



pointblank times

a lesbian/feminist publication houston, texas 50¢
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You Are What You Wear

Several of us in the collective had heard second and third hand that the Old Plantation (formerly the Bayou Landing), a gay bar/discotheque, was enforcing a dress code which discriminated against blacks and women. We thought it would be interesting to check it out, so four of us "dressed up" and went to the bar.

The man at the door let in two of us (one wearing a pant suit and one in a dress) but stopped the other two (dressed in blue jeans--one tacky, one respectable), because they did not meet the dress code standard. We asked for an explanation and he called the manager, Jodi.

Jodi was extremely patient, polite and patronizing, and amazingly cooperative. This, to the best of our recollections and with the aid of notes one of us took during the conversation, is what he said.

The Old Plantation is one club in a chain of 27 in the United States, all of which are obliged by the corporate entity which owns them to enforce this dress code. Jodi said surprise visitors checked on the club and his job would be on the line if someone not conforming to the code was found on the premises. (Interestingly, Jodi is supposed to wear a coat and tie while on duty and was risking rebuke for inappropriate dress himself.)

What purpose is the code meant to serve, we asked. Jodi said the Bayou Landing had been troubled with "big bull

dykes" ("you know what I mean") coming in and starting fights. The overall manager of the chain (he said) still has scars on his back from a scrap with a "bull dyke" who had scratched him. Hence, said Jodi, it was understandable that the management disliked this "kind of woman."

**OLD PLANTATION
DRESS CODE**

LADIES MUST BE IN
FEMININE ATTIRE

PANT SUITS OR
DRESSES ONLY.

NO JEANS OF ANY KIND.

MEN -- NO FEMININE
ATTIRE OR HATS.

But, we said, how does this relate to the dress code. After all, trouble-makers can wear pantsuits, and jeans do not *per se* mean the wearer is a bad person. Jodi agreed. He himself, after all, often wore jeans off duty. Could men come in jeans, we asked? It depended on who was at the desk, said Jodi. Those who are undesirable in the judgment of whoever is working at the desk are turned away. How do you detect undesirables? Not easy, he said.

Well, we asked, what about the prohibition against hats. Didn't this discriminate against blacks? Referring back to the old club, Jodi said blacks in drag and wearing hats came to the Bayou Landing, some of whom "weren't even gay" and caused trouble, hustled, even rolled other customers. So yes, the code *was* designed to keep out all but a very few blacks, "the nice ones." Again, he confessed, it was a problem figuring out which blacks were "nice."

Since Jodi agreed with us that people cannot be evaluated by the clothes they wear, we asked why they didn't just let everyone in and do the patrolling inside. He said he and another employee are, in

continued on back page

Dear PBT

dear PBT -

i'd be glad to send you more pictures, but don't feel like putting my work out to your publication as long as it gives so much attention to men - i feel strongly that men have their own media, including gay (which doesn't mean me either) and that we women need and deserve all the media space we can get to talk with each other about ourselves, our politics, our culture. if you still think it's all the same struggle be warned by the total tendency of men to replace us, ignore us, co-opt us which i don't feel the need to convince you of apart from your own experience. here's hoping we can work together again sometime in the future.

in struggle and revolution,

*robin birdfeather
austin, texas*

Dear PBT,

I especially enjoyed "Coming Out Green". It's classic. It should be read into the *Congressional Record*.

When PBT arrives each month, I feel as though a friend had reached out and taken hold of my hand.

Hugh Crell

Dear PBT,

As far as material for PBT, can anyone contribute, or do you have certain rules about that? I'd like to try sending in some stuff if that's ok.

N.



Dear N.,

Part of the initial and continuing reason for the existence of PBT is to provide a vehicle for the closeted creativity and talents of people who heretofore have had little encouragement and no publication vehicles.

The one cardinal rule to being published in PBT is: We Can't Print It If You Don't Send It In. We are eager to print a variety of styles (see box below) written from a variety of viewpoints. We can't afford to pay our contributors yet, but as a token of our appreciation we can send you several extra copies of the issue your material appears in, so you can impress your mother or whoever.

Last but not least, keep those cards and letters coming. Thanks!

PBT Collective

Pointblank Times is published 12 times per year by the PBT Collective. Opinions expressed herein are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the PBT Collective.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14643, Houston, Texas 77021

Next Deadline: February 10, 1976

We welcome all contributions, including features, reviews, poetry, announcements, graphics and photographs. Please tell us how you would want your name to appear, and whether you want your material returned to you.

