



## boy's back

Boy George pans marriage for gays but says he can't wait to spin at Rich's.

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APRIL 30, 2004

## Local activist to become first trans law partner

Another milestone for Phyllis Frye, named partner in Nechman & Simoneaux firm

By JOSEF MOLNAR

Phyllis Randolph Frye, who has scaled her share of legal hurdles, struck down another barrier last week when she became the nation's first openly transgender lawyer to be named partner in a law firm.

Frye, who became a Houston legend by striking down city ordinances and winning tough court cases, stepped out of retirement last week when she joined the openly gay Nechman & Simoneaux Law Firm, adding her name to the partnership list.

The partnership of Nechman, Simoneaux and Frye, becomes official on May 1.

"I am very excited about it," Frye said. "It demonstrated again that transgender people are being allowed to move into more mainstream things."

The move represents a significant accomplishment for Frye, who managed her own highly successful and groundbreaking practice for 20 years before going into semi-retirement a few years ago because of various health-related problems.

While it appeared that Frye wanted to remain in retirement even



Phyllis Frye (center) will join John Nechman (right) and Jerry Simoneaux in their law firm, becoming the first transgender law partner in the country.

after she returned to full health, during a chance conversation with John Nechman and Jerry Simoneaux she revealed her willingness to return to a full professional life.

"We were talking about the new partnership and before we knew it, I said I was interested and they said they were interested and we formed a three-way partnership," Frye said.

Nechman added, "Everyone assumed she was happily retired and would not come out of that because she certainly earned it. But when a legend comes to you and says 'I want to be a part of this,' it's the easiest thing to do."

The firm will now add Frye's expertise in transgender issues to

the immigration, business and estate planning, and criminal defense focus of its other partners.

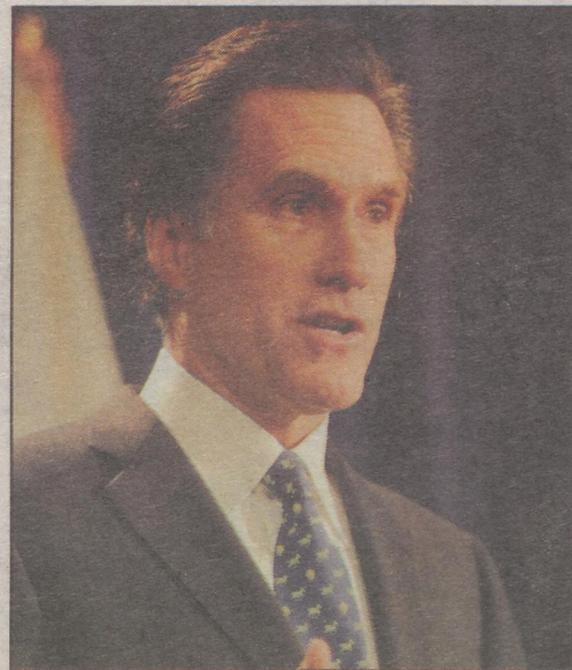
"They have a lot of experience in family law, litigation and criminal law, so we will be able to mentor new legal associates and definitely strategize on cases," she said.

"It's very exciting because I used to turn away people and refer them out, and now we can keep them in the partnership."

Nechman added that their work on gay, lesbian and transgender legal issues should contribute toward legal progress.

"We want to be a firm that's on the cutting edge of issues in the

Please see **FRYE** on Page 5



Mass. Governor **Mitt Romney** (R) says he will use a 1913 law to block out-of-state couples from traveling to Massachusetts to get married this summer. (AP photo)

## Mass. governor jilts out-of-state gay couples

Republican Romney says only local residents can marry on May 17

By JOE CREA

BOSTON — Citing a 1913 law that prohibits Massachusetts from marrying an out-of-state couple whose marriage would not be recognized in their home state, Republican Gov. Mitt Romney announced last weekend he will enforce the old

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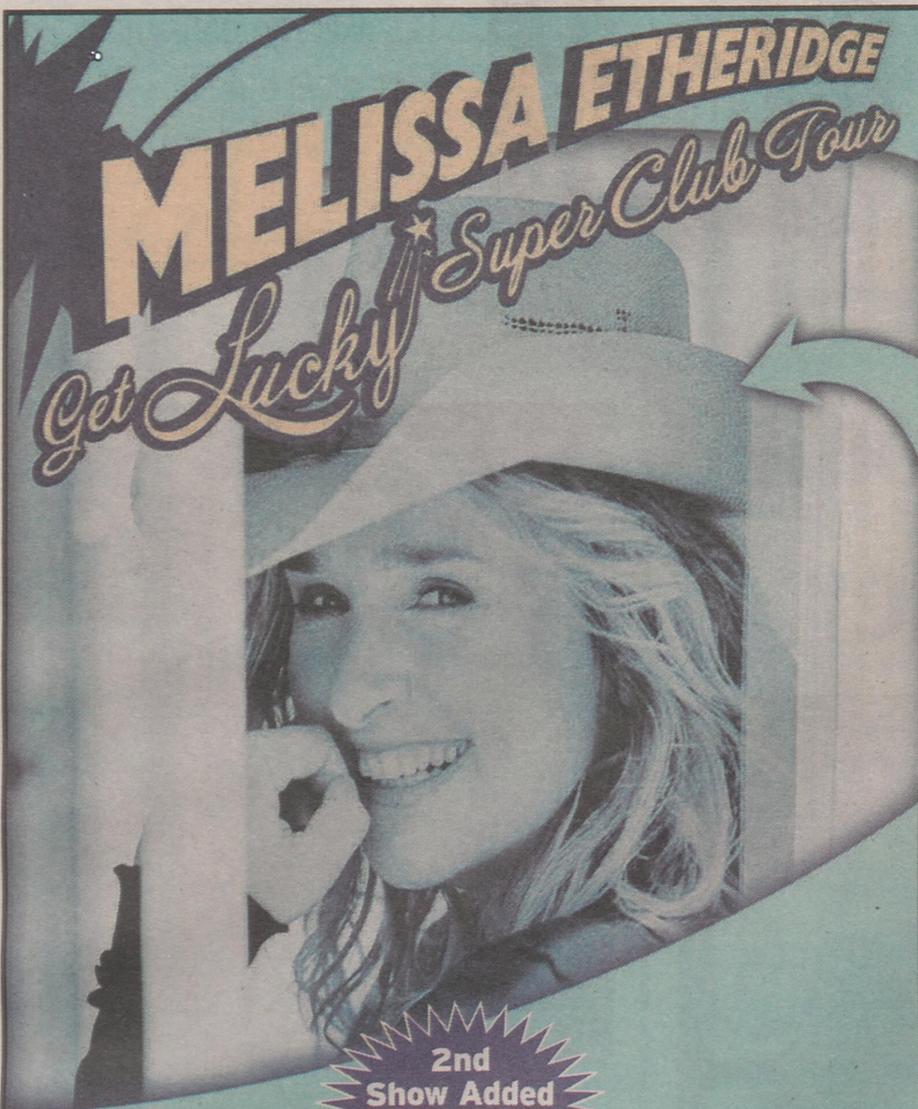
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- ◇ Use the Internet to meet men

Participants will take part in a one hour focus group session with 5-7 other men and will receive compensation for their time.

## houston news

# Activists say focus amendment fight on Constitution, not gays

Panelists say public debate should not focus on gay marriage itself

By JOSEF MOLNAR

Activists at a Human Rights Campaign Houston forum on gay marriage argued that the best way to fight a federal amendment banning gay marriage was to focus on the Constitution and not on the more controversial issue of gay marriage itself.

While the discussion, last Tuesday at Stages Repertory Theatre, served as an introductory dialogue into the issue of the proposed Constitutional amendment, some lesser known, underlying issues gave attendees more to consider.

For instance, panelists argued that the amendment would prevent states from enacting Vermont-style civil unions as well; a charge that President Bush and the amendment's sponsors dispute.

At the same time, the Federal Marriage Amendment would not affect church commitment ceremonies because they are religious ceremonies protected by the First Amendment.

Mark Wood, president of the Houston chapter of the Stonewall Democrats, said he wants the gay men and lesbians to realize that same-sex marriage is a civil rights issue.

"If people look back on this time in history, we want them to know the gay community stood up and did something about this," he said.

The issue was discussed by a panel that also included Mitchell Katine, cooperating attorney for Lambda Legal Defense in the Lawrence v. Texas Supreme Court case; Randall Ellis, the director of the Lesbian & Gay Rights Lobby of Texas; Seth Kilbourne, a field director with the Human Rights Campaign; and Chris Barron, the political director for the Log Cabin Republicans. Ernie Manouse, the host of "The Connection" and "InnerViews" on Houston PBS, served as moderator.

### Mass. marriages push debate

Conservative leaders have been quick to push the process to adopt the amendment because of a decision last year by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court to allow same-sex marriage. The decision, if not delayed, would allow such ceremonies on May 17.

An amendment to ban same-sex marriage nationally would have to pass the House of Representatives and the Senate by two-thirds margin in each and then be ratified by three-fourths of the states in the U.S.



The debate over a proposed Constitutional amendment on marriage should focus on the dangers of amending the Constitution, rather than trying to win people over about gay marriage itself, said panelists (from left) Mitchell Katine, Christopher Barron, Seth Kilbourne, Mark Wood and Randall Ellis. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

Katine held up a thin, hand-sized book containing the Constitution as a display of its simplicity.

He said the document was intended to leave most issues to the states, but the amendment would circumvent that process, since federal law superimposes state law.

### 'Not about same-sex marriage'

Barron said conversations with straight people should center on the effect such a move would have on future movements to restrict rights for Americans. He said opponents to gay civil unions want to override social progress.

"This is not about same-sex marriage," he said. "This is about amending the constitution. They want to overturn 225 years of history and freeze time."

Barron was quick to stress to the audience that gays, lesbians and straight people of all political persuasions should be concerned about the impact of any amendment, and particularly this one.

If the amendment goes into effect, only the intervention of the U.S. Supreme Court or a similar Congressional measure could remove it.

"The reality is that they have more resources, but we can't let them win this," Barron said. "If we lose this one, we will be fighting it for the next 50 or 100 years."

Ellis said gays should take a two-pronged approach by talking to people they know

about the issue as well as confronting their federal representatives through letters, phone calls and face-to-face discussions.

"We have the opportunity to approach our senators and representatives and get involved," he said. "They need to hear from the people they represent."

He also encourages gays and lesbians to form coalitions with other disenfranchised groups to increase the level of support each needs for their legitimate battles, but said it should be a continuous relationship.

"We have to be able to reach out to them on their terms, with their issues, and not just when we need something," he said.

Panelists agreed battle over gay unions has been especially intense because of advances in a series of positive outcomes of gay equal rights cases over the past few years.

Kilbourne said the argument has largely been a social one that has been exploited by conservatives.

"They have been successful about exploiting the discomfort that people have about same-sex couples," he said. "While we have a political movement where we have made political gains, we are also at risk of losing some of it."

In his conversations with straight married couples, Katine said, they were not concerned about the impact of gay marriage on their own unions, but the effect it would have on their children.

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PERSECUTION CLAIMS INCREASING: A Toronto lawyer says sexual orientation asylum complaints are on the increase. Page 9

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## houston news

# Burglars hit Houston GLBT Community Center

Q-Patrol struck hardest, cell phones worth \$1,000 taken from storage locker

By BINNIE FISHER

Recruiting volunteers is normally uppermost in the mind of Chris Arasin, chair of Q-Patrol, Inc., but last Monday afternoon, he learned the organization had another, more pressing problem.

Sometime between 2 p.m. Sunday, April 25, and 5 p.m. Monday, April 26, an intruder broke into the Houston GLBT Community Center at 3400 Montrose Blvd., and used a screwdriver to pry open three storage lockers, one of which belonged to Q-Patrol.

Arasin said the burglar knew what he or she wanted. Taken from the Q-Patrol locker were four Nextel communication units that serve as both cell phones and walkie-talkies.

A second locker belonged to the community center and a third to the Houston Big Men's Club. Arasin said the Big Men's Club lost about \$250 in supplies set aside for meetings.

"The story is not so great for Q-Patrol," he said. "Over \$1,000 worth of damage and



Chris Arasin, chair of Q-Patrol, Inc., said a \$500 reward is being offered for return of four cell phones taken in a burglary at the Houston GLBT Community Center. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

theft was inflicted on the Patrol."

Arasin said the Nextel i55sr wireless phones alone are valued at \$250 each. Financial loss aside, he said, the theft makes a substantial dent in the patrol's ability to operate effectively and safely.

"That leaves only two operational radios, which will limit the ability to conduct patrols," Arasin said. "Each group needs to have at least two radios because

batteries don't last that long. This really diminishes our ability to operate safely as a patrol."

He described the phones as yellow with black trim. The phones are manufactured to have a dual function, Arasin said, but these could not be used as cell phones but only as walkie-talkies on the network.

"As of now, we've stopped all communication on the phones, so they're use-

### **i** MORE INFO

Q-Patrol, Inc.  
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less," he said. "The only thing [the thief] could do now is call 911, which we'd really appreciate it if they would."

Arasin said the center, located on an upper floor of the building at 3400 Montrose, experienced an attempted break-in a week ago.

"The person who did this was familiar with the center," he said.

"It may have been someone who had been to the center to utilize the services of one of the organizations there. They knew where the weak part was."

He added that the thief went directly to the lockers and did not ransack other areas of the center's offices.

Arasin said Q-Patrol is working with the Houston Police Department to solve the theft.

