

Atlanta Braves relief pitcher John Roker apologized this week for his comments about minorities and gays, just days after Major League Baseball ordered him to undergo psychological evaluation. **Page 10**



Gore Vidal talks about being a queer pioneer who not only defined what it is to be gay but then managed to escape the pigeon-hole of that definition—gloriously. **Page 15**



Texas City killings go unsolved



MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Three dozen people took part in a vigil last year for two gay Texas City men slain in a double homicide, including Betty Parker (background), the mother of one of the victims.



Kevin Tryals (left) and Laaron Morris were shot and found dead along with Morris' burned Ford Mustang on Jan. 17, 1999. The killings of the two gay men remain unsolved.



GALVESTON COUNTY DAILY NEWS

A year after two gay men were slain, police have exhausted their leads, as family and friends prepare for a vigil to remember the victims

by MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Betty Parker will once again stand on the front lawn of her Texas City home Monday, light a candle and search for the closure that has eluded her for a year.

The day—Jan. 17—marks the one-year anniversary of the brutal double homicide that claimed the life of her son, Laaron "Larry" Morris, and his friend Kevin Tryals.

The two gay men were shot and burned to death in the city's first double slaying in more than 25 years.

And in the year since the two men were discovered in a burning Ford Mustang on a dead-end road, the crime has continued to stump police investigators, who have exhausted the few leads they had, and made no arrests.

"You get agitated and frustrated because you have nobody to take to trial for two murders," Parker said this week. "The only thing we can do is keep praying."

Friends and family will join Parker on Monday to plant two trees in memory of the slain men, and hold a final vigil to commemorate the anniversary of the killings.

While the event may help Parker and others to cope with the unsolved crime, Parker said she will not soon forget what happened to her son.

"For me, it is not a closure on the case at all. That tree planting will keep his memory alive. Maybe I can sit down and look at the tree and it flourishing and go out and remember the good times."

Morris and Tryals stayed out into the early morning hours of Jan. 17, 1999, stopping in at a local bar, visiting nearby Galveston and spending time behind the wheel of Morris' Ford Mustang, purchased a day earlier.

They left a club in the 6100 block of FM 1765 about 2:30 a.m. Their bodies were found about four hours later as police responded to a report of heavy smoke near Bayou Campbell Road.

Sometime after 2:30 a.m., the two friends were shot several times and killed, and put in or near Morris' car, which was set ablaze on a dead-end road off Loop 197 South, just a few miles from Parker's home in Texas City.

Morris was so badly burned that family members identified him through jewelry and his auto.

After the slayings, Texas City police spent hours in two Galveston gay bars that Morris and Tryals visited, logging interviews with people who knew the two men. They gathered mounds of forensic evidence from the crime scene.

But in the days after the killings, and in the months since the crime, authorities couldn't unearth suspects or develop strong leads.

Because the two men were found with their jewelry, robbery may not be a motive, police have said. And police say none of the evidence in the case supports a hate-related motivation.

> Continued on Page 14



MELINDA SHELTON

Baton Rouge High School student Martin Pfeiffer's transformation from closet case to activist now includes a push to start a gay student group at his high school.

Baton Rouge youth leads fight for Gay-Straight Alliance

Martin Pfeiffer left school officials scratching their heads when he asked to start a student-led Gay-Straight Alliance

by MELINDA SHELTON

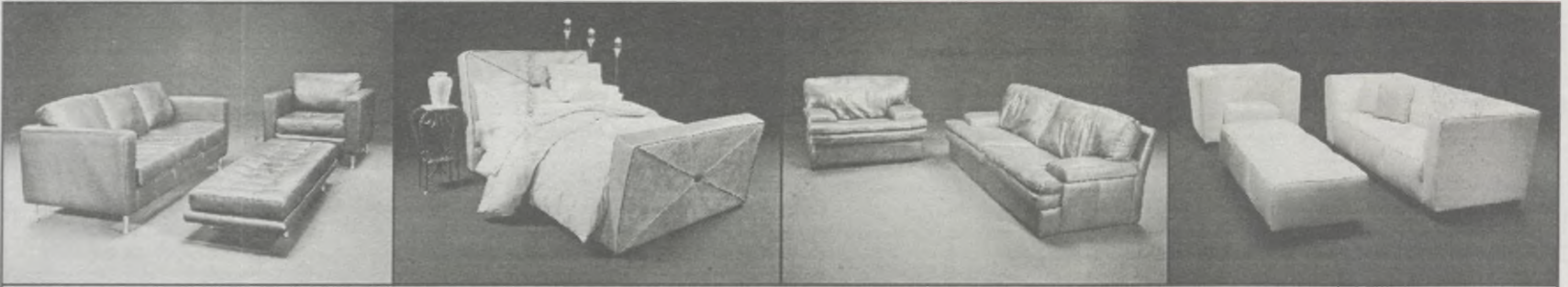
BATON ROUGE—Make no mistake about it. Martin "Marty" Pfeiffer is one self-assured guy who's leagues ahead of most youngsters his age—which happens to be 17.