Staff: Alison McKinney/Amanda/Barbara Cigainero/Ellen/Jo/Phyllis/Pokey Anderson/
Susan/Vicki Glasgow

Homo—Centennial

to my friends in the collective:

PBT is, without doubt, the most exciting piece of mail I get. I deliberately postpone reading it until I know I have time to be alone and read and laugh and cry and scream with rage and, mostly, time to reread.

My favorite article in January issue was "Couplism." I have long resisted couplistic attitudes and, unfortunately, have found few people willing to discuss them with me - much less willing to work together to challenge those prejudices.

Amanda, you're wonderful for once again putting it in print that we're not really an alternate lifestyle if all we do is mimic traditional values and principles.

Alice

Dear Collective:

I have purchased only my second copy of *PBT* and would like to stress my appreciation for such wonderful, as well as encouraging people!

To Amanda, I'd like to take this privilege to say, "Right On!" Your article on "Couplism" was simply fantastic! Desperately in need of wide circulation.

Collective, all in all I'd be pleased to help the staff however possible with the *Pointblank Times* publication.

Rusty

On April 30 and May 1, Forward Foundation, Inc., will present a program in San Antonio, Texas called "Gay in San Antonio--A Sense of Belonging?" This program, which will consist of an exhibit of tapes and photo-posters as well as a conference of gay and non-gay citizens, has been officially recognized as part of San Antonio's American Revolution Bi-Centennial Celebration.

At present, the conference and exhibit are still in their formative stages. Anyone who would like to share tapes of their life experiences, letters, photographs, slides, or manuscripts for the exhibit, or anyone with academic training who is interested in facilitating a workshop is encouraged to write to:

Jim Eggeling
Forward Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 12260
San Antonio, Tx. 78212

PBT welcomes announcements of events, meetings, etc. of feminist or gay organizations throughout Texas. Please send your group's news to *PBT* by the 10th of the month in order to reach our readers by approximately the 25th.



an incredibly feminist-lesbian science fiction view of time/space travel. wonderful. i loved reading it. but more than that. it stays with me. it's been weeks since i read it and still several times a day i recall something from the book. and not just recall it. but react to it.

react with much intensity. the full gamut of emotions: love, hate, fear, delight, dread, absolute pleasure, discomfort. everything. sometimes several at once.

written by a woman, of course. and of course i suspect she's both a feminist and a lesbian. cannot imagine that one could write something like this and be otherwise.

story of four women (one of the main characters isn't introduced until the last third of the book or later). they live in different probabilities of earth. they meet and interact with each other and others from their respective worlds. the one who drew most of my attention most quickly (quite deliberately on the author's part i'm sure) was a place called Whileaway. there were no men on whileaway and hadn't been for 8 or 9 centuries. that was certainly an interesting thought.

one of the most delightful passages in the whole book was one in which janet from whileaway was doing a tv talk show in new york in 1969 and was asked by a (male) moderator if the women on whileaway were excited about the possibility of visits of men from earth. she couldn't quite get the point of what he meant (you know of course) until he finally had to discreetly hint that he was referring to their lack of sexual love.

she: oh! you mean copulation.

he: yes.

she: and you say we don't have that?!

he: yes.

she: how foolish of you. of course we do.

he: ah? (he wants to say, "don't tell me.")

she: with each other. allow me to explain.

needless to say she was cut off the air before the explanation spewed forth.

i loved the frankness. i loved his embarassment which i perceived to be great. and i loved her response to him which was irritation, even rudeness, not embarassment to his embarassment. (a "normal" woman's reaction.)

jeanine was from a probability similar to ours in the 1960's and is probably just the epitome of "normal" schizophrenic woman here and now. wanted intensely to get married because she wanted to believe that would magically settle all her frustrations, hostilities, confusions, etc. she knew it wouldn't but wanted to think it would. naturally, there was a lot of outside pressure in that direction.

she nearly succumbed, but didn't; to tell you why she changed would spoil the effect of the entire book, i think. too bad. i'd love to.

i've gone through many emotional phases during and after the reading. was very drawn to the idea of a place and time without men. then alarmed at my own receptiveness to that idea. then angry at myself for being alarmed.

the several love-making scenes with women couples are splendid! told with much delight and fascination but not pornographic voyeurism. they're fun.

there is a nice scene in which the whileaway woman literally punches out an obnoxious cocktail party host (he's from '69 u.s.a.).

one of the signs to me that the author herself is probably lesbian and probably at least semi-active in the women's movement is the way she dealt with hostilities among women on whileaway. i suspect a non-feminist woman or man writing on such a theme would've constructed a place of goodness and light and nice ladies. not this one: she admits casually and openly that sometimes one just can't work out her disagreements with another woman and so they have duels on whileaway.