"Q-Patrol, Inc. is offering up to a \$500 reward for the return of the stolen equipment or the arrest and conviction of those who committed this crime," he said.

Aside from the loss, Arasin said, "To the whole community, this is a big slap in the face."

# Katine, Lawrence and Garner to be honored by ACLU

Civil rights commitment to be recognized in striking down sodomy law

By JOSEF MOLNAR

The three Houston area men behind Lawrence vs. Texas will be honored May 8 for overturning the law that criminalized homosexuality in Texas.

The Houston chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) will present the plaintiffs in the suit, John Lawrence and Tyron Garner, and attorney Mitchell Katine with a new award being given for the first time.

Katine, Lawrence and Garner will receive the 2004 Dassia Porper Liberties in Justice Award, named after a longtime ACLU activist during the group's annual spring gala.

In a 6-to-3 decision on June 26, 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Texas Homosexual Conduct Law and in the process all state laws criminalizing sodomy.

Attorney Katine took the case in 1998 when he learned that Garner and



Attorney Mitchell Katine (right) and (from left) Tyron Garner and John Lawrence will be honored by the ACLU Houston Chapter. (Photo by Penny Weaver)

Lawrence were arrested while having sex in Lawrence's apartment. Harris County Sheriff Deputies stormed in the bedroom, took the two men out in their underwear, arrested them and jailed them for a night.

Katine told the Houston Voice that receiving an award from the ACLU is an honor for someone who has long respected the organization. "I just really have grown up respecting the ACLU for all their work."

But when Katine accepts the award, he won't focus solely on Lawrence vs. Texas. He plans to highlight another groundbreaking Supreme Court case, Loving vs. Virginia, in which the nation's highest

### **i** MORE INFO

Houston Chapter ACLU Gala  
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court overturned Virginia's miscegenation law, which barred mixed-race marriages.

Katine said a look back at history shows some similarities to the battle now being waged over same-sex marriage.

"In 1911, there was a constitutional amendment proposed to ban interracial marriage. But as a result of its failing to get approved, states enacted their own laws," he said. "So I think it's astonishing that people are proposing a federal amendment against same-sex marriages and now the states are getting into the act. This is history repeating itself."

Katine said the next major milestone for marriage will take place May 17, when same-sex couples will legally wed in Massachusetts by order of the state's highest court.

"I think a lot of people are going to get married in Massachusetts and the more people getting married, the harder it will be to reverse it," he said.

George Barnstone, president of the Houston ACLU chapter, said Katine is being honored for his work in preparing the case to go all the way to the Supreme

Court, and Lawrence and Garner are being honored for taking a stand.

"We are privileged to honor John Lawrence and Tyron Garner for having the bravery and the energy to stand up for what is right, and that is their right to privacy," he said.

Barnstone said although this is the first time the chapter has awarded the Dassia Porper award, it is not being done lightly. Although Porper was not an attorney, he said, she was adamant about standing up for the rights of others.

"She was a good civil libertarian who fought for what's right," he said.

In addition, Barnstone said, the chapter will honor one of its founders, Ben Levy with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

The event takes place at 7 p.m. at a private residence at 2106 Persa in Houston and will feature cuisine from some of the city's best restaurants.

Humorist Jim Hightower, former Texas agriculture commissioner and the best-selling author of "Thieves In High Places: They've Stolen Our Country And It's Time To Take It Back," will be the featured speaker.

Cost of the gala is \$75 per person. Although it will be possible to pay at the door, Barnstone said, those who plan to attend are encouraged to mail their checks in advance, made out to the ACLU-Houston Chapter-Gala, to P.O. Box 132047, Houston, TX 77219.

## houston news

# Partnership could pave way for transgender professionals

FRYE, continued from Page 1

community, and we spend tons of time looking over latest case law," Nechman said. "Now we have the top transgender attorney in the world in our office, and we want to use those elements to help other firms who deal with issues related to the GLBT community."

Frye has personal knowledge of discrimination that transgender persons face. Her military service ended after she came out in 1972. Her career in engineering ended after she underwent sexual reassignment in 1976.

Those setbacks might have defeated anyone else, but Frye saw them as an opportunity to return to school and get a law degree so that she could fight discrimination in the courts.

Among her early victories was to strike down Houston's cross-dressing ordinance. In her first criminal case, she opened by informing the jury that her client was gay and that she was a transgender attorney. She won.

She represented Christie Lee Littleton, the San Antonio transgender woman who had been told by the courts that she could not file a wrongful death suit against her husband's doctors because she was born a man.

Nechman said Frye's reputation as a hard-working, dedicated lawyer became apparent to him soon after he entered the profession.

"It didn't take me long to learn what she accomplished in the Houston community," he said. "She gave everything of hers to break down barriers, and she has always fought for everyone. She has moved Heaven and Earth to make sure everyone is taken care of and represented well in the courts."

Nechman, Simoneaux and Frye is the second firm in the nation to employ an openly transgender lawyer and the first to establish one as an equal partner.

Alyson Meiselman, an associate attorney with Scurti and Gulling in Maryland and a board member of the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association, said Frye's decision to join the firm marks an important step in integrating open transgender people into the professional community.

"Being in a practice with other attorneys gives her more flexibility and raises her level of exposure for the transgender community in Texas and the Houston area," Meiselman said.

"It's a boon to them because they now have a firm representing them in areas that might be more complicated."

The public announcement of the part-



Early in her law career, Phyllis Randolph Frye helped eliminate Houston's cross-dressing ordinance.

nership last weekend at the 12th Annual Transgender Unity Banquet brought several rounds of applause for the partners, but Nechman said he was surprised that the inclusion of even hard-working and successful transgender lawyers in a partnership was so uncommon.

"I am horrified and furious that it has taken until this year for that to happen," he said. "There are only a couple of firms where there are transgender attorneys working, and I hope this will open the door for them because they have earned that right."

Frye and Nechman are adjunct instructors at South Texas College of Law, and all three partners vowed to continue working on issues facing gay men, lesbians and transgender persons.

Nechman and Frye serve on the board of the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association, and Simoneaux serves as the president of the Stonewall Law Association of Greater Houston.

Lilly Roddy, a longtime activist and prominent member of the transgender community in Houston, said the move is an important step toward transgender equality.

She added that Frye's return as a member of a legal partnership will allow her to build an even greater presence in the community.

"No one can replace her," Roddy said, "Phyllis has once again changed the laws of the land."

### **i** MORE INFO

Nechman, Simoneaux & Frye  
www.nsflaw.us

## houston news

# Memorial service planned Saturday for Tom Strain

## Former counselor at Montrose Counseling Center died in San Antonio car crash

A memorial service for Thomas Mackenzie Strain, 46, of Houston, formerly of Elkhart, Indiana, will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 1, at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2025 W. 11th St. Viewing will be from noon to 2 p.m.

Strain was killed in an automobile accident Saturday, April 10, 2004, in San Antonio, Texas.

Born December 26, 1957, Strain graduated from Elkhart Memorial High School in 1976, earned a B.A. at Indiana University in 1980, and completed work on a Master of Social Work degree at the University of Houston in 1989. He left an indelible impression on many friends and colleagues.

Strain was a caring person who worked as a therapist and Licensed Clinical Social Worker at Baywood Hospital, Montrose Counseling Center, and, most recently, as a supervisor with the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team at Houston's Memorial Hermann Hospital System.

He volunteered his time, talent, and energy to diverse groups such as the Lambda Center, AIDS Foundation Houston, and the Houston Gay and Lesbian Switchboard.

In addition to his full-time employment, he was also certified in crisis debriefing, was a continuing education service provider with Social Work PRN, mentored newly graduated social workers, counseled private clients, and lead therapy groups.

Strain was a talented musician and a gifted actor. He played starring roles in



Thomas Mackenzie Strain

high school plays and also wrote, acted and directed numerous musicals during the annual Houston Round Up for the Lambda Center.

His friends and extended family will miss his infectious love of life and people. Strain will be remembered for his wit, charm, and unquenchable spirit as well as his compassion.

Strain is survived by his mother, Helen Coe Mackenzie Strain, of Union, Michigan; two sisters, Sandra Coe Strain of Bristol, Indiana, and Peg Strain of Union, Michigan; a brother, Robert Leroy Mitchell, Jr. and a nephew, Robert Leroy Mitchell III, both of Fairbanks, Alaska. His father, Jack Allen Strain, preceded him in death on August 24, 2002.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in his name be made to the Lambda Center, Attn: Tributes, 1201 W. Clay, Houston, Texas 77019 or to The NAMES Project, Attn: Tributes, 101 Krog Street, Atlanta, Georgia, 30307.

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## around houston

# Gay Houstonians do good works, good fun



Kim Ogg, executive director of Crime Stoppers, (right) attended the Neartown Little League Social with Olivia Jordan and son Jack Jordan. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)



Vance Nesbitt (left) recognized Judie Cross for her contributions during the Bering Volunteer Recognition Event. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)



Rob Landes, Ray Ramirez and the Rev Carolyn Mobley talked after the 31st Anniversary Celebration at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)



Jim Bentley and Jason Sechrest attended the Deb-U-Not ball. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)



Brenda Thomas received an award from attorney Phyllis Frye during the Transgender Unity Banquet. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

## national news

### Gay lovers climb Central Park tree in protest, taunt police

NEW YORK (AP) — Two gay lovers — a man in a dress and a teen in only a pair of shorts — protested their families' lack of understanding for their relationship by climbing a Central Park tree last week, stripping, performing lewd acts in front of onlookers, and refusing to come down for hours. The lovers, ages 32 and 17, scaled the 55-foot larch tree next to the Chess & Checkers House around 4 p.m., said Detective John Sweeney, a police department spokesperson. The couple had told the teen's parents about their relationship and been rebuked, police said. The man performed oral sex on the teen and stripped down to a thong to taunt them, police said. Police were alerted to the mischief when an onlooker flagged down a bicycle officer. After about five hours, police put harnesses on the lovers and began to lure them down. The names of the lovers were not immediately released. The two were taken to a hospital for evaluation, and Callahan said arrests and criminal charges depended on the outcomes of those evaluations.



A police officer talks with two men in a tree in New York's Central Park on April 22. (Photo by Ed Bailey/AP)

### Blockbuster settles gay harassment allegations

ST. PAUL (AP) — Blockbuster Inc. will pay a St. Paul man what is believed to be Minnesota's largest settlement in a case alleging discrimination based on sexual orientation. Jeffrey Davis will receive \$78,750 from the video store chain after filing two discrimination charges with the Minnesota Human Rights Department in November 2002. Davis alleged he was harassed by managers at two St. Paul locations. He said he was repeatedly called derogatory names, physically assaulted by a co-worker and faced retaliation when he complained to Blockbuster's management. Following an investigation, the department found probable cause to support his allegations, which happens with only about 10 percent of the 800 discrimination cases each year, said Human Rights Commissioner Velma Korb. Dallas-based Blockbuster agreed to provide discrimination and harassment training for all store managers in the Twin Cities as part of the settlement. No one involved in the case is still employed by Blockbuster.

### NAACP adds to criticism of gay Philadelphia appointee

PHILADELPHIA — The local chapter of the NAACP last week joined criticism of Mayor John Street's appointment of Michael Williams as the new head of the Minority Business Enterprise Council, the Philadelphia Inquirer reported. The council is a city agency that enforces city laws on contractor diversity, the newspaper stated. J. Whyatt Mondesire, president of the local NAACP chapter, sent a letter to Williams that questions both the appointee and Street, the Inquirer reported. "How your business background, contacts and work record was seen by this administration as making you the best possible candidate to fill the position recently vacated by your grossly incompetent predecessor remains a mystery to the NAACP," Mondesire wrote, according to the Inquirer. An attorney and former deputy director of Community Legal Services, Williams is black and gay, and some critics allege Street appointed him to appease the mayor's gay political supporters, the Inquirer reported. Street, a Democrat and also black, denies that allegation, according to the newspaper.

### Calif. PTA approves measure to oppose anti-gay amendments

SAN JOSE, Calif. — After PTA President Kate Hill heard a panel of gay high school students talk about the discrimination they face, she offered the Palo Alto Council of Parent Teacher Associations a resolution to oppose laws or constitutional amendments to ban gay marriage, the San Jose Mercury News reported. When the board passed the measure last week, it became the first PTA leadership in the nation to support gay marriage and urge the national board to do so as well, the Mercury News stated. Gay parents and their children expressed surprise that the coalition of 17 PTA groups adopted the measure, according to the newspaper. "I think it allows people to feel more comfortable to be who they are," Dey Rose told the Mercury News. A gay parent of two children in the Palo Alto school district, Rose teaches drama at a middle school in the system, the newspaper reported. "It's wonderful that they take a stand and say this is the right thing to do," she told the Mercury News.

### Vt. says town illegally fired transgendered officer

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) — Recognizing the rights of transgendered people under state employment law, the attorney general's office says the town of Hardwick discriminated against a transgendered police officer by firing him in April 2003. The ruling by the attorney general was released as the town of Hardwick settled with Anthony Barreto-Neto for \$90,000. Barreto-Neto was born a woman but had a sex change operation in the 1990s. He began his law enforcement career in Florida and joined the Hardwick Police Department in April 2002. Barreto-Neto, who lives in Barton with his wife and daughter, described the attorney general's decision as bittersweet. "I'm very happy because they did find discrimination because I believe pervasive discrimination goes on against transgendered people," Barreto-Neto said. But Barreto-Neto also said his experience in Hardwick had probably ended his career in law enforcement, and that he's struggled to find a job since he was fired.