In many respects, he's not unlike other high school seniors: his bleached-blond hair is closely cropped; he wears an earring in each earlobe; his baggy Cargo slacks are topped by an over-sized sweater. Slung over his shoulders is the over-packed backpack that has become an extension of every student's wardrobe.

Despite the similarities, Pfeiffer is notably different. The tall, lanky high school senior is remarkably articulate, politically astute, and hell-bent on changing the world.

And he's gay.

> Continued on Page 12

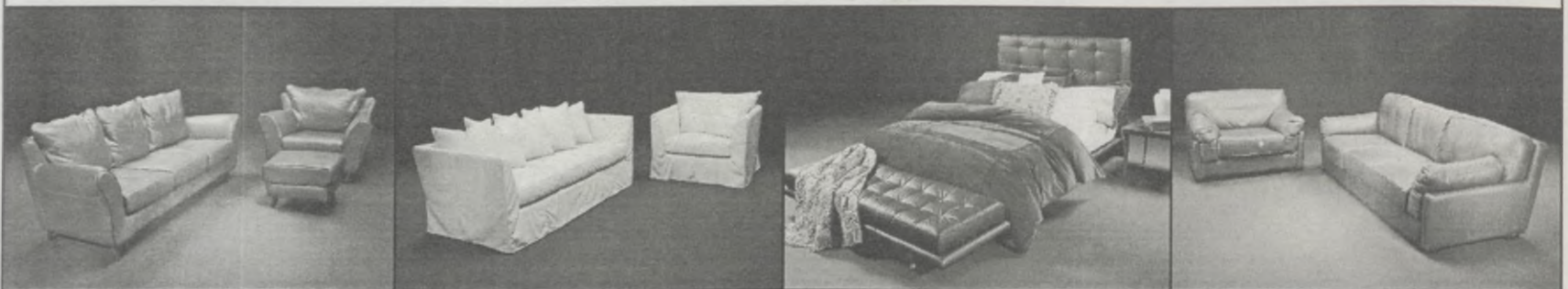


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Talk to your doctor when you start taking SUSTIVA. SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Always tell your doctor if you are taking, starting or changing any prescription or non-prescription medicine when taking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

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

FOR HIV

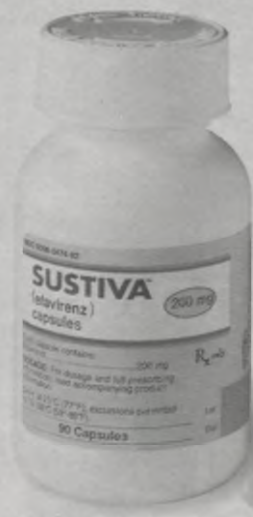
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† Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV Infection, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), December 1998.

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

What is SUSTIVA?

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

How does SUSTIVA work?

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

Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?

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

Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

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

How should I take SUSTIVA?

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

Can children take SUSTIVA?

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

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

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

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

Talk to your doctor right away if you:

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

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

How should I keep SUSTIVA?

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

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

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

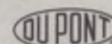
How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?

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

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

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Anti-gay marriage bill may hit legislature

Gay activists say a recent court decision in Vermont may feed a conservative push to ban same-sex marriage in Texas, allowing an anti-gay bill to slip through the legislature 'like a greased pig'

by TAMMYE NASH
 Dallas Voice

During the last two sessions of the Texas Legislature, opponents beat back measures designed to prevent the state from recognizing same-sex marriages.

