cancer, Marinol (dronabinol) has been co-administered with a variety of medications (e.g., cytotoxic agents, anti-infective agents, sedatives, or opioid analgesics) without resulting in any clinically significant drug/drug interactions. Although no drug/drug interactions were discovered during the clinical trials of Marinol, cannabinoids may interact with other medications through both metabolic and pharmacodynamic mechanisms. Dronabinol is highly protein bound to plasma proteins, and therefore, might displace other protein-bound drugs. Although this displacement has not been confirmed *in vivo*, practitioners should monitor patients for a change in dosage requirements when administering dronabinol to patients receiving other highly protein-bound drugs. Published reports of drug/drug interactions involving cannabinoids are summarized in the following table.

CONCOMITANT DRUG	CLINICAL EFFECT(S)
Amphetamines, cocaine, other sympathomimetic agents	Additive hypertension, tachycardia, possibly cardiotoxicity
Atropine, scopolamine, antihistamines, other anticholinergic agents	Additive or super-additive tachycardia, drowsiness
Amitriptyline, amoxapine, desipramine, other tricyclic antidepressants	Additive tachycardia, hypertension, drowsiness
Barbiturates, benzodiazepines, ethanol, lithium, opioids, buspirone, antihistamines, muscle relaxants, other CNS depressants	Additive drowsiness and CNS depression
Disulfiram	A reversible hypomanic reaction was reported in a 28 y/o man who smoked marijuana; confirmed by dechallenge and rechallenge
Fluoxetine	A 21 y/o female with depression and bulimia receiving 20 mg/day fluoxetine X 4 wks became hypomanic after smoking marijuana; symptoms resolved after 4 days
Antipyrine, barbiturates	Decreased clearance of these agents, presumably via competitive inhibition of metabolism
Theophylline	Increased theophylline metabolism reported with smoking of marijuana; effect similar to that following smoking tobacco

**Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility:** Carcinogenicity studies have not been performed with dronabinol. Mutagenicity testing of dronabinol was negative in an Ames test. In a long-term study (77 days) in rats, oral administration of dronabinol at doses of 30 to 150 mg/m<sup>2</sup> (equivalent to 0.3 to 1.5 times maximum recommended human dose (MRHD) of 90 mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day in cancer patients or 2 to 10 times MRHD of 15 mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day in AIDS patients), reduced ventral prostate, seminal vesicle and epididymal weights and caused a decrease in seminal fluid volume. Decreases in spermatogenesis, number of developing germ cells, and number of Leydig cells in the testis were also observed. However, sperm count, mating success and testosterone levels were not affected. The significance of these animal findings in humans is not known.

**Pregnancy:** Pregnancy Category C. Reproduction studies with dronabinol have been performed in mice at 15 to 450 mg/m<sup>2</sup> (equivalent to 0.2 to 5 times maximum recommended human dose (MRHD) of 90 mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day in cancer patients or 1 to 30 times MRHD of 15 mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day in AIDS patients), and in rats at 74 to 295 mg/m<sup>2</sup> (equivalent to 0.8 to 3 times MRHD of 90 mg/m<sup>2</sup> in cancer patients or 5 to 20 times MRHD of 15 mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day in AIDS patients). These studies have revealed no evidence of teratogenicity due to dronabinol. At these dosages in mice and rats, dronabinol decreased maternal weight gain and number of viable pups and increased fetal mortality and early resorptions. Such effects were dose dependent and less apparent at lower dosages which produced less maternal toxicity. There are no adequate

and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Dronabinol should be used only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

**Nursing Mothers:** Use of Marinol is not recommended in nursing mothers since, in addition to the secretion of HIV virus in breast milk, dronabinol is concentrated in and secreted in human breast milk and is absorbed by the nursing baby.