From staff and wire reports

## national news

# Gay porn industry not impacted by HIV scare

## Straight adult video studios voluntarily halt production over HIV outbreak

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

Pornographic film studios producing adult videos for gay men were recognized as models for safe sex practices earlier this month as California's multi-billion dollar straight adult film industry voluntarily suspended operations after two performers tested HIV positive.

Unlike the gay studios, nearly all of the straight pornographic film production companies based largely in Southern California encourage sexual acts without the use of condoms, according to a health foundation that provides services to the porn industry.

"In our part of the industry, mandatory condom use has been the rule since the 1980s," said Todd Montgomery, vice president of Falcon Studios, one of the nation's largest gay adult film companies.

Montgomery said a few, smaller gay porn studios have recently begun producing "barebacking" videos, in which performers engage in anal intercourse without a condom.

"They are scorned by the industry," he said. "This is being done in a very small number of places which we hope, over time, will go away."

Officials with the Adult Industry Medical Health Care Foundation, which was created by the straight porn studios, said the foundation provides HIV testing to about 1,200 performers in the industry once a month under mandatory rules established by the studios, the New York Times reported.

A requirement that the performers provide a written report of their negative HIV status each month as a condition for working had largely kept the male and female performers free from HIV during the past decade, industry spokespersons said.

But what appeared to be an effective system in screening for HIV fell short last month when a male porn star went to Brazil to perform in a film, industry officials disclosed.

To the dismay of those he worked with when he returned, he tested positive one month later after having performed in films with at least 12 females, industry officials told the Los Angeles Times. One of the female performers tested positive, the L.A. Times reported, and studio officials identified about 65 performers who had sex with someone else who had sex with one of the two.



Gay pornographic movies have shown actors wearing condoms while engaging in sexual activity for years. In that regard, they have not felt the impact of the current HIV scare to hit companies that make straight porn films. (Photos courtesy of Falcon Studios)

On April 13, the Adult Industry Medical Health Care Foundation, which is known as AIM, identified on its Web site the male porn star who contracted HIV while making a film in Brazil and the screen names of more than 45 first and second generation contacts with him.

L.A. County health officials on April 22 ordered AIM to hand over medical files on more than 50 porn performers who may have had sexual relations with the male star or others who had sex with him.

He said the department would conduct contact tracing to alert the performers' spouses or personal partners outside the film industry, just as it does for other county residents found to have a sexually transmitted disease.

Ira Levine, chair of AIM's board of directors, called the action by the county a violation of the privacy rights of the foundation's clients.

Titan Media, another gay adult film production company, issued a statement last week saying it will not knowingly hire performers who have appeared in films that feature anal sex without condoms.

"Any potential model who has performed in any film featuring unprotected anal sex will automatically be disqualified from performing in a Titan Media or ManPlay production," the statement said.

"Today's 'bareback' films depict and eroticize high-risk behavior as the centerpiece of their sensuality," the statement said. "We find this to be reprehensible and an attempt to profit at the risk of the health and safety of performers and the community at large."

Still, gay videos rarely depict the performers actually unwrapping and applying condoms.

## national news

## Lawmakers challenge authority of state's highest court

MARRIAGE, continued from Page 1

statute unless governors and attorneys general in any of the other 49 states or the District of Columbia say they will permit Massachusetts to marry a gay couple from their state.

It is not clear how the attorneys general of Maryland and Washington D.C.'s equivalent — the mayor's corporation counsel — will respond to Romney's pronouncements.

"Massachusetts should not become the Las Vegas of same-sex marriage," Romney told the New York Times last week. "We do not intend to export our marriage confusion to the entire nation."

The obscure 1913 law, known as the "reverse evasion" statute, bans Massachusetts from granting marriage licenses to out-of-state residents who cannot legally marry in their home states. According to Romney's interpretation of the law, the statute applies to residents in the remaining 49 states and the District of Columbia since no other state expressly permits gay marriage.

Romney said his administration will soon send out letters to the 49 attorneys general asking them if gay couples from their state can wed in Massachusetts.

Tony Bullock, communications director for D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams, confirmed that the mayor has received a legal opinion from Robert Spagnoletti, the city's corporation counsel, on whether D.C. law permits the city to recognize same-sex marriages performed elsewhere. He said that the document would be made public in the next few weeks.

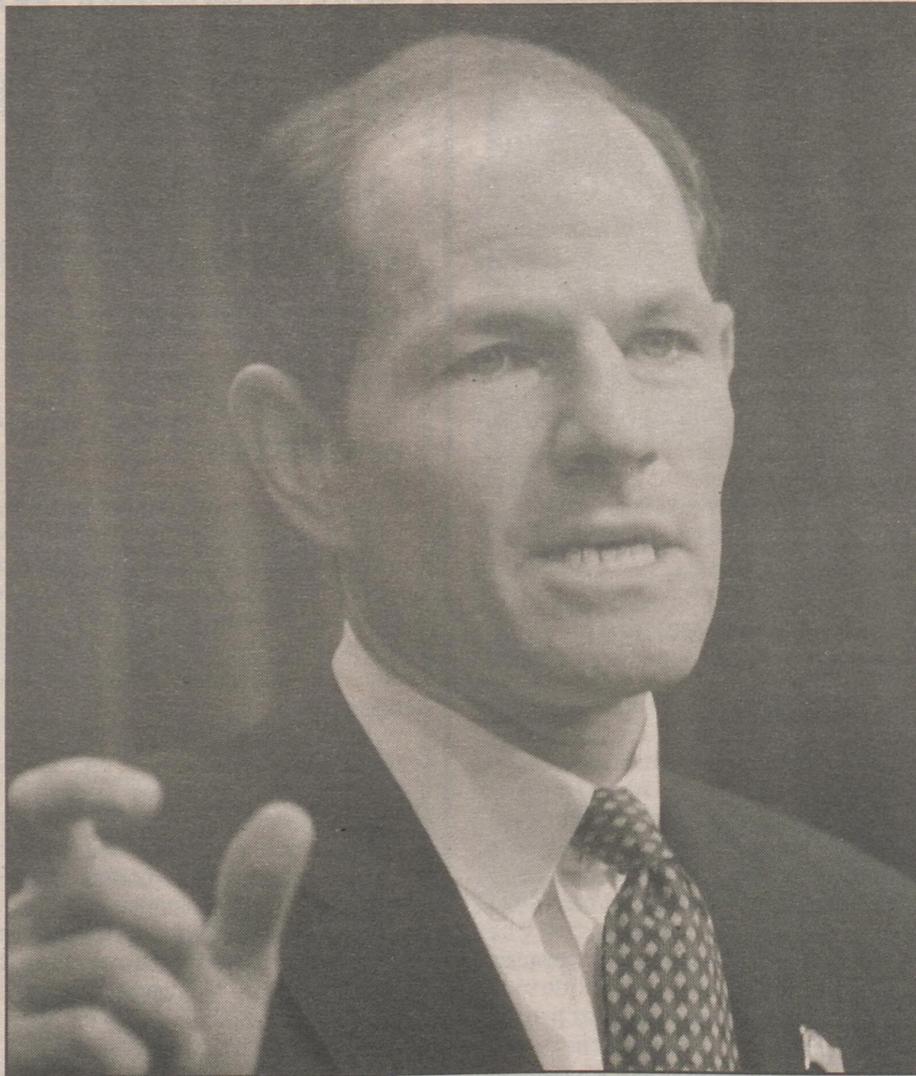
"I don't see anything to prevent D.C. gay couples from going up to Massachusetts and coming back here," Bullock said. "At some point, the mayor and Mr. Spagnoletti agree that this question of recognition will face the District government. That's the basis for Spagnoletti's research. He shared his legal opinion with the mayor, and I suspect that at some point, in the next week or two, the mayor and city administrators will determine what the position of the city is."

Kevin Enright, spokesperson for Maryland Attorney General J. Joseph Curran, said he was working on finding an answer as to whether or not the state would recognize a Maryland gay couple's Massachusetts marriage license. While Maryland does not have a Defense of Marriage Act and does not constitutionally ban gay marriage, the state's Family Code does not provide explicitly for same-sex unions.

Calls to the office of Virginia Attorney General Jerry Kilgore, a conservative and longtime opponent of gay rights, were not returned by press time. Dyana Mason, executive director of Equality Virginia, the statewide gay rights group, noted that Virginia already bans the recognition of same-sex marriage "and the incidents of such a marriage celebrated in another jurisdiction."

## Clerks urged to comply with law

Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry, said the 1913 statute was used largely to prevent interracial



New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer (D) said he has no problem with gay marriage and any New York gay couples who get married in Massachusetts can count on his support for full marriage rights in the Empire State. (AP photo)

marriages. He criticized Romney for dusting off the old statute.

"For him to resurrect this artifact from the deepest days of discrimination is completely inconsistent with the Massachusetts Constitution," Wolfson said. "It's a statute that was a part of a campaign to discriminate against interracial marriage."

While trying to stop out-of-state gay couples from applying for a Massachusetts marriage license, Romney's staff has also instructed city and town clerks to resign if they are not comfortable performing same-sex wedding ceremonies, which are set to begin on May 17.

Meanwhile, the executive branch has ordered changes to the state's marriage application, replacing "bride" and "groom" with "Party A" and "Party B," and adding new questions to the forms asking couples for "evidence of where a person resides and intends to continue to reside."

The new form also asks if couples have ever joined together in a civil union or domestic partnership and says that the marriage of an out-of-state gay couple that does not intend to move to Massachusetts will be "null and void."

While officials in the Romney administration say the governor is on firm legal footing with his interpretation of the law, the application of the old statute could open the state up to a potential lawsuit.

Boston College law professor Charles H. Baron said that based on federal and state legal precedents, a law that is discriminatorily applied, even if it is not intended to discriminate, could conflict with both the Massachusetts and U.S. constitutions.

"Courts could decide on the basis of its own precedent that a law being applied with animus, with a direction to oppress a particular class, is unconstitutional," Baron said.

## Maine passes DP bill

Next door to the Bay State, legislators in Maine this week passed an expansive domestic partnership bill, which Gov. John Baldacci is expected to sign. The measure provides for a registry and affords couples inheritance rights, next-of-kin status, victim's compensation, and guardian and conservator rights.

The measure passed the Senate on Tuesday by an 18-14 vote; the House passed it earlier in the month, 84-58. If the DP bill becomes law, Maine will become the fifth state to pass statewide laws that provide rights to unmarried couples.

Elsewhere, some gay activists have reacted to Romney's announcement with confusion and are uncertain how to advise out-of-state gay and lesbian couples who want to marry in Massachusetts.

Alan Van Capelle, executive director of

## i MORE INFO

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders  
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Boston, MA 02108  
617-426-1350  
www.glad.org

Empire State Pride Agenda & Foundation, a Manhattan gay rights group, said he is telling New York City gay couples to "continue planning their weddings until we know otherwise."

At the same, Capelle said he hopes soon to talk with New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer (D), who recently said that he has "no problem with gay marriage," and has said that New York State, which does not prohibit gay marriage, would recognize same-sex marriages performed elsewhere.

Dan Furmankys, executive director of Equality Maryland, the state's leading gay rights group, acknowledged the confusion and said he is advising couples to visit GLAD's Web site for further guidance before they begin planning a wedding this spring.

For gay couples in the D.C. area, the situation is up in the air. Takoma Park, Md. resident Kevin Sturtevant and his partner, Steve Geishecker, both 35, said they would like to get married this spring in Massachusetts but are now waiting to see how events unfold.

The couple has been together for 10 years. They never got a civil union certificate in Vermont and chose not to participate in the San Francisco wedding spree earlier this year. For Sturtevant and his partner, it is very important to have a license that is legal.

Sturtevant said he plans on contacting Curran, the Maryland attorney general, to encourage him to respond favorably to Romney's letter.

## Lawmakers challenge SJC's authority

A conservative public interest law firm based in Virginia Beach has filed a lawsuit on behalf of 13 Massachusetts lawmakers challenging the decision of the state's high court clearing the way for gay marriages.

The American Center for Law & Justice filed a motion on April 27 to vacate the judgment in Goodridge vs. the Department of Public Health by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. The lawsuit maintains that the SJC is required under the state constitution to vacate its judgment and argues that, constitutionally, the issue of marriage is left up to the governor and legislature.

"It is clear that the Supreme Judicial Court overstepped its authority in the decision in the Goodridge case," said Vincent McCarthy, senior counsel of the ACLJ. "The SJC lacked jurisdiction in deciding this case and it is clear that the authority concerning the issue of marriage rests with the governor and/or legislature according to the Massachusetts Constitution — not the Supreme Judicial Court."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



## international news

### Gay refugees seek haven via political asylum in Canada



Claims of persecution based on sexual orientation used as reasons to seek asylum in Canada are on the rise, and such claims are harder than others to disprove, said **Max Berger**, a Toronto immigration lawyer. (Photo by AP).

TORONTO — The number of people who request refuge in Canada because they are gay and will be persecuted if they are returned to their native countries is on the rise, the Toronto Globe & Mail reported this week. Since 2001, nearly 2,500 people from 75 different countries sought refuge in Canada on the basis of sexual orientation, the Globe & Mail reported. According to experts, the increase in applications is powered by bogus claims and also by a spreading view that Canada is a haven for persecuted gays, the Globe & Mail reported. Most of those seeking refuge are natives of Mexico, about 602, and many are from Costa Rica (276) the newspaper stated. "People who come from relatively peaceful countries tend to grasp at straws in terms of advancing refugee claims," Max Berger, a Toronto immigration lawyer who has represented dozens of Pakistani gay claims in the past year, told the Globe & Mail. "With gay cases, it is harder to disprove."