whileaway marriages are non-monogamous. after all, sex doesn't have anything to do with commitment or feelings.

so they say.

the various characters at several points give long potent feminist propaganda speeches, solely for the benefit of the reader, usually. there is much anger in these tirades. i was drawn to them and reread them.

not easy to read if you require that stories be told in order. it is told in first person and the author switches the point of view from one character to another frequently and without notice. you just have to pick it up as you go along. and sometimes she just tells it in first person--i, the author. and the author named one of the main characters after herself. i liked that ego.

i would live to meet this woman and hear her speak. would like to read other written works of hers.

and i would like to touch her and tell her i think she's splendid.

alice shrader

PBT-Shirts



"Stunning!"

- *Women's Wear Daily*

"You must see them."

- *Judith Crist*

"Ring-a-ding-a-dingie."

- *Lili Tomlin*

Design is silkscreened in brown ink on your choice of T-shirt color: sky blue, forest green, or sun yellow.

Available in Houston at the Women's Center (3602 Milam), Abraxas (1200 W. Alabama), or from various members of the *PBT* Collective.

Available by mail from *Pointblank Times*, P. O. Box 14643, Houston, TX. 77021. Send \$4.50 + 50¢ postage for each shirt along with your name and address. State choice of color and size: small (34-36), medium (38-40), large (42-44), or extra large (46-48). (Medium fits an "average" woman from about 5'4" to 5'8".)

Hugh Crell's Gay Predictions For 1976

gays and the media



Gay prognosticators are known for the high degree of accuracy of their predictions. This is probably attributable to their heightened sensitivity to social attitudes and trends. My predictions for 1975 were without error. For example, I correctly foresaw that someone would be discharged from military service for homosexual conduct. I also knew in advance that a homosexual would be discovered in San Francisco. Uncanny, eh?

After long and careful deliberation, I have prepared my predictions for 1976 which I am glad to share with you.

1. A lesbian will compete in the national women's invitational softball tournament in Memorial Park. Another will observe from the stands.
2. Sometime during the afternoon of June 12, a homosexual will appear at the intersection of Montrose and Westheimer.
3. A resident of Pasadena will conclude that she is gay after an agonizing self-appraisal.
4. Pokey Anderson will identify herself as a lesbian before a predominantly heterosexual group.
5. A homosexual will become a parent, but not apparent.

Hugh Crell

The establishment press has never been friendly toward the gay community. On the contrary, they have been active agents in promoting fear and hatred of homosexuals.

Take as an example the front page headline of the final edition of the Jan. 8, 1976, *Houston Chronicle*: "Homosexual Tells Police He Killed Three Men Here." That this account of murder was newsworthy certainly is not in question. But the emphasis on the sexuality of this alleged murderer perfectly demonstrates the *Chronicle's* heterosexist policy toward crimes that have a sexual connotation.

Recently, the *Chronicle* ran a story on the arrest of the mayor of Seabrook, Tx. for sexual abuse of children. Nowhere in their coverage did the paper allude to the mayor's heterosexuality. In the same vein, when a rapist's arrest is covered by the paper, have you seen the headline read, "Heterosexual Rapist Arrested." You have not, and you probably will not. The reason for this is clear. The *Houston Chronicle* and the *Houston Post* use the word "homosexuality" as a derogatory term that implies a causal factor in the crimes committed. This man or woman committed these acts *because* they are homosexual, *i. e.* queer, sick, deranged, etc. The fact that heterosexuals sometimes kill those with whom they have had sexual intercourse, besides raping women and occasionally abusing children (often their own) is never brought to the attention of the newspaper readers.

Neither news source would ever consider implying that a heterosexual's sexual orientation had anything to do with the sex-related crime that they committed.

The result of such prejudiced reporting is that the community which reads these news accounts has all the fears and myths which they have held about the gay community soundly reinforced. An atmosphere is created which supports the oppression of gays. All of the efforts which numerous gay organizations in Houston might make in one year's time are nullified and made void by one sensational and distorted headline.

As if this were not enough, both the *Chronicle* and *Post* have also taken it upon themselves to foster division among gays and those organizations which have expressed support for gay rights.

Articles have appeared in both papers (see *Chronicle* 12-28-75 and the *Post* 11-18-75) which have stated that a faction (the Independents) of the National Organization for Women is in opposition to the position of support NOW took on lesbians at its past convention. To quote from the *Post*, "Some, but not all, members of the (Independents) also were unhappy at the attention given lesbian issues at the Philadelphia conference."