#### ADVERSE REACTIONS

Adverse experiences information summarized in the tables below was derived from well-controlled clinical trials conducted in the US and US territories involving 474 patients exposed to Marinol (dronabinol). Studies of AIDS-related weight loss included 157 patients receiving dronabinol at a dose of 2.5 mg twice daily and 67 receiving placebo. Studies of different durations were combined by considering the first occurrence of events during the first 28 days. Studies of nausea and vomiting related to cancer chemotherapy included 317 patients receiving dronabinol and 68 receiving placebo.

A cannabinoid dose-related "high" (easy laughing, elation and heightened awareness) has been reported by patients receiving Marinol in both the antiemetic (24%) and the lower dose appetite stimulant clinical trials (8%) (see CLINICAL TRIALS).

The most frequently reported adverse experiences in patients with AIDS during placebo-controlled clinical trials involved the CNS and were reported by 33% of patients receiving Marinol. About 25% of patients reported a minor CNS adverse event during the first 2 weeks and about 4% reported such an event each week for the next 6 weeks thereafter.

#### PROBABLY CAUSALLY RELATED: Incidence greater than 1%.

Rates derived from clinical trials in AIDS-related anorexia (N=157) and chemotherapy-related nausea (N=317). Rates were generally higher in the anti-emetic use (given in parentheses).

*Body as a whole:* Asthenia.

*Cardiovascular:* Palpitations, tachycardia, vasodilation/facial flush.

*Digestive:* Abdominal pain\*, nausea\*, vomiting\*.

*Nervous system:* (Amnesia), anxiety/nervousness, (ataxia), confusion, depersonalization, dizziness\*, euphoria\*, (hallucination), paranoid reaction\*, somnolence\*, thinking abnormal\*.

\* Incidence of events 3% to 10%.

#### PROBABLY CAUSALLY RELATED: Incidence less than 1%.

Event rates derived from clinical trials in AIDS-related anorexia (N=157) and chemotherapy-related nausea (N=317).

*Cardiovascular:* Conjunctivitis\*, hypotension\*.

*Digestive:* Diarrhea\*, fecal incontinence.

*Musculoskeletal:* Myalgias.

*Nervous system:* Depression, nightmares, speech difficulties, tinnitus.

*Skin and Appendages:* Flushing\*.

*Special senses:* Vision difficulties.

\* Incidence of events 0.3% to 1%.

#### CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP UNKNOWN: Incidence less than 1%.

The clinical significance of the association of these events with Marinol treatment is unknown, but they are reported as alerting information for the clinician.

*Body as a whole:* Chills, headache, malaise.

*Digestive:* Anorexia, hepatic enzyme elevation.

*Respiratory:* Cough, rhinitis, sinusitis.

*Skin and Appendages:* Sweating.

#### DRUG ABUSE AND DEPENDENCE

Marinol (dronabinol) is one of the psychoactive compounds present in cannabis, and is abusable and controlled (Schedule III (CIII)) under the Controlled Substances Act. Both psychological and physiological dependence have been noted in healthy individuals receiving dronabinol, but addiction is uncommon and has only been seen after prolonged high dose administration.

Chronic abuse of cannabis has been associated with decrements in motivation, cognition, judgement, and perception. The etiology of these impairments is unknown, but may be associated with the complex process of addiction rather than an isolated effect of the drug. No such decrements in psychological, social or neurological status have been associated with the administration of Marinol for therapeutic purposes.

In an open-label study in patients with AIDS who received Marinol for up to five months, no abuse, diversion or systematic change in personality or social functioning were observed despite the inclusion of a substantial number of patients with a past history of drug abuse.

An abstinence syndrome has been reported after the abrupt discontinuation of dronabinol in volunteers receiving dosages of 210 mg/day for 12 to 16 consecutive days. Within 12 hours after discontinuation, these volunteers manifested symptoms such as irritability, insomnia, and restlessness. By approximately 24 hours post-dronabinol discontinuation, withdrawal symptoms intensified to include "hot flashes", sweating, rhinorrhea, loose stools, hiccoughs and anorexia.

These withdrawal symptoms gradually dissipated over the next 48 hours. Electroencephalographic changes consistent with the effects of drug withdrawal (hyperexcitation) were recorded in patients after abrupt dechallenge. Patients also complained of disturbed sleep for several weeks after discontinuing therapy with high dosages of dronabinol.