But such a measure may face an easier time in the next session, beginning in January 2001, legislators and gay rights advocates said.

Last month's decision by the Vermont Supreme Court, requiring lawmakers there to provide gay couples with the same "benefits and protections" currently extended to married couples, may give added impetus to anti-gay marriage legislation in Texas, they said.

"The Vermont ruling definitely heightens the [same-sex marriage] issue in Texas," said Dianne Hardy-Garcia, executive director of Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas. "We've had to fend off [anti-gay marriage] bills in the last two sessions of the legislature. And I expect we'll have an even bigger fight this next time around."

State Rep. Harryette Ehrhardt (D-Dallas) agreed.

"There's no question that there will be an anti-gay marriage bill introduced in the next session," Ehrhardt said. "If they are able to make this into a real emotional issue, it's going to be very hard to defeat such a bill."

Both previous bills were defeated through technical maneuvers, not by votes, noted state Rep. Glen Maxey (D-Austin), the legislature's only openly-gay member.

"We've never had the votes to kill a marriage bill," Maxey said. "We've always done it through parliamentary

procedure. Whether or not we could do it again depends on who controls the legislature, the Democrats or the Republicans."

Maxey said it was inevitable that the legislature would take up another anti-gay marriage bill in 2001.

"We'd have this bill again whether the Vermont ruling had come down the way it did or not," Maxey said. "I don't think we can continue to block it. I know that if the Republicans control the legislature in the next session, Texas will have a 'Defense Of Marriage' law."

State Rep. Warren Chisum (R-Pampa) introduced bills in 1997 and 1999 to prevent the state from legally recognizing same sex marriages, including unions conducted legally elsewhere. Both bills died in the State Affairs Committee. Opponents also were able to stymie efforts to have Chisum's bills passed as amendments to other legislation on the House floor.

Chisum did not return calls seeking comment.

Hardy-Garcia agreed with Maxey that the November elections will play a key role in deciding whether the next legislature will pass an anti-gay marriage bill.

"This election couldn't be more important," Hardy-Garcia said. "Our community has to have an energized vote in November, and all of our emphasis this year is going to be on the election. That's our best chance to defeat any anti-gay legislation. But if the Republicans take over the Texas House, the marriage bill is going to fly through there like a greased pig."

A ruling by the Hawaii Supreme Court in 1993, declaring that the state's failure to grant marriage licenses to same-sex



State Reps. Harryette Ehrhardt and Glen Maxey said that it will be difficult for gay-friendly lawmakers to beat back efforts in the Texas Legislature next year to pass a ban on same-sex marriage.

couples was a form of sex discrimination prohibited by the state constitution, sparked a flurry of legislation around the U.S. barring same-sex marriage.

In 1996, Congress passed and President Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act, a measure withholding federal recognition of same-sex marriages and permitting states to do the same. By the end of 1998, 29 states had passed similar legislation, according to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

In November 1998, Hawaii voters approved a constitutional amendment permitting the state's lawmakers to declare that marriage was limited to a man and a woman—something lawmakers had already done in 1994. The Hawaii Supreme Court ruled late last year that the constitutional amendment was the final word on the gay marriage controversy in the state, ending a lawsuit by three gay and lesbian couples seeking the right to marry.

Last year, 16 additional states considered anti-gay marriage legislation, including Texas. But only one passed such a measure—Louisiana, which became the 30th state with a law barring same-sex marriage.

In the wake of the Vermont court decision last month, efforts to ban gay marriages have been announced in two states.

Hate crimes summit in Houston expected to draw hundreds

by MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Finding practical ways to address hate crimes will bring together local, state and federal officials during a day-long summit next week expected to attract up to 700 participants.

The focus of the event—targeted at clergy, educators, law enforcement and community groups—will include hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation. Nancy Rodriguez, the mother of a gay man slain in Houston nearly 10 years ago, and Bill Lann Lee, acting assistant U.S. Attorney General, who has spoken out on gay-related hate crimes, are scheduled to take part in Thursday's summit.

"[Organizers] have tried to really cover the whole gambit," said Tracey Cobb, a spokeswoman for Mayor Lee Brown. "It is a very diverse group."