### Gay marriage plan revives debate on rights in France

PARIS — A French mayor's planned celebration of a gay marriage in town hall next June, and the likelihood it will be declared illegal, have re-ignited the debate on gay rights in France, Agence France-Presse reported. Noel Mamere, mayor of the southwestern town of Begles, said the ceremony "will take place in the conditions and with the obligations of the civil code," the press agency reported. The mayor said the nation's civil code does not specify that marriage must be between two people of the opposite sex, Agence France-Presse reported. "If this marriage is declared void, the case will be taken to the European Court of Human Rights," Mamere told the press agency. He said the court "says very clearly that basic texts must adapt to the social evolution of societies," according to news reports. The mayor said he believes in equal rights and wants to fight discrimination, Agence France-Presse reported.

### Kuwaiti officials side with man who had sex-change operation

KUWAIT CITY, Kuwait — A 25-year-old man who had a sex-change operation officially can be regarded as a woman, a Kuwaiti court ruled last week, the BBC News reported. The move came after the court heard about the plaintiff's physical and mental torment since childhood based on hormonal imbalances, according to the BBC. The judges were guided by a religious belief that allows gender change if there are medical reasons for it, attorney Adel al-Yahya told Reuters. A higher court must approve the judges' decision, and that may take about a month, the BBC reported. Yahya, who represented the plaintiff, said he reminded the court of a directive from al-Azhar, Sunni Islam's top religious institution, located in Egypt, the BBC reported. The edict allows people to change their gender if they have a medical basis for it, according to news reports. "We have evidence, a fatwa from al-Azhar, because we have a case of illness, not a case of switching gender or as they call it in Kuwait a third-sex case," Yahya told Reuters. "This is a very rare condition ... and the court ruled according to that condition."

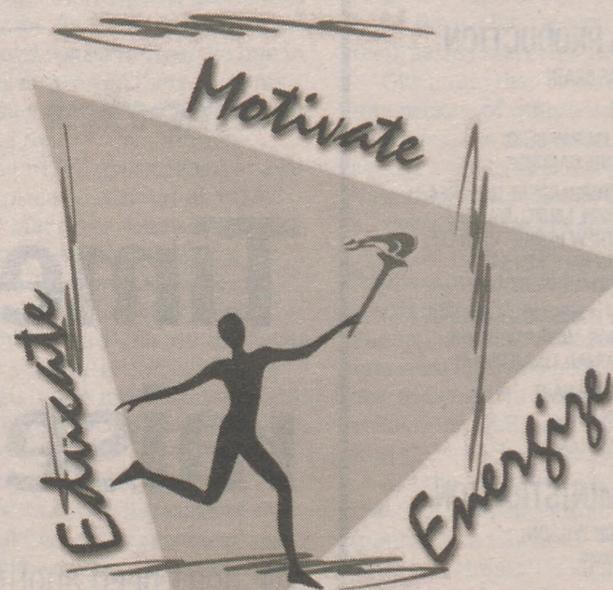
### Australian leader plans changes to block same-sex marriages

SYDNEY — Australian Prime Minister John Howard wants a radical overhaul of the nation's marriage act to stop courts from recognizing gay marriage, the newspaper Australian reported this week. Howard aims for reforms, approved by federal cabinet, to solidify the government's power to protect traditional marriage from changes by states and territories, and also to prevent recognition of same-sex unions from other countries, the newspaper reported. But the proposed changes in the 1961 Marriage Act may spark debate between Howard, a social conservative, and Labor leader Mark Latham, the Australian reported. Latham previously supported equality for gay couples in real estate and property entitlements, but his party is divided on the issue of gay marriage, according to the newspaper.

### Gay advocates accuse Australian companies of censoring 'L Word' ads

MELBOURNE, Australia — Gay rights activists last week accused five major companies of "commercial censorship" after they dropped advertising from the lesbian-centered drama "The L Word," the Age reported. The advertisers — Just Jeans, DaimlerChrysler, insurance company Allianz Australia, and vitamin producers Roche & Centrum — told the Christian group Saltshakers that they would drop ads during that program, the Age reported. Terry Towell, managing director of Allianz Australia, wrote in an e-mail, "The scheduling of our advertisement during 'The L Word' was made in error, and we have already contacted our media agency to ensure it doesn't happen again," according to the Age. Saltshakers had lobbied against advertising on "The L Word," the newspaper reported. Adam Pickvance, chief executive with Alternative Lifestyles Organization, said the advertisers used "commercial censorship," and should be honest about why they canceled ads during the show, the Age reported. "They have the right to spend their advertising dollars as they want," Pickvance told the newspaper. "But if they are going to take such a public stance, they should be clear and articulate the reason for it."

From staff and wire reports



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## editorial

# Time for us to raise the bar

We don't need another hero like Howard Dean because we shouldn't be so willing to canonize politicians like him who oppose marriage equality.

By CHRIS CRAIN

**d**OES ANYONE remember Howard Dean? Exactly four years ago this week, while still the governor of Vermont, Dean signed into law that state's first-of-its-kind civil unions

law. Gays across the country cheered in response and were all the more titillated by rumors that the articulate physician-turned-governor was weighing a run for higher office.

When Dean actually launched his long-shot bid for the White House, he generated unprecedented backing from gay supporters, who managed almost single-handedly to bankroll his fledgling campaign. Every time Dean launched into his spirited defense of Vermont civil unions, tears welled in the eyes of even crusty gay activists.

Just four months ago, when Elizabeth Birch stepped down from the Human Rights Campaign post that made her the nation's most visible gay activist, she excitedly jumped on board the Dean bandwagon — just before that bandwagon was wrecked in one fell “whoop!” on the night of the Iowa caucuses.

What a difference four months, not to mention four years, can make.

Howard Dean was considered a gay rights hero back then, but in a remarkably short period of time the bar for hero status has palpably been raised. How soon we forget that Dean was a clear opponent of gay marriage, and almost irritably brushed off the question with a one-sentence retort that civil unions were marriage by another name.

Then, in February, everything changed. The very question of whether civil unions were the equivalent to marriage was answered very differently by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. Civil unions are *not* the same as

marriage, the court ruled, in language so strong that it drew lines in the sand as clear as those drawn a half century ago in the Brown vs. Board school segregation case.

“The history of our nation has demonstrated that separate is seldom, if ever, equal,” wrote Chief Justice Margaret Marshall, on behalf of the 4-3 majority. “[Civil unions] maintain an unconstitutional, inferior and discriminatory status for same-sex couples.”

Before Massachusetts clerks could even begin handing out marriage licenses, the mayor of San Francisco famously beat them to the punch, and his lead was followed by local authorities in New York, New Mexico and Oregon.

NOW WHEN A POLITICIAN LIKE Howard Dean says he opposes gay marriage but favors civil unions, the words of the Massachusetts court ring in the ears of many of us. Separate is inherently unequal, and even though you get to the same place when you ride in the back of the bus, your dignity does not necessarily make it to the destination.

Supporting civil unions is still a good thing, of course, in a country where the president favors amending the Constitution to ban gay marriages outright. But in four short months, the bar has been raised. True gay rights heroes are those like 26-year-old New Paltz, N.Y., Mayor Jason West, who was willing to risk his career, and even arrest, to publicly solemnize gay marriages.

To be considered full-fledged gay rights supporters today, a candidate for office ought to at least offer up public support for full marriage rights. Support for “separate and unequal” civil unions is not enough, though it is certainly better than nothing, and might still qualify as “gay-friendly.”

Our opponents remain clear enough, of course. President Bush and most con-

gressional Republicans oppose gay marriage *and* civil unions *and* want to amend the Constitution to permanently enshrine discrimination against same-sex couples.

But there's plenty of room in the middle of the road to our full equality, and it's worth considering just what sort of mixture of gratitude and additional lobbying we ought to offer up to the many politicians who are afraid to cross the street.

Most Democrats and a few moderate Republicans in Congress oppose Bush's Federal Marriage Amendment, but most of them also oppose gay marriage and civil unions, and many might even vote in favor of the Defense of Marriage Act again, if it came up for reconsideration. While we should be happy these politicians oppose the FMA, does that fact alone justify our support?

The answer ought to be no, that is not enough, but ours is the most pragmatic civil rights movement in American history, and our activist leaders, ever slaves to polls and focus groups, will undoubtedly endorse candidates like that just because they are incumbents and are voting our way on “the big one.”

THANKS LARGELY TO JOHN KERRY, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, the last four months of progress hasn't even been entirely in our favor.

Four months ago, most of us would have agreed that no gay rights group should ever endorse a candidate who favors amending a constitution to ban gay marriage. Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, traditionally our most progressive national lobby group, said as much in a New York Times interview.

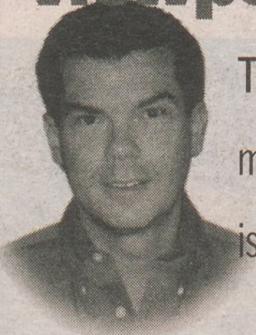
But then Kerry came out in favor of amending the Massachusetts Constitution to ban gay marriage, so long as civil unions were preserved.

Gay Democrats were too partisan to care much, and our “non-partisan” groups are led by mostly partisans anyway, so their anti-Bush fervor mostly muted their complaints about Kerry. The Human Rights Campaign has, at least, withheld its Kerry endorsement a while longer.

Kerry's backslide certainly doesn't justify voting for Bush, or staying home, but let's reserve our endorsements, not to mention hero status, for the public officials who truly deserve them.

@ Chris Crain is executive editor of the Houston Voice and can be reached at ccrain@window-media.com.



**viewpoint** DAVID MUCK

The same conservatives who oppose gay marriage were there to fight us on other issues. Gay rights groups didn't invent them.

# This 'mess' is our civil rights

IN WITNESSING THIS HISTORIC CHAPTER in our country's history, where gay and lesbian couples are on the verge of being granted full and equal rights normally afforded married heterosexual couples, it's disappointing to see members of our own community hold national GLBT advocacy organizations responsible for the "mess" that we're in with regard to same-sex marriage.

Memo to these folks: Equality is a messy business.

Last year, when Canadian courts began ruling in favor of same-sex marriage, it opened the door for the logical question, When will same-sex marriage be available in the United States? Fuel was added to the fire last summer when Justice Antonin Scalia, in his dissenting opinion in *Lawrence v. Texas*, wrote "this reasoning leaves on pretty shaky grounds state laws limiting marriage to opposite-sex couples".

The icing on the cake was spread last November, when the Massachusetts

Supreme Judicial Court told seven same-sex couples that their right to marry was protected by the state constitution. In the minds of social conservatives, the line in the sand was drawn and there was only one way to stop this erosion of moral order: amend the U.S. Constitution.

At that point, all eyes turned to a little noticed piece of legislation called the Federal Marriage Amendment that was introduced earlier in 2003 in the U.S. House of Representatives by Marilyn Musgrave, Republican of Colorado. President Bush, on the "opening day" of his re-election campaign, gave the legislation legitimacy with his hastily called news conference supporting the measure.

From that moment on, life in our world, and certainly in the world of our national GLBT advocacy organizations, has not been the same.

WHAT SOME GAY PEOPLE FAIL TO grasp as they seek to blame ourselves for the current environment in which we live, is a simple fact: Those people who fund opposition to same-sex marriage have been there to fight us on civil unions, domestic partner benefits, hate crimes legislation, employment non-discrimination and HIV/AIDS funding and treatment.

They don't even acknowledge our right

to exist. This conflict isn't about marriage. Marriage is just another opportunity for them, albeit a good one, to show their hatred and prejudice.

Given that they're clever enough to tap into pockets of otherwise uninterested heterosexuals to broaden their base, should we help them on this end with those that would slow or pause our progress towards full equality? Hardly.

As for responsibility, are the Human Rights Campaign, the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force and Log Cabin Republicans responsible for getting us into a troublesome position politically? Yes, to the extent that they've motivated millions of GLBT Americans to stop sitting at the back of the bus.

But the "mess" was really created by the John Lawrences and Tyron Garners (plaintiffs in *Lawrence vs. Texas*) and the Julie and Hillary Goodridges (lead plaintiffs in the Massachusetts same-sex marriage case) of America who had the courage to demand to be treated equally under the law.

They're the responsible ones. If only all of us could be so responsible.

@ David Muck lives in Houston and serves on the board of the Human Rights Campaign; he can be reached through this publication.

## letters

### 'Queer As Folk' no friendlier to black gays than Houston

To the Editor:

On Sundays past, like so many others in Houston's gay community, I anticipated the season opener of "Queer as Folk".

As a gay man, to see our community represented in the media, in any fashion, is a massive step forward. However, as a gay man of color, I was left in the end having enjoyed the show, but feeling excluded. Pretty much the feeling I have after an episode of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy." Token representation.

It has always amazed me that racism, although maybe subtle, exists within our community. As difficult as it has been to take baby steps towards equality, we as a people have not come to peace and understanding amongst ourselves.

As in any family, there will be differences or misunderstandings. But how many times have I heard the gay struggle compared to the civil rights movement? Usually by liberal white activists, for certainly the majority of black lesbian and gay Americans understand that the two are hardly the same.

As I turn the pages of Houston's gay and lesbian press I am faced with the same realization. Token representation. How many times have I walked into one of our proud gay establishments with a group of friends to be met with stares of, "why are you here?"

Maybe it is time for Houston's gay and lesbian community to step back and examine ourselves. Our habits, our feel-

ing on the internal issues that divide our community. As a gay man of color, am I only to be welcomed if I am in the company of my white friends?