#### OVERDOSAGE

Signs and symptoms following MILD Marinol (dronabinol) intoxication include drowsiness, euphoria, heightened sensory awareness, altered time perception, reddened conjunctiva, dry mouth and tachycardia; following MODERATE intoxication include memory impairment, depersonalization, mood alteration, urinary retention and reduced bowel motility; and following SEVERE intoxication include decreased motor coordination, lethargy, slurred speech, and postural hypotension. Apprehensive patients may experience panic reactions and seizures may occur in patients with existing seizure disorders.

The estimated lethal human dose of intravenous dronabinol is 30 mg/kg (2100 mg/70kg). Significant CNS symptoms in antiemetic studies followed oral doses of 0.4 mg/kg (28 mg/70 kg) of Marinol.

**Management:** A potentially serious oral ingestion, if recent, should be managed with gut decontamination. In unconscious patients with a secure airway, instill activated charcoal (30 to 100 g in adults, 1 to 2 g/kg in infants) via a nasogastric tube. A saline cathartic or sorbitol may be added to the first dose of activated charcoal. Patients experiencing depressive, hallucinatory or psychotic reactions should be placed in a quiet area and offered reassurance. Benzodiazepines (5 to 10 mg diazepam *po*) may be used for treatment of extreme agitation. Hypotension usually responds to Trendelenburg position and IV fluids. Pressors are rarely required.

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INFO

## Chamber X with Eve Beglarian

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# Occasions



Mellie, a sweet 6-month-old tabby is ready to be adopted, contact the Houston Humane Society at 713-434-5555 or pr@houstonhumane.org.



Lovely lesbian Barbara Walker is smiling in another birthday on May 16.



Reno and Randall (above) have the two birthday 'R's' at JR's on May 17.



Bobby Rood (owner of the Venture-N) and partner Rick Duplechin share a birthday cake on May 13.

## Birthdays

Sandi of TGRA ropes in a birthday on May 13. Real estate magnet and socialite Bob Ryan toasts in his birthday on May 13. The one and only "Rita Blvd." drags in another birthday on May 18.

## Anniversary

Houston Voice staffer Carolyn (Cuervolyn) Roberts and Jeff (the Lazer Wizard) Roberts celebrate 5 wonderful years of marriage on May 13.

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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# community calendar

## saturday, may 13

After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM. 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. 713-526-5738.  
 Q-Patrol walks the streets 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.  
 Dignity mass. 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.  
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.  
 Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club. 713-863-1860.  
 Houston Wrestling Club. 1:30 p.m. 713-453-7406  
 Rainbow Fishing Club. 713-526-7070.  
 Houston Faerie Circle. 2 p.m. 713-533-0150.  
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry Southwest Center 281-633-2555 & Conroe 936-441-1614. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
 Montrose Writer's Project. 3 to 4:30 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-956-1866.  
 Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center volunteer meeting. Noon. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.  
 Gulf Coast Transgender Community. Meeting. Call for location. 713-780-4282.  
 Kolbe Project. Breakfast Club. 9:30 a.m. 713-861-1800.  
 Houston Outdoor Group. Social. 713-681-7321.  
 Houston Area Bear's Car Wash at Mary's. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 1022 Westheimer. 713-867-9123.

## sunday, may 14

New Hope Christian Center Worship Service. 11 a.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.  
 Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets. 713-942-7002.  
 Rainbow Riders. A bicycle club for women. 713-869-1686.  
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Holy Rite Eucharist I 7:45 a.m.; Holy Rite Eucharist II 8:55 a.m.; Education hour 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist 11 a.m. 713-528-6665.  
 Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church. Service. 6:30 p.m. 713-528-6756.  
 Resurrection MCC. Services. 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10 a.m. Youth Sunday School 11:15 a.m.  
 Handbell Choir rehearsal 1:30 p.m. 713-861-9149.  
 Grace Lutheran Church. Sunday school for all ages 9:00 a.m. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.  
 Community Gospel. Service at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Sunday School for children 10 a.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.  
 Houston Mission Church. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-529-8225.  
 Covenant Baptist Church. Service 9:30 a.m. & education hour 11 a.m. 713-668-8830.  
 Bering Memorial United Methodist. Services at 8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 713-526-1017.  
 The Women's Group. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.  
 Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County. 502 Church St. Service 10:30 a.m. 409-765-8330.  
 First Congregational Church (Memorial). Service at 11 a.m. Christian Education. 11:30 p.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-