Houston police Chief C.O. Bradford will also take part. Since early 1998, Brown and Bradford have greatly expanded the police department's efforts on hate crimes, including appointing a hate crimes coordinator and expanding training for officers.

The idea for the summit grew out of the regular meetings of the Houston Area Hate Crimes Working Group, a collaborative effort that includes local, state and federal government officials, law enforcement and prosecutors.

Some 1,000 people were invited to attend the event, though organizers moved this week to open the session to the public, Cobb said.

The event is broken into two panel discussions, along with two break out sessions to focus on developing practical approaches to combating hate crimes in metro Houston, Cobb said.

Organizers also tapped openly lesbian City Councilwoman Annise Parker for suggestions on what organizations in the gay community should be invited to attend.

"They wanted to focus on people who are actively involved in some sort of hate crimes work," Parker said. "It is more about having people that can affect what is happening here in Houston."

INFO

Hate Crimes Summit

Jan. 20, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
 George R. Brown Convention Center
 1001 Avenida de las Americas
 To pre-register: 713-437-6966
 www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/hatecrimes.htm

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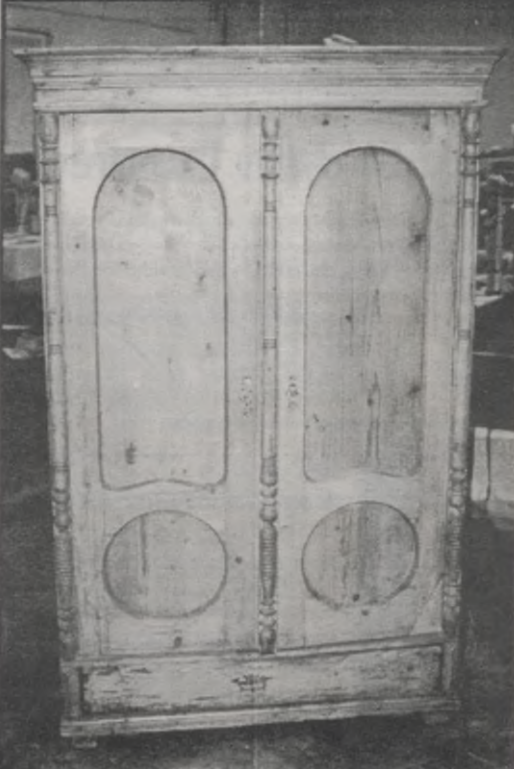
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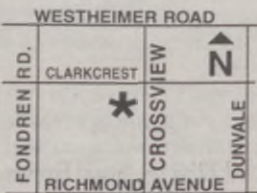
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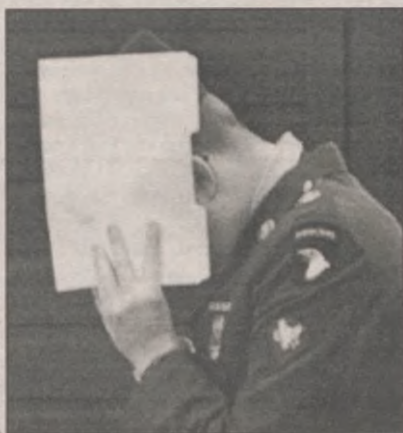
Around the Nation

CDC: Number of black, Hispanic gay men with AIDS passes whites

ATLANTA (AP)—For the first time since AIDS arrested the nation's attention in the early 1980s, more black and Hispanic gay men are living with the disease than are white gay men. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported Thursday that minorities represent 52 percent of the gay and bisexual men who had AIDS in 1998, up from 31 percent in 1989. Black men made up one-third of the cases, while Hispanics represented 18 percent of them. Researchers said the report suggests that the stigma of homosexuality plays a role in spreading the disease because blacks and Hispanics are less likely than whites to identify themselves as gay or seek AIDS prevention and treatment services. "People have totally ignored the consistent fact that gay men of color have always been the largest single risk category for men ... and this issue is never talked about," said Dr. Helene Gayle, director of the CDC's national center for prevention of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis. Gayle said trends identified several years ago led researchers to project that the number of nonwhite gay men with AIDS would surpass whites, but the increase happened faster than expected.