Having endured and survived the civil rights movement of the '60s, must I now in the new millennium fight the battle within the gay and lesbian community? Why has there not been an outcry by those liberal activists demanding that we, as a community, be represented by the media as we exist?

Maybe as we wave our banners and flags demanding gay rights, we should take a look within to assure that we, as a community, are practicing human rights.

CHRIS MARTIN  
Houston

### Falwell ignores some hetero sex parts

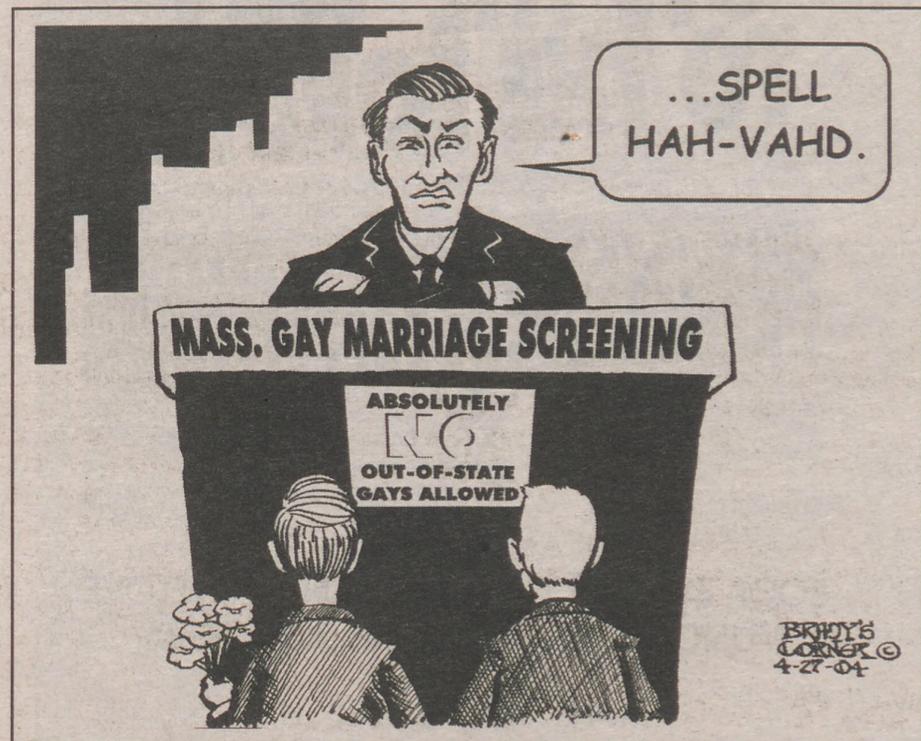
To the Editors:

These days it is very distressing to watch debate with Jerry Falwell on same-sex marriage when he talks about male and female "parts that fit," giving the impression that all different-sex-oriented people are exclusively coital.

In this way he has opened discussion on sexual acts. When is someone going to inform him that different-sex-oriented people also engage in oral and anal sex?

Many different-sex-oriented people readily flaunt their noncoital sexual activity. Tune in Howard Stern on WJFK-FM for daily flaunting.

JOE F. RANDOLPH  
Gaithersburg, Md.



### Bush should focus on AIDS at home

To the Editors:

In his televised press conference last week, President Bush said something to the effect of, "The people of the world are obligated to help Africa with the AIDS crisis." He also spoke of freedom deserved by the people of the world.

The president should keep the latter in mind as he fights to protect the "defini-

tion" of the "word" marriage. And while I agree the AIDS crisis has reached horrific proportions in Africa, he is the president of the United States of America, not dictator and savior of the world.

Perhaps when and if we can solve problems within our borders we should then seek to help our neighbors throughout the world, and maybe they will be the better for it.

JIM SLATTERY  
Washington

Send letters and op-ed column submissions to [editor@houstonvoice.com](mailto:editor@houstonvoice.com)

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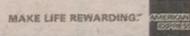
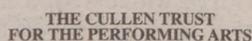
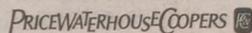
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# A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM



BOOK BY LARRY GELBART / BURT SHEVELOVE  
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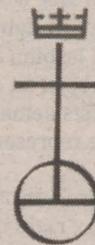
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# on the record



"Like all good partners, occasionally you don't partner. But you kiss, you make up and you make love most of the time."  
*State Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno (R) (far left), in comments about New York Gov. George Pataki (near left), a fellow Republican, at the opening of a power plant (Newsday, April 22)*

"I don't mind making love to you. Just don't ask me to marry you."  
*George Pataki, reacting to comments by Joseph Bruno (Newsday, April 22)*

"If the tiara must be passed, who says it has to go to another smiling lady in an apron? Divide it instead among the 'Queer Eye' guys. Like Martha, the Fab Five have an unshakable belief that there's a correct way of doing things, that dried parsley and soap scum need to be banished from the face of the earth, and that elbow grease is the most stylish product of all."

*Columnist Mary Elizabeth Williams on the search for the "next Martha Stewart" (TV Guide, May 1)*

"I have consistently supported the president and would vote to pass a constitutional amendment if narrowly defined as he requested — to define marriage as between a man and a woman."

*Democrat Stephanie Herseth, candidate for South Dakota's lone House seat, defending herself from GOP accusations that she does not support the Federal Marriage Amendment endorsed by President Bush (Associated Press, April 27)*



"Many of our courts are guilty of that judicial sin, that is willingness, even eagerness, to reach results announcing principles that have no plausible relation to any constitution. If decisions like those I've been discussing are the waves of the future, our culture will slide into chaos and self-government will be a shrunken remnant of what we once aspired to."

*Former federal appeals court judge Robert Bork, who was rejected by U.S. Senate after being nominated to the Supreme Court by President Reagan, on the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court's ruling on gay marriage (Advocate of Stamford, Stamford, Conn., April 26)*



"I realize that there's a tension between who I am and how I have chosen to live my life and the institutional church. I'm hoping that the church truly is the family that I was told that it was when I was growing up."

*Washington state Rep. Ed Murray (D), who is Catholic and openly gay and the state's leading advocate for gay marriage. (Associated Press, April 24)*

"Speaking of Colin Farrell, the guy is *tho thexy!* I mean, *theriously!*"

*Billy Bush (above left), the president's cousin and east coast reporter for the syndicated show "Access Hollywood," mock lisping during a practice run not aired by the show (Details magazine, May issue)*



"You know, at first I wasn't inclined to like [Billy Bush] — not being a guy who was voting for his uncle or cousin or whatever. But he's actually an extremely gregarious, nice guy. There's a hokum quotient that goes with the job — a sort of blow-dried cheesiness — and he's absent that. *And* he's got a very small cock. And I'm a bottom, so it doesn't hurt, which I like."

*Actor Ben Affleck (left), presumably joking in an interview for a profile of Billy Bush (Details magazine, May issue)*

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# The Boy's back in Houston for a return, not a comeback

Before spinning at Rich's, Boy George talks about marriage and defends a member of Parliament

By JOHNNY HOOKS

THE WORD ICON GETS THROWN AROUND A LOT lately.

The Hotel Icon reigns at the corner of Preston and Main, you find icons on your computer's desktop and in movie theaters.

Except for one glaring, gloved, now indicted omission, the return of the '80s musical icons has begun.

Madonna, Cindy Lauper and Prince shows are sold out as summer arrives. But beyond stadiums and reinvention, there is Boy George.

Boy George is on a roll or perhaps more aptly on a spin. He arrives at Rich's tonight for a DJ set, bringing with him Club Kid/songstress/award-winning designer for Heatherette Richie Rich, 21st century muse Amanda LaPore, Miss Guy, Lilly of the Valley, the Trinity and Red Eye, not to mention Houston's own Sean Carnahan.

The Houston Voice talked with Boy George recently to see what he's up to these days.

As Norma Desmond said: "It's not a comeback, it's a return!"

**HOUSTON VOICE:** Hello!

**BOY GEORGE:** Boy here, fire away.

**HOVO:** You are really busy this year!

**BOY GEORGE:** Well you know I have always worked, constantly.

**HOVO:** You're the MAC AIDS Fund spokesperson right?

**BOY GEORGE:** Yeah, that was great fun, it was nice to do that. After all these years of wearing makeup, it was kind of fun.

**HOVO:** And also to get all that makeup for free!

**BOY GEORGE:** I have enough makeup to last me forever, though I always like to get more.



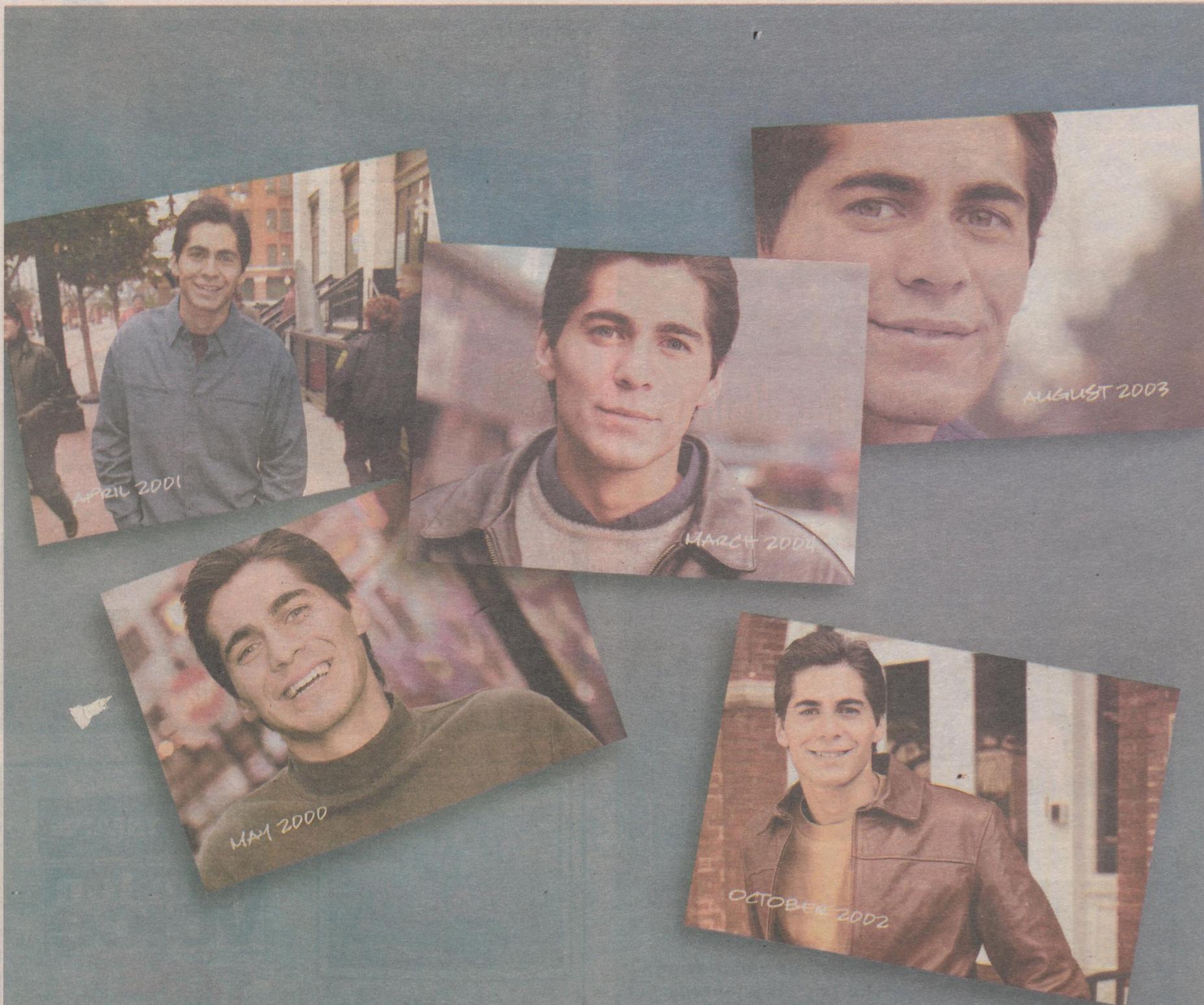
Please see **BOY GEORGE** on Page 20

Getting back to icons of the 1980s, Boy George makes a stop in Houston.

**OPPOSITE SEX:** New documentary explores the complicated life of sexual reassignment. Page 17



**CD'S ARE OUT:** Two awaited soundtracks, 'Connie and Carla' and 'The L-Word,' are out. Page 18



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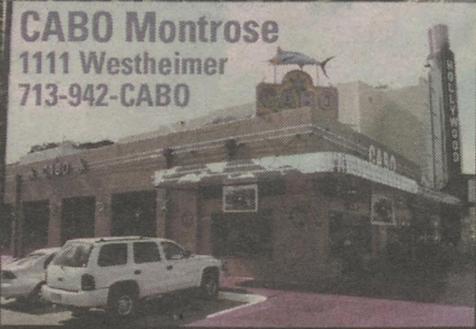
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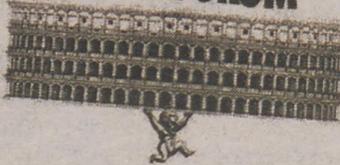


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**television** BRIAN MOYLAN

Documentary series 'The Opposite Sex,' tackles complicated lives of two people undergoing gender-reassignment surgery.