houston.org.  
 Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum 10 a.m. Service 11 a.m. 713-686-5876.  
 Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation: Adult discussion 9:45 a.m. Service 11 a.m. 281-277-8882.  
 www.tuuc.org.  
 Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.  
 FrontRunners. 9 a.m. 713-522-8021.

## monday, may 15

Gay Fathers/Fathers First. 8 p.m. 281-505-1788.  
 Bering Support Network. 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.  
 Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.  
 HIV testing. STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 1 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. 713-626-2837.  
 Kolbe Project. Eucharist 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.  
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 936-441-1614.  
 Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.  
 gayDAR. Wellness community. 7 p.m. 713-526-1017 X211.  
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours from 6 to 9 p.m. Black Lesbian & Gay Coalition weekly meeting. 7 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.  
 Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Board meeting. 6:40 p.m. 713-523-7576.

## tuesday, may 16

Gay Men HIV+ Psychotherapy. Montrose Counseling Center. 4:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.  
 Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center 6 p.m. 713-529-0037  
 Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous. 7 p.m. 281-495-8009.  
 PROTECT. An HIV-negative support group 7 p.m. 713-526-1017  
 Women Survivors of Childhood Abuse. Montrose Counseling Center 6:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.  
 Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang 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.  
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 281-633-2555.  
 Lambda Skating Club skates at 8 p.m. Tradewinds. 713-410-7215.  
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. Lesbian Coming Out Group meets 7 p.m. Lesbians Island Young Women's Group meets 7 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-528-3818.  
 Men's Mixer. Center for AIDS. 6 p.m. 713-527-8219.

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**wednesday, may 17**

Free HIV Testing, Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2015 Thomas Street 713-793-4026.  
 STD Exams & treatment. HIV Testing. Free. AVES. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.  
 Houston Crossdressing Anonymous. 7 p.m. 239 Westheimer.  
 BiNet Houston. 7:30 p.m. Social meeting. 713-467-4380  
 Women's Network. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center  
 Richmond. 713-529-0037.  
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 936-441-1614.  
 Project: Caesar. Workshops. AFH. 3203 Wesleyan. 713-623-6796.  
 Out Skate Rollerskating Club. 8 to 10 p.m. 8075 Cook Road. 281-933-5818.  
 Rainbow Ranglers free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. 7 p.m. 713-880-0670.  
 Bible Study. Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.  
 Spiritual Uplift service. 7 p.m. Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.  
 Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.  
 Houston Pride Band. Open rehearsal. 7 p.m. 713-524-0218.  
 Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Various Support Groups 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.  
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. Free HIV testing by the Montrose Clinic 6 to 9 p.m. Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus board meeting. 7:30 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.  
 Gay, Lesbian & Straight Educators Network (GLSEN). Chapter meeting. 7 p.m. 713-529-4571 or GLSENHouston.com.  
 Unsolved Mysteries: The Pathogenesis of HIV Infection. Houston. Center for AIDS. 713-527-8219.

**thursday, may 18**

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Open rehearsal. 7 p.m. 713-521-7464.  
 HIV+ Men Psychotherapy. Montrose Counseling Center. 1:15 p.m. 713-529-0037.  
 Rainbow Ranglers free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. 7 p.m. 713-880-0670.  
 STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.  
 Relapse Prevention. Montrose Counseling Center. 2 p.m. 713-529-0037.  
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 281-633-2555.