Helen Cassidy, National Board Member of NOW and member of the Independents, responded to this quote by saying, "Nothing could be farther from the truth. We have three up-front lesbians in our group. The only time we have discussed the lesbian issue was in an effort to come up with ideas on how to take positive action on the issue. We have no intentions of being conservative on the lesbian issue."

Cassidy related that the reporter who had written the article for the *Post*, had raised the question of the Lesbian Resolution with her and that she (Cassidy) had been very clear as to the Independents' support for lesbians.

The use of inflammatory headlines and the blatant misrepresentation of fact about the gay movement indicates that both the *Post* and *Chronicle* are using

their vast power and influence to foster homophobia in the straight community and division among gays and their supporters.

If their policies result from ignorance instead of malice, this could be corrected if they were to be inundated by letters of indignation from the community, gay and straight. In the meantime, don't depend on either source for reliable information on gays●

Barbara Cigainero

MCC Youth Group

A youth group in Houston's MCC (Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection) is now being formed. Just as MCC welcomes all people regardless of sexual preference, MCC's youth group welcomes all interested people up to age 21. If you're interested in finding out more about GAY (Growing American Youth), contact them at MCC's number, 522-4446.

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TELLING MOM

Over the years I have collected from friends stories about how their families found out about IT. They break down into general categories. First, and most traumatic, is when Mom/Dad/Sibling walks into the living room/bedroom/kitchen while daughter is getting it on with her roommate/friend/teacher. Second is when A LETTER is found by an interested family member. That one is tough because it usually means you get an hysterical phone call long distance while you are studying for finals or are otherwise vulnerable. The third means of revelation is actually telling Mom, stuttering up to it and spitting it out.

I've personally experienced all three, which means I have a very stubborn mother. The first was when I was 13 and my very young sister threw open the door to my bedroom. "Mother," she screamed. "Sister is kissing Barbara and they're NAKED!" Mother's voice came calmly from another room: "It's all right, dear. It's just a stage girls go through."

When THE LETTER was found, I was a sophomore in college. My mother called to say my roommate's mother had found a letter from me and the roommate's mother was calling the dean of my college but for ME not to worry because mother knew it was just a stage that girls go through. That, of course, was not what my housemother said when she kicked me out of the dorm.

The personal confrontation came just recently. I said directly to my mother: "Mother, I think it's important that you understand the nature of my relationship with ____." "You don't have to explain," she said happily. "I understand it very well, and I'm very happy for you both."

Terrific, I thought. The next day, however, we took her with us to look at a new house. We were talking about fixing this bedroom up for us and the other bedroom up as a study. "Nonsense," she said. "You'll be too crowded. Each of you take a bedroom and fix up that back room as a study."

Rats. I must have left something out about our relationship.

Most of the stories I've heard have a lot in common with one another. But there are highlights. Like the friend who decided to give it to her mother as a Christmas present. Her sister and brother were coming to town for a sweet, family Christmas, and my friend writes her mother a long, carefully thought out letter about the fact that her dear daughter is gay. The idea was, see, her mother was to get the letter just before she set out for the long drive to Houston and Christmas and her gathered family. That way she would have lots of time to think about it and by the time she got here everything would be fine.

Only she didn't get the letter before she left home. And daughter spent all of Christmas holiday wondering how she was going to tell Mom that an interesting letter awaited her when she got home.

Another story has it that after mother was told, she spent three days in the bathtub, crying. Another mother ran away to visit her own college roommate whom she had not seen for 20 years. And yet another immediately called her psychiatrist only to be told that she too had such leanings.

Few parents take the news philosophically, but one local lesbian had such luck with her mother that it has inspired many another to tell all.

This brave lady had anguished over her revelation for months. She had gnashed her teeth and smoked too much. Finally she went home for the confrontation. It was now or never. She had five days at home and she used every one of them to work up to it. Finally her last day came. She sat at the kitchen table while her mother was fixing dinner. She couldn't form the words. She looked at the clock and promised herself that by the time the clock hit 6:30 pm she would have spoken it. The clock ticked and her mother talked. At 6:29 her mother said: "Which would you prefer, cauliflower or broccoli?" It was 6:30 and daughter said, "Mother, I'm a lesbian."

Dinner was late that evening but mother and daughter had a closer relationship after that.