## Making the switch

IT SEEMS LIKE NEARLY EVERY TIME transgender people appear on television, they're in a documentary. Viewers seem to have more difficulty accepting them as characters on a drama or sitcom, but are more than willing to watch non-fiction slices of their life.

This might change if compelling documentaries of the quality and caliber of Showtime's "The Opposite Sex" continue to make the airwaves. The two-part series, which premieres next week with "Rene's Story," begins with a look at the life and reassignment surgery process that Rene undergoes to change from female to male.

The series concludes in June with "Jamie's Story," which shows a father's transition from male to female and its impact on friends and family.

Both 90-minute films on Showtime are followed by 30-minute roundtable discussions with doctors, well-known transgender activists and pundits about various issues related to gender reassignment and the plight of transgendered people in general.

Following in the footsteps of "Southern Comfort," HBO's documentary in 2001 about female-to-male transsexual Robert Eads, "Rene's Story" humanizes the case study by highlighting vivid and often painful aspects of the subject's life.

But in "Comfort," the mild-mannered Eads, who lived in rural Georgia and died of ovarian cancer, was a universally likable and sympathetic subject. Rene, 31, is far more complicated.

A TRUCKER IN ANAHEIM, CALIF., RENE has lived as a very attractive man since his teens and has been in a relationship with Wona, 28, for 12 years. They refer to each other as husband and wife, though they aren't legally married.

Rene has had his female breasts removed and has been on male hormones for years. As a man, he sounds very sweet, but comes across like a macho jerk. Rene is domineering, loud, pushy



Female-to-male transsexual Rene (left) and his wife Wona deal with the complications of surgery, society and their rocky relationship in the first installment of Showtime's 'The Opposite Sex.' (Photo by Josh Aronson/Showtime)

and more liable to talk than listen.

Wona says Rene is compensating for the years he lived as a woman and feels inadequate because he's not "whole." Rene wants a normal-sized, functioning penis, and this is the subject of much of his discussion in the documentary.

When he decides to have a metoidioplasty — surgery in which the uterus and ovaries are removed, the clitoris fashioned into a working (though small) penis and the labia formed into a scrotum — the cameras are there to show the detail.

Rene's genitals are shown before and after the procedure, and there are several minutes of footage of the actual surgery. It's not for the squeamish.

BUT THE REAL REASON TO WATCH "Rene's Story" is the film's humanistic angles.

Viewers may find blowhard Rene abrasive at times, but there are several heart-breaking sympathetic moments in the film. When he tries to fulfill a lifelong dream and auditions to be a male stripper, the proprietor, who says "customers might be confused," turns him away. Rene's pained look of resignation and acceptance speaks louder than all his bombastic words ever do.

Wona is even more interesting. A heterosexual woman, she moved in with Rene at age 16 and has never been in a relationship with another man.

Rene and Wona are kicked out of their church when officials there learn that Rene was born female. This rejection and Rene's upcoming surgery sets off a torrent of feelings and realizations that the naïve Wona never considered.

"Rene's Story" offers a painfully realistic portrait of a couple forced to face challenges that most viewers can barely imagine.

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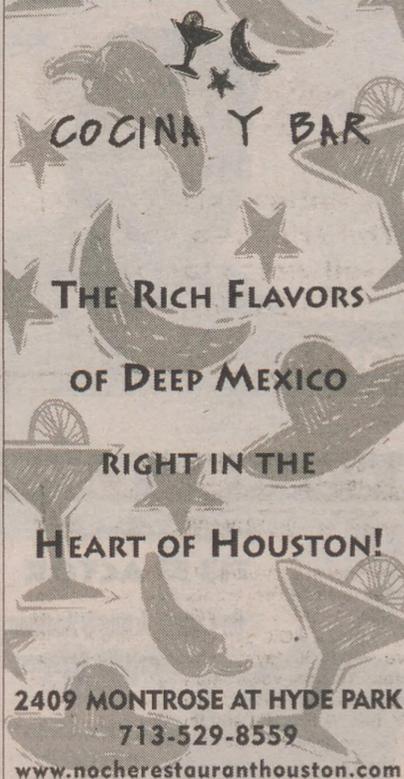


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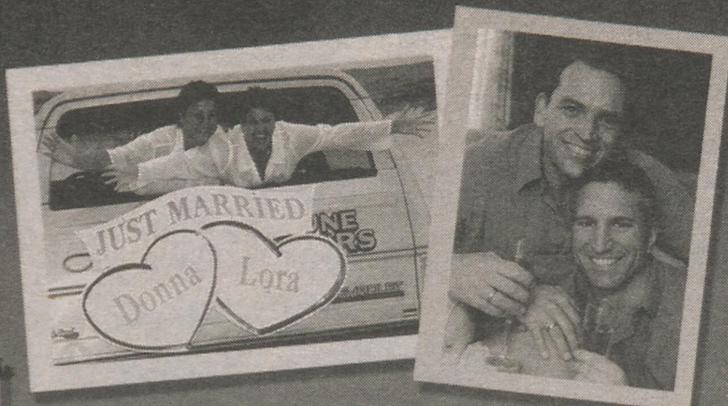
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### **i** MORE INFO

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May 11, 8 p.m.  
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music ARJAN TIMMERMANS



The new 'Connie and Carla' soundtrack  
is all about drag, but as you might expect,  
'The L Word' CD is anything but a drag.

## Music fit for queens

"CONNIE & CARLA" IS BY FAR ONE OF the campiest movies since "The Birdcage." Though the drag flick bombed at the box office, gay audiences embraced the musical performances by Nia Vardalos and Toni Collette.

The film puts Broadway classics and show tunes front and center. Its soundtrack is an entertaining trek down memory lane with tunes from "Evita," "Yentl," "Cats," "Oklahoma" and other musicals. And we all know how the boys love their show tunes!

Both Vardalos and Collette have an extensive background in musical theater. Vardalos, a self-admitted "musical theater geek," performed in musicals and dinner theater early in her career in Toronto. Collette performed in the successful Broadway musical "The Wild Party" in 2000, for which she received a Tony nomination.

Hollywood composer Randy Edelman and Paul Bogaev, who is primarily known as the musical director for the Broadway shows "Chicago" and "Bombay Dreams," produced the soundtrack.

All of the album's songs also appear in the movie. The producers played it safe by picking audience favorites such as "Don't Rain On My Parade" (from "Funny Girl"), "Don't Cry For Me Argentina" (from "Evita") and "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outta My Hair" (from "South Pacific").

The tracks feature some of the original dialogue from the movie, from the climactic "I am an eater" on "Let Me Entertain You" to the hilarious "We need to go somewhere without theater, no culture at all ... Los Angeles!" on "Shake Your Groove Thing."

Guest star Debbie "boobs out" Reynolds is also featured. "Connie & Carla" will not be remembered for its exceptional vocal performances. Collette has an edge over Vardalos, but both actresses are constrained by the movie format and their roles.

Within the movie's context, this soundtrack is a satisfying tribute to musical theater. Most of all, it is a souvenir for fans who want to relive the music and campy hilarity the film offers.

THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED SOUNDTRACK from "The L Word" is anything but a drag.

You don't have to be a lesbian to enjoy the music from this popular Showtime series about a group of young women in Los Angeles.

Executive Producer Rosie Lopez had a long list of tunes she wanted to use from the hit show. She decided primarily to go with songs from a variety of female singer/songwriters.

The result is an eclectic compilation of



14 songs performed by timeless talent such as Joan Armatrading, Lucinda Williams and Marianne Faithful.

Besides mirroring the program's storyline, Lopez also wanted to come up with a selection of songs that the show's characters would listen to and possibly own.

"I imagined Marina owning Fantcha, Shayne being a Murmurs fan, and Bette and Tina listening to Rufus [Wainwright]," Lopez says.

The disk's most noteworthy surprise is Frances Faye's "Frances And Her Friends," which fits the spirit of the show perfectly. The daring '50s nightclub singer was one of the first artists to openly talk about her bisexuality.

The endearing "Genius," performed by girl band The Murmurs, has a special meaning for Leisha Hailey, who plays the bisexual journalist, Alice, on the show. She founded the group with Heather Groy in the mid-'90s. Together, they're currently working on the debut of their new band Gush.

Cape Verdean vocalist Fantcha is featured with the exuberant Portuguese track "Sol Ja Camba."

Wainwright, a gay singer/songwriter, is one of three male vocalists on the soundtrack. His sublime "Hallelujah" is one of the singer's finest performances, with his wistful vocals and stripped down piano arrangement.

Lopez chose "Hallelujah" and "Right In Time" by Lucinda Williams because they were used in some of the memorable scenes in the show.

"I got e-mails from fans saying that they were using video on demand and Tivo to rewind these scenes so they could listen to the songs over and over," she says.

"The L Word" soundtrack is a remarkable collection of music that features some of America's greatest talent.

Whether you watch program each Sunday night or not, this album stands on its own and will likely resonate with an audience much larger than the show's faithful followers.



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## eclipse cover story

## Boy George pans gay marriage as assimilation

BOY GEORGE, continued from Page 14

**HOVO:** You have a book coming out called "Straight," correct?

**BOY GEORGE:** I'm spending next week on the final parts. It's written.

**HOVO:** How about a little summary?

**BOY GEORGE:** It's basically a follow up to my first Book, "Take It Like A Man," from '95, and what I've been up to since.

**HOVO:** You've been to Rich's before, right?

**BOY GEORGE:** Yeah, I really loved it. Really good. You know, I really love the fact that the drag queens come out in full regalia even in that heat.

**HOVO:** You know, Boy, that's why Houston moved our Pride Parade; we have the only nighttime Gay Pride Parade in America

**BOY GEORGE:** Fantastic!

**HOVO:** What are you spinning right now? What's your fave record?

**BOY GEORGE:** Must be a song called "Bounce" by Babylon. I play a mixture of old things, new things; I am always finding new stuff—a bit of tribal, a bit of progressive, a bit of classic house. You have to size up the crowd. I always hear "oh you can't play that," but if you play things properly and pace the

set, you can get away with anything. It's very housey.

**HOVO:** You're bringing your pals from clubland?

**BOY GEORGE:** Yeah, Richie, Amanda. ... They all know [promoter] Brooke H. We're coming down for a party!

**HOVO:** You and Richie are both designers, and your work can be found only at the store Organic London? I love the "Eminem Sucks my D\*ck" shirts I saw on-line.

**BOY GEORGE:** Well yeah, he designs for Heatherette, and I'm working on Rude. We're just mates helping each other out. Rude will soon be at Screaming Mimi's in New York.

**HOVO:** Quick question? The wax you applied to your head for "Taboo," did that hurt?

**BOY GEORGE:** It was actually liquid latex. If you leave it on all day, it comes off in one go. However during the show, I don't get a chance and it was one of the worst costume changes. It's a fetish sex accessory.

**HOVO:** You called Clare Short the Joan Collins of politics

**BOY GEORGE:** *laughing*

**HOVO:** Who is Clare Short?

**BOY GEORGE:** Clare Short is a Labour MP [Member of Parliament in

Britain] who went against Tony Blair on the WMDs (weapons of mass destruction) and everybody slammed her. I think she had incredible integrity. I watch a lot of political stuff. I'm interested in that, and I can always tell when someone is a real person. Suddenly she was being attacked in all the press, and I wanted to write something positive about her.

**HOVO:** So your statement was a compliment?

**BOY GEORGE:** Absolutely! I think Joan Collins is fantastic!

**HOVO:** Boy, we're dealing with the gay marriage issue here in the states, speaking of politics, and did you fight this in the UK?

**BOY GEORGE:** It's not something I would want to do. I think it's more an attempt to assimilate. I don't know why we have to marry in order to get equality. To me it is a human rights issue. I believe people should be able to bless their relationships anyway they choose. This idea that if we can just achieve marital rights then we're gonna be free is a delusion. Because I can assure you right now, we will *never* be like straight people!

**HOVO:** Thankfully!

**BOY GEORGE:** I think it's horrible that men and women are not allowed to leave their belongings, regardless of your

## i MORE INFO

Boy George  
Rich's  
2401 San Jacinto  
www.richs-houston.com

sexuality, to their loved ones, whoever they feel that is.

**HOVO:** Is the law the same in the UK?

**BOY GEORGE:** If someone in the family proper objects, the law is on their side. Twenty years as partners and the partner has no rights. My family would never do it. I think it's more important for [gay men and lesbians] to put their wishes down on paper. It's a must for people we love.