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.  
 FrontRunners. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.  
 HIV Art Course Program. 1 to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer 713-526-1118.  
 Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.  
 Community Gospel. Service. 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.  
 HIV Testing. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.  
 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.  
 EC Houston. Pro-Gay, Pro-Christian bible study & fellowship. 800-310-6718 or Houstonec@hotmail.com.  
 Out Together. Discussion led by Tony Carroll, LMSW-ACP. 713-667-1535.

**friday, may 19**

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) meets. 713-942-7002.  
 Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center. 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.  
 STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.  
 Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.  
 Q-Patrol walks the streets. 9:00 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.  
 Kolbe Project. Morning Prayer. 10 a.m. 713-861-1800.  
 Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.  
 Positive Art Workshop. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer. 713-526-1118.  
 Lesbian and Gay Voices. KPFT 90.1 FM. 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.  
 Mishpachot Alizim Shabbat Services. 8 p.m. 713-748-7079.  
 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. Men's Coming Out Group. 7 p.m. 713-524-3818.  
 Healing Eucharist. Christ Church Cathedral. 7 p.m. 1117 Texas. 713-222-2593.  
 Texas Lesbian Conference. Runs through May 21. Renaissance Hotel. 713-460-3435 X3.

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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# Classifieds

## Announcements

### GLSEN

The Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network is a national organization striving to end anti-gay bias in American schools. GLSEN is forming a Houston Chapter. The meeting is May 18, 7pm. at Baba Yega's. Please contact Kathleen Murray at [GLSENHouston@cs.com](mailto:GLSENHouston@cs.com)

### PWA Coalition

Desperately needs the following items: Dishes, silverware, pots/pans, sheets, towels, dressers, dinettes, coffee tables, sofas, chairs and small appliances. Pick-up available, call 713.522.5428.

### Thank You!

We need "Sugar Daddies", underwear and a CURE! • Community Resale at 515 Richmond Ave.

### Project L.E.A.P.

Are you interested in advocating for funding and services for people living with HIV and AIDS? The PWA Coalition-Houston announces start of Project L.E.A.P., an intensive training program for HIV positive individuals and others who want to become advocates for HIV/AIDS related services and funding. Classes for Project L.E.A.P. will begin in May. Participants must complete an application and a limited number of spaces are available. To receive an application or to obtain more information please call Rich Arenschioldt, Project Coordinator at 713.522.5428, ext. 28 or 800.999.0325.

The Ashland Street Theatre is please to show the works of Cindy Duke, a local artist in the community. Call 713.426.3019 for theatre show times.

### 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](http://www.bodypositive.org) or call 713.524.2374.

### Autos For Sale

'92 Crown Victoria, A/C, \$4,800 • '92 Chevy S-10 P/U X-cab, \$3,500 • '90 GEO Storm, \$2,200 • '90 Subaru Wagon, 4-WD, \$3,200 • '90 Jeep Comanche P/U, \$2,900 • Call 713.449.8710 • '97 Dodge Club Cab SLT • 8-cylinder, 28K miles, Stk.#9537 • \$16,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

'97 Toyota Avalon XLS • Leather, 55K miles, Stk.#6856 • \$15,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

'99 Ford Explorer XLT • Leather, 24K miles, CD, Stk.#9559 • \$20,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

'97 Honda Passport EX • 6-cylinder, auto, 51K miles, Stk.#6896 • \$15,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

'97 Ford Mustang GT Coupe • Auto, 38K miles, Stk.#6900 • \$13,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

'99 Ford Explorer Sport • Leather, CD, Stk.#9567 • \$18,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

'99 Chrysler Sebring JX Convertible • 6-cylinder, power seat, Stk.#9578 • \$15,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

'98 BMW 328i Convertible • 11K miles, white, Stk.#6968 • \$36,988 • Richard Sisco, River Oaks Chrysler/Jeep - 713.524.3189.

## Employment

Insurance Agency needs a sharp trainee to learn customer service. • Duties include computer word processing, filing, phones & general office work. • Please call Rob at 713.661.7700.