I once knew a college professor who was gay but who wanted to remove this secret from her relationship with her mother. Her technique was to send her mother articles clipped from magazines and behavioral science journals. Anonymously. She figured that once her mother became familiar with the literature, she could then just discuss her own lifestyle with ease.

Months went by, as did many unsigned messages. Finally she went home for a holiday only to find a very distraught mother. The elderly woman finally confided in her daughter that she had been receiving the most incredible obscene material in the mail, but that postal inspectors were now tracing them to their source. My friend stopped sending the enlightening literature.

Jo

(PBT welcomes vignettes about this subject. How did YOUR mother find out?)



Share us with a friend.

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Gift Message?

On The Leaving Of Lovers

for: Rusty

& so they have left us:

your slim strong man
& my small confused lady-friend

they have left us

& two women sit
gripping their shreds of lost love in clenched angry-hurt fists

you think of him / i remember her

we bear our separate pain
with our aching hearts
close/pressed
together

you speak quietly,
"you must cry once a day-
it will help."

& the first of those
tears begin
for us both

mine sob loud against your neck
yours cry softly through my hair

the awful doubt/of how much (or now how very little) we are

hangs

about our heads

the anguished
WHY?

dangles
between us

he has gone to other women

she has left me for a man

& two women sit
sharing sorrow
over the leaving of lovers
& as sisters
we weep

Lisa Fenton

GPC Combats Discrimination



Yupon Bowl

The second annual Yupon Bowl Homecoming is upon us! Arch-rivals The Lima Beans and The Mean Red Machine will face each other in a rematch of last year's gripping touch football contest.

There will also be half time entertainment and assorted floats and spectators. And, if the Search Committee is successful, a new Homecoming Queen will be crowned. Come join the fun!

(If you would like to participate in the halftime entertainment -- Quasi-Musical or otherwise-- Call Betty at 487-2489.)

Time: Sunday, February 1, 1:00 p.m.
(Rain date February 8)

Place: Yupon Bowl
(Schoolyard on Fairview
at Yupon in Houston's
infamous Montrose area)

Houston's Gay Political Caucus is concerned that the gay community here be unified. Toward its goal of fighting discrimination wherever it may rear its ugly head, GPC has started an Affirmative Action Committee to investigate charges of discrimination within the gay community against gay people because of their sex, race, etc. GPC has received reports that some local gay bars have hassled people arbitrarily. If you or someone you know experiences discrimination in one of our bars, please contact the Affirmative Action Committee through GPC's phone, 526-2668. Please record as many details as possible, such as name of person you feel treated you unfairly, name of bar, persons accompanying you, etc.

UNCLASSIFIED

Ad copy plus 10¢/word should be received by the 10th to appear in the following month's issue.

* * * * *

Me and small dog need small Montrose apartment bills paid. Linda Lovell. 523-0506

WANTED: apartment/duplex/house to serve as office for PBT, living quarters for one staffer; preferably bills paid, near Montrose, and cheap.

NEED MONEY? Then we won't ask you for any. But if you are looking for a way to support PBT and can afford it, may we suggest a six month pledge of \$1 per month or more to help us finance much needed office space to house typewriter and one shitworker/coordinator.



You Are...

fact, on watch inside, with access to cattle prodders in case of trouble. He had to break up five fights on New Year's Eve alone. So obviously, a dress code is not improving the manners of their clientele.

This code is sexist and racist, we said. Jodi shrugged and said it was out of his hands. The owners wanted a "nice, all-American, clean cut crowd" where the men look like men and the women dress like girls. Enforced sex roles, in other words, in a gay bar. Even he could see some irony in that, but again insisted he just followed orders.

We established to our satisfaction through this visit that the Old Plantation has a dress code that is designed to harass gay women and blacks. The "reason" for the dress code (to keep out troublemakers) is no justification for a discriminatory policy, and besides, they still have to patrol inside to break up fights, so the code is obviously ineffective in avoiding trouble, though that is its purported function.

This all leads us to conclude that the purpose of the dress code has nothing to do with avoiding fights in the club, but is designed to establish and maintain a male, white clientele. "This is mainly a boy's club," Jodi said, when explaining why men could wear jeans and women could not. Possibly they want white men as customers because they have more money to spend than women and blacks, maybe they just don't like "bull dykes" and blacks. Whatever the reason for the ownership's preference for white males, the dress code implemented is blatantly and unapologetically sexist and racist.

All of which, upon reflection, casts further light on the renaming of the club. The Old Plantation dedicates itself to serving white men and to keeping women in dresses and blacks outside. Perhaps the Old South *has* quietly risen again.

Alison/Barbara/Ellen/Phyllis