**HOVO:** Off topic, do you like "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy"?

**BOY GEORGE:** I have seen it once. ... I don't think I got it. I like the way straight people dress.

**HOVO:** It lets us know they are straight?

**BOY GEORGE:** Well yeah, that's why they're cute! We don't want everyone to look like a namby-pamby, poofster!

**HOVO:** You'll have a lot of boyfriends here in Houston then!

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# community calendar

## SATURDAY MAY 1

**All-Spanish Worship Service/Noche Espiritual** 7 p.m. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2026 W. 11th. 713-861-9149.  
**After Hours.** KPFT 90.1 FM. 1-4 a.m.  
**Dignity mass.** 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872. Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Viviana's. 713-830-3000.  
**Gay & Lesbian Breakfast Club.** 9:30 a.m. 281-437-0636. Lambda Center.  
**Alcoholics Anonymous.** 11:30 a.m. Eye Opener Group, 8 p.m. Saturday Night Live, 9:30 p.m. Willing Ones Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.  
**Montrose Soccer Club.** 10 a.m. practice. Woodrow Wilson School, Fairview and Yupon. New players welcome, but beginners not currently being admitted. 713-862-9491. http://geocities.com/montrosesoccer. E-mail: montrosesoccer@yahoo.com.  
**Q-Patrol.** Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com  
**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.** Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.  
**Houston GLBT Community Center.** CATS (Community Awareness for Transgender Support) board meeting, 2 p.m. 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

## SUNDAY MAY 2

**Front Runners Houston.** Runners meet at Memorial Park at 8 a.m. for a three-mile run. http://home.swbell.net/larathon/houfr.htm. E-mail: larathon@swbell.net. 713-522-0899.  
**Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.** Services at 8:30 & 10:50 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 713-526-1017.  
**Center for Spiritual Living.** Services at 11 a.m., for children at 10:50 a.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808. The center also has commitment ceremonies, metaphysical bookstore and classes.  
**Community Gospel.** Service at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Sunday School for children 10 a.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.  
**Community of Kindred Spirits** in Beaumont. Worship at 6 p.m. 1575 Spindletop Ave., Beaumont, Texas. 409-813-2055. E-mail: cksrev3@netzero.net  
**Covenant Church,** Ecumenical, Liberal Baptist. Service 9:30 a.m. & education hour 11 a.m. 713-668-8830.  
**Emerson Unitarian Church.** Adult education, 10 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. Lunch at noon. www.emersonhou.org.  
**First Congregational Church (Memorial).** Service at 10 a.m. Christian Education, 11:30 a.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.  
**First Unitarian Universalist Church.** Services at 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. Brunch at 10:30 a.m. 713-526-5200. church@firstuu.org.  
**Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic.** 9 p.m.-midnight at Club Inergy. 713-830-3000.  
**Gay Bowling Leagues.** 7 p.m. Palace Lanes, 4191 Bellaire Blvd. 713-861-1187.  
**Gay Catholics of St. Anne's-Houston.** 5 p.m. worship service. Dinner and social. alexcam@wt.net. 713-623-0930.  
**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 11 a.m. service. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@eastttx.net.  
**Grace Lutheran Church.** Sunday school for all ages 9 a.m. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.  
**H.A.T.C.H.** Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets 6-9 p.m. For meeting information, call 713-529-3590. www.hatchyouth.org.  
**Houston Tennis Club.** 9 a.m.-noon. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com  
**Lambda Center. Alcoholics Anonymous.** 9:30 a.m. Came to Believe Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.  
**Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church.** 10 a.m. service. 3333 Fannin, Suite 106. 713-528-6756.  
**Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Church.** Services at 9:45 & 11:15 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 281-298-2780.  
**Resurrection MCC.** Services, 9 and 11 a.m. Children and Youth Sunday School, 10 a.m. Children's service, 11 a.m. 713-861-9149.  
**St. Patrick's Reformed Catholic Mission.** Sunday Mass at noon. Holy Unions available. Group meets at the Hair Express, 3310 Delaware, Beaumont, Texas 77703. 409-781-8152. E-mail: bwatson1@gt.rr.com.  
**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.** Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 7:45 a.m.; Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 8:55 a.m.; Education hour, 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist, 11 a.m. 713-528-6665.  
**Sunday Brunch.** For HIV-positive men. 11 a.m. Riva's, 1117 Missouri St. Paul, 713-880-0690. E-mail: PoznBuff@aol.com.  
**The Women's Group.** Meeting and discussion. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.  
**Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation.** Adult discussion, 9 a.m. Service, 11:15 a.m. 281-277-8882. www.tuuc.org.

**Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County.** 502 Church St. Service, 11 a.m. 713-686-5876.  
**Houston GLBT Community Center.** Some Transgenders are Guys (STAG), 6 p.m., 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

## MONDAY MAY 3

**Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic.** 1-7 p.m. at the clinic, 215 Westheimer and 3311 Richmond, Suite 100; 4-8 p.m. at Bricks, 617 Fairview; and 9 p.m. - 1 a.m. at O, 710 Pacific. 713-830-3070.  
**Free HIV Testing.** 4-8 p.m. at All Star News, 3415 Katy Freeway. Health clinic with free testing for HIV and syphilis. 713-869-7878.  
**Gay Bowling Leagues.** Women's league. 6:45 p.m. Dynamic Lanes, 6121 Tarnef Drive. 713-861-1187.  
**Gay Fathers/Fathers First.** Support group. 8-9:30 p.m. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Tom, 713-726-8736. www.geocities.com/gaydadshouston/  
**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@eastttx.net.  
**Grief & Divorce Support Groups.** 7 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, ext. 208.  
**Kolbe Project.** Eucharist 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.  
**Lambda Center. Alcoholics Anonymous.** 8 p.m. Beginner's Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.  
**Montrose Clinic.** Offers weekly peer support groups for gay and bisexual men with HIV. Spanish speaking group meets, 6:30 p.m. 215 Westheimer. 713-830-3050. Grupo de Apoyo para Latinos gay y bisexuales VIH positivos. Lunes 6:30. Para mas informacion llama al 713-830-3025. Queer Voices Radio Show. 8-10 p.m. KPFT 90.1.  
**Houston GLBT Community Center.** Lesbians Coming Out 7 p.m. American Veterans for Equal Rights, 7p.m. 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

## TUESDAY MAY 4

**Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang,** 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.  
**Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic.** 1-7 p.m. at the clinic, 215 Westheimer and 3311 Richmond, Suite 100; 4-8 p.m. at The 611, 611 Hyde Park; and 8 p.m. - midnight at Club Houston, 2205 Fannin. 713-830-3070.  
**GLBT Pentecostals.** Bible study, prayer, 7 p.m. in the Heights. For info: 936-931-3761; e-mail: www.WVgb1947@cs.com.  
**Houston Roughneck Rugby.** Practice from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. For more information, log on to www.roughnecksrugby.org.  
**Houston Women's Rugby Team.** No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.  
**Introduction to Buddhism.** All welcome at 634 W. Temple in the Heights. 7 p.m. Carlton, 713-862-8129.  
**Rainbow Ranglers.** Free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. No partner needed. Beginner 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.  
**Houston GLBT Community Center.** Lisa Wannemacher Relationship Seminar, 7 p.m. Lesbian Coming Out Group, 7 p.m., 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

## WEDNESDAY MAY 5

**MS Healing Art,** with Salli Babbitt, 10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m., Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray, 713-523-9530.  
**Center for Spiritual Living.** Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.; SOM Discussion & Exploration, 7 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.  
**Physically Challenged Healing Art,** with Salli Babbitt, 1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray, 713-523-9530.  
**OutSkate.** This roller Rink skate club hosts Gay Skate Night at Zenith Roller Rink, 8075 Cook Road every Wednesday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. \$5 entry plus skate rental. 281-933-5818, Doble367@aol.com.  
**Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA).** 8:15 p.m. meeting. Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond Ave., Room 15.  
**Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.** Support Network Pot Luck Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Various support groups, 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.  
**Bible Study.** Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.  
**Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic.** 4-8 p.m. at Mary's, 1100 Westheimer; 9 p.m.-midnight at Ripcord, 715 Fairview; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at E.J.'s, 2517 Ralph; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin. 713-830-3000.  
**Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.  
**Community Gospel Service.** 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235. www.communitygospel.org.

**Gay Bowling Leagues.** 6:30 p.m. Palace Lanes, 4191 Bellaire Blvd. 713-861-1187.  
**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@eastttx.net.  
**Houston Pride Band.** Open rehearsal, 7:30-9:30 p.m. 1307 Yale. 713-862-1488.  
**Houston Tennis Club.** 7-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com  
**Spiritual Uplift Service.** 7 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.  
**Houston GLBT Community Center.** Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, 7 p.m., 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

## THURSDAY MAY 6

**HIV+ Healing Art Group,** 1-4 p.m., Kermit Eisenhut Studio, 1953 Montrose Blvd., 713-523-9530.  
**Free HIV Testing. Houston Area Community Services.** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Joseph-Hines Clinic, 1710 West 25th St. Also 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Gallery Medical Clinic, 5900 North Freeway, and Club Toyz from 9 p.m.-midnight. 713-526-0555, ext. 231, 227 or 226.  
**Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic.** 8 p.m.-midnight at Brazos River Bottom (BRB), 2400 Brazos, atd at Cousins, 817 Fairview, and 4-8 p.m. at All-Star News, 3415 Katy Freeway. 713-830-3000.  
**Free HIV Testing.** 4-8 p.m. at All Star News, 3415 Katy Freeway. Health clinic with free testing for HIV and syphilis. 713-869-7878.  
**FrontRunners Houston.** Runners meet at Memorial Park at 6:30 p.m. for a three-mile run. http://home.swbell.net/larathon/houfr.htm or e-mail: larathon@swbell.net. 713-522-0899.  
**Gay Bowling Leagues.** Luci Duos. 9 p.m. Dynamic Lanes, 6121 Tarnef Drive. 713-861-1187.  
**GLOBAL.** Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston-Central Campus. Weekly meeting, 6 p.m. e-mail: nguyen0023@hotmail.com.  
**Hep C Recovery.** Support group. 6:30 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.  
**Houston Roughneck Rugby.** Practice from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. For more information, log on to www.roughnecksrugby.org.  
**Houston Women's Rugby Team.** No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.  
**Lake Livingston GLBT Support Group.** 7 p.m. dinner and discussion. Grace Assembly Church, 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@eastttx.net.  
**Lambda Skating Club.** 8 p.m. Tradewinds Skating Rink. www.neosoft.com/~lrsc. 713-523-9620.  
**Montrose Clinic.** Offers weekly peer support groups for gay and bisexual men with HIV. English speaking group meets, 6:30 p.m. 215 Westheimer 713-830-3050.  
**Rainbow Ranglers.** Free C&W dance lessons. No partner required. Brazos River Bottom. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.  
**Recovery From Food Addiction (RFA).** Meeting for 12-step program open to all. Noon-1 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama St. RFA: 713-673-2848. www.geocities.com/rfa77235/. E-mail: rfaworldservice@aol.com.  
**Spanish Charla Conversation Group.** Café Agora, 7 p.m. E-mail: charlahouston@msn.com. 713-416-7203.  
**Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic.** 713-830-3000.

## FRIDAY MAY 7

**Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.  
**HIV+ Healing Art Group,** 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Kermit Eisenhut Studio, 1953 Montrose Blvd., 713-523-9530.  
**Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic.** 1-5 p.m. at the clinic, 215 Westheimer and 3311 Richmond, Suite 100; 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. at Rich's, 2401 San Jacinto; 10 p.m. - 2 a.m. at The Meatrack, 2915 San Jacinto; 10 p.m. - 1 a.m. at Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin; 10 a.m. - 1 a.m. at E.J.'s, 2517 Ralph. 713-830-3070.  
**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@eastttx.net.  
**H.A.T.C.H.** Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets 7-10 p.m. For meeting information, call 713-529-3590. www.hatchyouth.org.  
**Houston Tennis Club.** 7-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub.org  
**Q-Patrol.** Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com  
**Houston GLBT Community Center.** Women's Game Night, 7p.m., In Our Own Write (Poetry Night), 8-10 p.m., 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818.

@ To list an event, call 713-529-8490, fax at 713-529-9531, or e-mail editor@houstonvoice.com. The deadline is Monday at 5 p.m.

## appts.

## SATURDAY MAY 1



Gay Men's Chorus Artistic Director **James Knapp** and **Beth McConnell**, principal accompanist. The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston presents VocalEase, a performance of favorite tunes, at 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1660 Harold Street. The concert will feature Knapp, McConnell and Ensemble Director Eric McAnallen. 1-800-494-TIXS.

## SUNDAY MAY 2

'Life in the Closet, and What Makes GLBT People so Resilient?' is the topic up for discussion when Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays meets at 2 p.m. in the Jones building at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 5501 S. Main St. at Binz. 713-467-3524.

## THURSDAY MAY 6

Learn about the art of bookmaking during 'Bound/Unbound/Rebound' an exhibition by the Book Art Students of the Glassell School of Art. The exhibit begins with a free lecture and reception at 7 p.m. at the Jung Center Library, 5200 Montrose Blvd. The exhibit runs through June 6. 713.524.8253. www.junghouston.org.

'Pink! The Musical' will be staged at 8 p.m. at the Wortham Center, 501 Texas Ave., as part of the Pink Ribbons Project Gala to benefit breast cancer awareness and assistance to underserved women in Houston. Tickets are \$100 for preferred reserved seating and \$50 for general reserved seating. A silent auction precedes the show, and a champagne and dessert reception follows the performance. www.pinkribbons.org.

## FRIDAY MAY 7

CentrePoint presents an educational program on sexual intimacy at 7:30 p.m. at the non-profit education center, 1920 Hollister. 713-932-7224.

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## SHARE / HOUSTON

**15 MINS FROM DOWNTOWN** 290 NEAR 610 LOOP Huge BR/BA for rent in 3 BR house w/ pool. WD, maid service, HBO, priv back yard, great neighborhood! All utils incl. NS M. \$535/mo. Call (713) 290-0353 or [bigtexsms@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bigtexsms@sbcglobal.net)

**290 JONES RD NW.** 3 BR, 2.5 BA on quiet street. Fully furnished, priv BA & BR. \$550 + 1/2 util. Call Frank (281) 469-0482.