### Adm. Assistant

Seeking full time energetic candidate with public candor willing to make presentations and familiar with internet. • Will assist in expansion of programming and workshops. • Kolbe Project, 713.861.1800.

Café Beignet, an upscale Galleria restaurant is now hiring manager and professional wait staff. • Fax resume to 713.790.0846 or apply in person at 5381 Westheimer & Yorktown.

Nightingale ADC offers free employment assistance to HIV+ individuals • Including job preparedness training, resume development, job search assistance. For more information call 713.981.1543.

### OUTSIDE SALES

Work with our community and give back at the same time. Good base • Excellent benefits and generous commission • Mon-Fri. • Call Jan Roberts with Community Communications Network at 281.583.3770. See our full page ad in this issue.

Cashier • Late night Shifts • Start \$6.50 per hour • Apply in person 3100 Fannin • Midtowne Spa.

### STEVEN'S HOUSE

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.

## EXHIBITIONIST WANTED

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### WindowMedia

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### BASIC BROTHERS

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## Home Improvements

CLEANRITE, call John • \$8.50 hr., home or office • 713.526.2496 (10% of earnings are donated to AFH).

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### Hawaiian Massage

2 Hours - \$90.00 special (Reg. \$125.00) • 3 Hours - \$125.00 special (Reg. \$175.00) • Tim of L.A. (Rmt.#23477), 713.508.7896.

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## Pets

### TOO CUTE!

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The Homeless Pet Placement League is a Houston area, non-profit animal welfare organization. HPPL provides for the rehabilitation of stray and abandoned dogs and cats through its unique foster care program. All animals are spayed/neutered and have their first set of shots. For more information call 713.862.7387 or view website at [www.HPPL.org](http://www.HPPL.org)

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

## Professional Services

### BODY WAXING FOR MEN

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## Real Estate For Rent

### Totally Renovated!

Montrose spacious, upper duplex • 1/1, study, lot's of closets, polished hardwoods, deck, parking, on-site laundry. • \$795, low deposit • Leave message, 832.326.5201.

### Greenway Condo

Two blocks from Compaq Center • Cozy, 1/1, gated community, W/D on-site, covered parking, courtyards • \$450 month, plus electric • 3400 Timmons Lane, 713.868.2133.

### Heights 2/1

Large closets, central air & heat, 1 car garage, large lot with electric gate, pets OK! • 1606 West 13th Street • \$1,325 plus utilities, 713.868.2133.

### Westbury Gardens

Small 1 bedroom, ground floor, \$400 • Large 1 bedroom, upstairs, \$525 • 2 bedroom, 1 bath flat, upstairs or downstairs, \$625 • 2 bedroom, 1 1/2 bath townhouse with patio, \$750 • All units in a European style complex. Large over-sized pool. Quiet community just outside 610 Loop, near Meyerland Plaza. • Call Lyn, on-site at 713.729.9316.

Heights 1 bedroom Garage Apt. • Berber carpet, appliances, quiet neighbors. • \$450 month, no lease, low deposit. • Call 713.862.9699.

### Allen House Apts.

Large 1 & 2 bedrooms • Downtown location & free shuttle • Ask for specials, 888.283.1899.

Carriage House, 1/1, den, hardwood floors, C-A/H, attached one car garage, utility room, W/D connections, storage room. • No pets/smokers • \$850 month, call 713.297.5632 or 713.297.5648.

### Woodland Heights

1/1 condo with W/D in unit, refrigerator w/ice maker, fireplace, gated, covered/assigned parking, patio, pool. • Non-smoker • Nice unit, award winning community, great location, easy access to downtown. • \$600 month, 1 month security deposit (cable paid), call 713.862.4473.

### HEIGHTS APARTMENTS

New & Unusual 1 Bedroom/1 Bath • \$595 - \$895 per month • Individual flats • 1112 Lawrence @ 11th. Street. • Lauder Properties, 713.862.3747.

### 1 BEDROOM

Great locations Montrose/River Oaks • W/D included • Garage available • New construction • Call for specials • 713.630.0006.