## BODY / SOUL

**MANSCAPING** Men's waxing & clipping. Priv location in Montrose. Call Dale (713) 529-5952 for appt.

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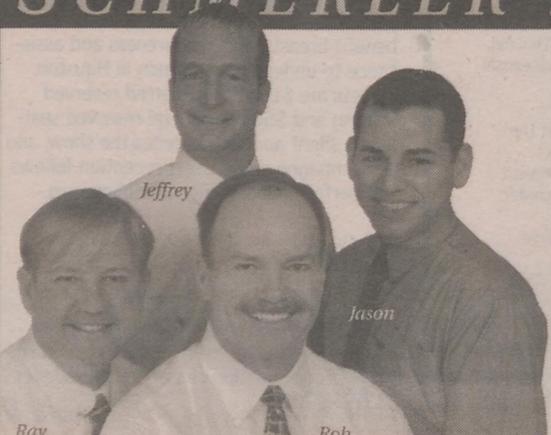
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**dish** There's a Fine Line Between Telling the Truth and Talking Trash

Dish is here to answering these burning questions:

Is Robbie Williams gay? Can we re-do 'The View?'

And why is that New York City tranny up a tree?

# Princes and queens

SOMEONE WE LOVE TO WATCH IS ALL grown up, and he's going to make a splash. Little **PRINCE WILLIAM** is looking devilishly regal at 21 wearing a Speedo and cheering on his team at a recent water polo match.

Other than the man-on-man sex fantasies running through your head right now, there isn't really anything gay about **DIANA's** son getting older, but Dish thought that everyone would appreciate the picture, which speaks for itself.



Prince William (left) and a teammate cheer on his Scottish National Universities team at a recent water polo match. Thank goodness he's 21. (Photo by Barry Batchelor/AP)

**Take that**

**SPEAKING OF ENGLISH ROYALTY**, there's more fuel to the fire for the "Is **ROBBIE WILLIAMS** the biggest queen of England?" debate.

The British pop star, whose 2003 solo CD was titled "Escapology," has been the subject of debates about his sexual orientation for years. But Gay.com reports that a colleague seems to have put an end to the speculation in a new documentary about Williams, a former member of the boy band Take That.

"I don't think he is bisexual. I think he is totally gay," says Kevin Kinsella, the former manager of Take That says in the documentary — "The Truth About Take That" — which aired in the U.K. on April 25.

"He said, 'I don't know if I'm straight or gay,'" Kinsella says about the time Williams asked him for advice about his orientation. "I said, 'Well, it sounds like you are leaning towards gay, but do you enjoy it?' He said, 'Well, yeah.'"

This comes on the heels of former Take That member **HOWARD DONALD**, now a club DJ, telling the British newspaper the Sun that Williams is confused about his sexual identity. "Robbie just doesn't know what he is," he says. "It wouldn't surprise me if he was gay."

In the past, Williams has made joking references to himself as a gay man, but never officially came out. Much of the speculation stems from his relationship with former BBC television host **JONATHAN WILKES**, the former host of "You've Been Framed" and Williams' former longtime roommate.

**Looking good**

**AMID THE CURRENT TREND OF GAY** men taking over television, New York's Hurricane Entertainment recently filmed a pilot for "TVQ," which they are billing as "Queer Eye" meets "The View," the New York Post's gossip column Page Six reports.

Taking the couch spots filled by **BARBARA WALTERS** and company, the pilot's participants include Village Voice gossip maven **MICHAEL MUSTO**, "The

Daily Show" correspondent **FRANK DeCARO**, celebrity stylist **JAMES AGUIAR**, "The Oprah Winfrey Show" producer **PATRICK RILEY**, department store Barney's executive **SIMON DOONAN** and actor/model **T.R. PESCOD**.

Hurricane claims the show is already attracting interest from syndicators.

**K-I-S-S-I-N-G**

**THOSE WACKY NEW YORKERS** JUST won't stop.

Last week, a 32-year old pre-op transsexual and her 17-year-old boyfriend climbed a tree in Central Park, disrobed and "had some fun" for all to see. The New York Daily News reports that the couple apparently was upset that the boy's family didn't approve of their relationship. (The age of consent in New York is 17.)

"I want my mother and my psychologist!" the unidentified teen screamed to police at one point.

His girlfriend also made demands, asking for a Vanilla Diet Pepsi. When someone handed her a regular Diet Pepsi, the diva threw the can at police and screamed, "Vanilla! What I say goes!"

The couple also complained about how transgendered people are portrayed by the media.

After four hours, they left the tree voluntarily, and police escorted them away for psychological observation.

@ Send comments, suggestions to Dish@houstonvoice.com.

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**Dykes To Watch Out For** by Alison Bechdel

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YET PART OF YOU IS RELIEVED WE CAN'T, BECAUSE IF MY CANCER COMES BACK, YOU CAN JUST LEAVE.

WHY WOULD I LEAVE? DID I LEAVE THIS TIME? GOD, SYDNEY, YOU HAVE ME, WHY DO YOU NEED A PIECE OF PAPER? MARRIAGE IS NOT SOME KIND OF INSURANCE POLICY.

THAT'S FOR DARN SURE... OH, YEAH! THAT'S IT... PUSH A LITTLE HARDER.

HI, CLARICE!  
 OH, HI, HONEY, ARE YOU JUST GETTING UP? WE FAST-WALKED FIVE MILES ALREADY!

AND GUESS WHAT? I TALKED GLORIA INTO JOINING THE FREEDOM TO MARRY BOARD?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M THINKING.

NEITHER DO I! HEY, GLORIA, DID YOU SEE OUR MARRIAGE LICENSE? IT'S REALLY COOL.

MEANWHILE... FURNITURE DELIVERY FROM CROCKERY SHED FOR A SYDNEY, UH... KRAPASKI?

YES?

GREAT! BRING IT UP.

I WONDER IF IT'S THE MANHATTAN ARMCHAIR OR THE LAUREL-ARMOIRE.

YOU TOLD YOUR FATHER WE GOT MARRIED.

WHAT'S HE GONNA DO? ASK TO SEE THE LICENSE?

THE F.D.B. DOES NOT SAY THE UNITED STATES IS GOING TO BE ATTACKED.

IT SAYS BIN LADEN WOULD LIKE TO ATTACK THE UNITED STATES.

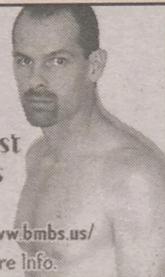
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**DEADLINES: 8am Wednesday for online submissions only.  
 5:30pm Tuesday for all other submissions.**

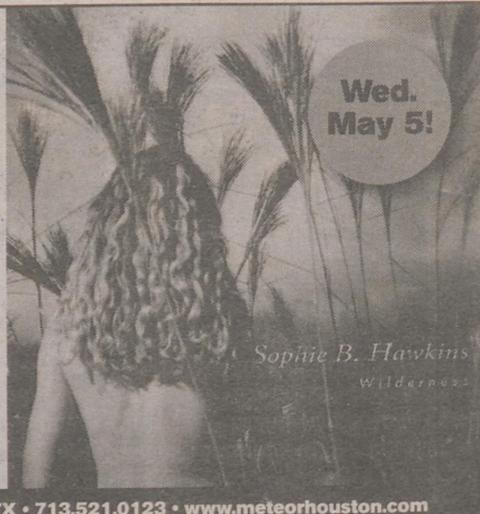
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## bitch session



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These are real bitches, sent in by real readers about gay life's little annoyances, and the big ones, too.

**WHY DO YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT PEOPLE** who only want sex, when you reject people only because you don't want to go to bed with them? That means you're only looking for sex, too.

**TO THE GUY WHO SAID "MY MAN** needs to do his duty and please this booty": If your man thinks of it as a duty, then there is something wrong. Perhaps you should try making the pleasure mutual.

**TO THE GUY WHO WROTE IN THAT** the poz guy who thinks he deserves compassion is going to die from HIV or get run over a bus: A lot of us have been HIV positive for more than 20 years. We're not going to die from this disease. May YOU get run over by a bus!

**TO THE IGNORANT PERSON WHO** said that anyone with HIV was certain to die of AIDS (unless they got hit by a bus first): There are people like me who've been poz and healthy for 20 years. Never heard of medical progress? Do us a favor and learn something instead of showing us how insensitive and stupid you are.

**AFTER READING "BITCH SESSION,"** I am surprised that in the name of free speech, racist rantings, insulting characterizations, and other bizarre submissions are allowed to go into print. Although I don't advocate censorship in any form, why is it a requirement to legitimize ignorance? **Bitch Boy responds:** One person's ignorance is another person's insight, or so sayeth the Bitch Boy, who has to wade through your ramblings.

**TO THE HOMOPHOBE WHO SAID HO-** mosexuality isn't "natural": Actually the AIDS virus and child molesters are natural; they weren't made in a laboratory. You're confusing "natural" with "good." You're probably confused about a lot of things.

**NOT TO BE AGEIST, BUT DO YOU OVER-** 50 queens ever tire of giving unsolicited advice to guys younger than you? I'm 30, and when I want your advice, I'll ask for it. Until then, keep that shit to yourself, gramps.

**TO GEORGE W. BUSH: THIS IS THE** Donald: You're fired!

**TO THE PERSON WHO ASKED FOR** better bar ventilation systems to combat smoke: How about one bar — just one, in this supposedly enlightened town — being smoke free, or having a meaningfully large non-smoking area, so that a few of us can live to a normal actuarial age?

**WHEN WE SAY WE WANT MORE THAN** a quick fuck, most of the time what we really mean is we expect more to happen after the quick fuck. It just doesn't work that way usually.

**GUYS ARE HUNG UP ON THE IDEA THAT** they must shave or trim down their bush. Why? Some of the carving I see makes them look like little girls.

**TO THE LOOGIE HOCKER COMPLAIN-** ing about bicycles on the sidewalk: Pay attention to the law; they have the same right to be on the sidewalk as pedestrians do.

**A BYSTANDER'S OBSERVATION: YOU'RE** not still friends with your former lover, but you are still friends with the idiot who tried to break you up. Go figure!

**TO THE GUY BITCHING ABOUT QUEENS** shaving their bushes: It's tired reading you whine about how proud you are of your hairy ass. Guys shave their head, their back, their crotch, whatever! Try it once and you might "get it." Besides, if you don't like it, it will always grow back.

**GAY PRIDE DAY IS JUST AROUND THE** corner. If you're embarrassed by anyone you see that day, maybe then you'll know why you won't see everybody else there.

**IF ANY GAY MOVIE OR TV SHOW** really tried to represent everybody, it would probably be more interesting to watch paint dry.

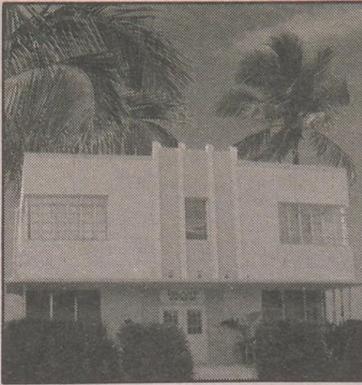
**TO THE GUY WITH THE ONE-TRACK** mind: Why don't you just come talk to me directly rather than bitching to everyone but me that you're interested?

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH THESE "BEEN** there" bisexuals who say they love you and then turn around and backstab you to your gay brothers and sisters? Good question!

**TO THE GUY WONDERING WHY A GAY** man would want to go to a straight gym: You mean there are straight gyms? Who knew!

**TO THE CLUELESS BITCH COMPLAIN-** ing about the media picking the "least attractive" gay couples getting married to "show the world how sick they are": To me, they are beautiful people who have set aside the conformist look you see in clubs to fight our battles. You truly don't deserve the rights you are about to get, and yet you do. Stop writing, stop speaking and stop quoting your mommy; you're bad at it.

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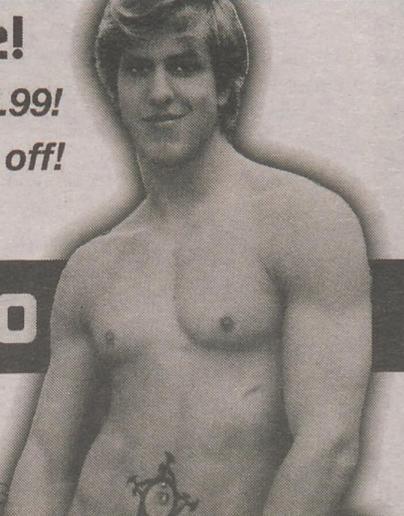
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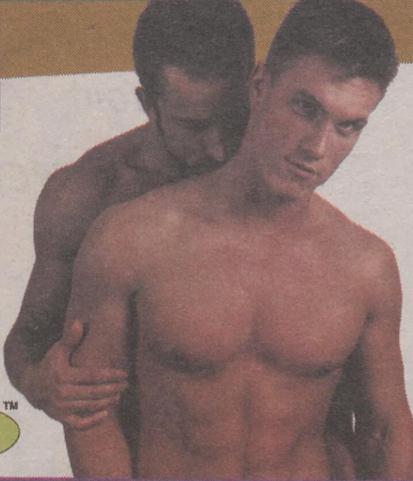
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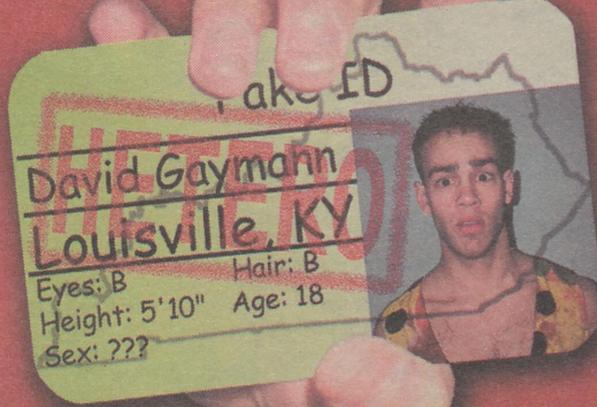
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