### RIVER OAKS

Plaza at River Oaks • 1 bedroom • W/D included • For details call 713.528.5277.

## Real Estate For Sale

### Land for Sale

8+ acres located 35 miles east of Austin with improvements. • Magnificent view, year round creek with access to 4 - 5 acre lake. • \$6,500 per acre, 512.273.2310.

## Roommates

GWM, 3/2/2 house at Beltway/290 • \$350 month (utilities included), \$50 deposit • Garage, private bath, W/D, non-smoker, pool access • Daytime # - 713.383.3586.

Share fully furnished 2 bedroom apartment during summer. • \$350 month, utilities included • Near Montrose, on-street parking only. • Call 713.521.1712.

GWM seeks same to share Montrose home. • Washer/Dryer, ceiling fan, cable, unfurnished room • Must be stable, non-smoker & no heavy drinkers. • \$300 (all bills paid) • Call Jim (after 6pm), 713.528.5331.

SGWM, non-smoker/drug user seeks roommate to share 2/1, pool, security. • \$375 month plus 1/2 utilities. • Richmond Square Apartments • Call 713.520.7662.

## Travel/Resorts

### WAIKIKI

Luxury ocean view • 18th floor • One bedroom condo in Waikiki • All amenities, fully furnished, including linens and remodeled kitchen. • Lovely terrace looks out to Diamond Head. • Secure building, non-smoking • \$99/night (double), 10 day minimum, security deposit plus cleaning fee • For more information email: [glarp@earthlink.net](mailto:glarp@earthlink.net) or call 310.473.1871 (Los Angeles).

## Volunteer Information

### GAY & LESBIAN SWITCHBOARD

Volunteer classes now forming. Reserve your space on line or call 713.529.9615 or [www.gay-switchboardhouston.org](http://www.gay-switchboardhouston.org).

### 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.

### Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center

is seeking volunteers to staff the facility in more extended hours. If organizations and individuals are interested, please contact Eva Luchak at 713.524.3818 to discuss how you can help.

### 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](mailto:www.rwpc.org).

## Web-sites

[www.bodypositivehouston.org](http://www.bodypositivehouston.org)

[www.bearsonthebayou.com](http://www.bearsonthebayou.com)

[www.HoustonGayWeb.com](http://www.HoustonGayWeb.com)

[www.houstonvoice.com](http://www.houstonvoice.com)

[www.sovo.com](http://www.sovo.com)

[www.impactnews.com](http://www.impactnews.com)

[www.montrosesoftballleague.com](http://www.montrosesoftballleague.com)

[www.iblhouston.net](http://www.iblhouston.net)

[www.gayswitchboardhouston.org](http://www.gayswitchboardhouston.org)

[www.edwina.com](http://www.edwina.com)

[www.lovetinn.com](http://www.lovetinn.com)

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## My Stars!

by JILL DEARMAN

YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



**May 12 - 18**



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

Someone could make you a cup of coffee that changes your life this week. If he or she a Taurus, that's a good sign (no pun, of course). Slow down in the workplace and handle big projects step by step. You can't do everything at breakneck speed.



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

Mercury moves into your money house this week, so think about using your writing and networking skills to make more dough. Nobody ever questions you, do they? This week the one who calls you on your crap—perhaps a Scorpio with integrity and attitude—is your greatest ally.



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

Your ruler Mercury teams up with butch Mars in your sign this week, so anything could happen. You've got the brains and the brawn. Be honest about what you're looking for. Stop sniffing around and decide. A Libra is already out shopping for rings.



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

Pay special attention to what your flesh tells you this week when it comes to making decisions. Before the Sun exits your friendship house for another year, call up as many of your darling comrades as you can to get together for a big "ho"-down. A Sagittarius is especially buddy-buddy.



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

This week can be surprisingly wonderful if you vow not to take anything too seriously, especially yourself. Venus is spreading good cheer at the top of your chart, so consider putting a slightly more artsy spin on your latest career project. A Pisces helps you to rediscover your integrity.



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

Jupiter is passing through the most expansive sector of your chart right now, so please think big. You are full of passion, and a Libra knows it. Don't make any rash decisions, but do put more imagination into your career. Now's the time to show you're not the cold fish people have been saying you are.



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

If you've been obsessing about minutiae at work or complaining about money: shut up and go out. You may discover a secret about yourself that you've kept hidden from your own mind for years. It's an intense week, but cathartic, too. An Aquarius helps you to remember your spirit and your body.



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

The full moon on May 18 falls in your sign, and it should be a pretty dramatic time for you. Trust your senses to lead you in the right direction, but always err on the side of empathy. Slowly say "buh-bye" to the judgmental side of your nature. A Virgo needs your unconditional love.



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

Move out of the spotlight and let someone else be the big cheese this week. You need to worship at the altar of the babe you adore. You could get a chance to work on a project that thrills you, so go for it. A Taurus is turned on by your dedication.



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

You are hornier than usual and that's saying a lot. Go out and have a bacchanal with your buddies during the full moon May 18. This is the week for you to be big and dramatic, instead of laid back and humble. A Cancer loves it when you reveal your (closet) exhibitionist tendencies.



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

This week is full of opportunities that scare the hell out of you, and you know what that means? You've simply got to take some chances. Like Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz," you are about to discover the obvious: what you need is in your own backyard. Notice if a Leo in your life is looking an awful lot like the cowardly lion.



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

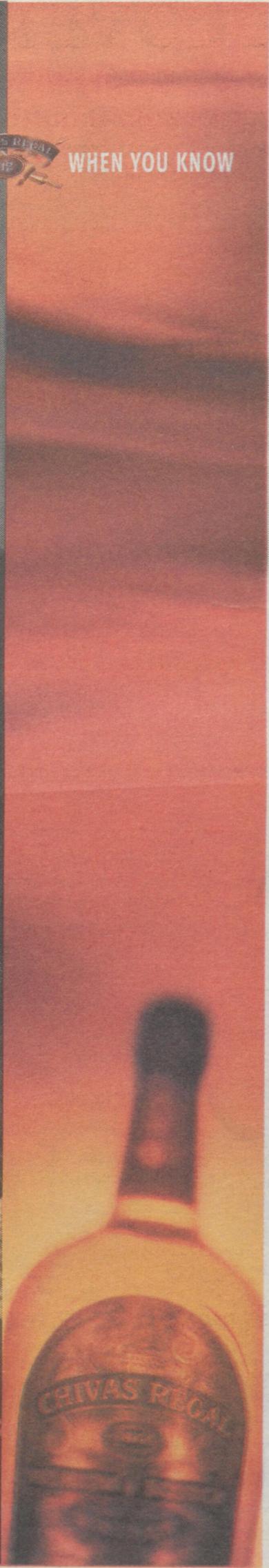
You could find a religion (though not necessarily an organized one) that helps you to put it all in perspective this week. Naturally, you have to be a fanatic about it, you overzealous nut. You need to do some exploring and visit some pretty wild places to figure out what you need. Follow an Aries' lead.

*Jill Dearman is the author of "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](mailto:QScopes@aol.com).*

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WHEN YOU KNOW



Drink responsibly. (But you know that.)

©2000 Chivas Regal 12 Year Old Worldwide Blended Scotch Whisky 40% Alcohol by Volume (80 Proof) Chivas Bros. Import Co., New York, NY. [www.chivas.com](http://www.chivas.com)

# 325 miles in 4 days. Houston to Dallas. Impossible.

## **AIDS isn't under control? Impossible.**

Declining AIDS deaths means more Americans than ever are living with HIV. However, infection rates are rising — and even more people need AIDS services. Over 17,000 Americans died of AIDS last year. AIDS will only be under control when that number, around the world, is zero.

## **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 City<sup>SM</sup>, 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:

JANUS

AA  
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CLIF

Benefiting AIDS service organizations throughout the Lone Star State.