Plea agreement reached in gay soldier's death on Kentucky base

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky.—Army Spc. Justin R. Fisher, 26, was sentenced to 12 1/2 years in prison on Jan. 8 in the beating death of a barracks mate who had been rumored to be gay. Fisher admitted he lied to military investigators and obstructed the investigation when he wiped blood from a baseball bat that Pvt. Calvin Glover used to kill Pfc. Barry Winchell, who had been sleeping. Under a plea agreement, the Army dropped other charges. Fisher's court martial trial had been scheduled to start last Saturday. Winchell, 21, was killed while he slept in his cot at Fort Campbell. Glover, 19, of Sulphur, Okla., was convicted of premeditated murder and sentenced to life in prison and prosecutors said he was driven by hatred of homosexuals. In the wake of the plea agreement, Pat and Wally Kutteles, Winchell's mother and stepfather told the *Washington Post* they are considering suing the Army for failing to protect their son. On Monday, Army officials said they will investigate alleged anti-gay actions at Fort Campbell, Ky., during the period leading up to Winchell's murder.



Spc. Justin R. Fisher may be eligible for parole after four years under a plea agreement he reached over his participation in the killing of Pfc. Barry Winchell.

Supreme Court allows insurers to set AIDS coverage limits

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court, rejecting allegations of illegal bias, let an insurance company provide less health care coverage for AIDS-related illnesses than for other conditions under the same policy. Two Chicago-area men bought health care policies from Mutual of Omaha with a \$1 million maximum benefit for non-AIDS-related conditions, but a much smaller limit for AIDS-related illnesses. The men charged in their suit that such limits violated the federal Americans With Disabilities Act. A federal judge in Chicago ruled for the two men in 1998, but the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that ruling. Mutual of Omaha did not refuse to sell insurance to people infected with HIV, the appeals court said, but instead made a coverage decision similar to a furniture store deciding not to sell wheelchairs. Lawyers for the two men told the justices that the limit on AIDS coverage "presents a classic case of disability-based discrimination." The court turned down the appeal Jan. 10 without comment.

Gay Dallas attorney announces long-shot run for U.S. Senate

DALLAS—Bobby Wightman-Cervantes will join four other little-known candidates in the March 14 Democratic primary for the opportunity to face Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison in the November general election. "The chances of me winning [the primary] are very good," Wightman-Cervantes told the *Dallas Voice*. "At least I have two target groups [of voters], gays and Hispanics." Wightman-Cervantes said the reason he decided to enter the race was so a Hispanic would lead the Democratic state ticket in the general election. Wightman-Cervantes ran unsuccessfully in the 1998 Republican primary seeking a state District Judge position in Dallas County. Hutchison is expected to be a prohibitive favorite for reelection, whoever wins the Democratic primary.

Utah education board quietly bans anti-gay bias

SALT LAKE CITY—With so little fanfare that even gay rights advocates didn't know about it, Utah has joined only eight other states in banning anti-gay discrimination by school personnel, the *Washington Blade* reported Jan. 7. Utah's Board of Education approved the change in its ethical code last May, but activists did not find out until November when it came to light during a court hearing on a lawsuit seeking to guarantee the right of public school students to form gay-straight alliances. The Utah code change added sexual orientation to the list of categories on which teachers, administrators, and other school personnel are barred from discriminating against students or co-workers.

—From staff and wire reports



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EDITORIAL

Let Rocker exercise his freedom of speech

The critical response to the verbal insults hurled by relief pitcher John Rocker at gays, people with AIDS, ethnic minorities and foreigners has mostly insisted that the Atlanta Braves and Major League Baseball muzzle the man permanently.

Until this week, the critics have gotten their way.

In the weeks following the publication last month of Rocker's angry diatribe against New Yorkers, including "queers with AIDS" and those speaking a foreign language, the opinionated relief ace has been uncharacteristically quiet.

Within hours after news broke about his colorful *Sports Illustrated* interview, in which he also called a minority teammate he thinks is overweight "a fat monkey," Rocker issued a brief written statement apologizing for his remarks, rationalizing them away as the product of an emotional athlete who feeds off "competitive zeal."

That public statement, in which Rocker admitted having "evidenced strong competitive feelings," had more the ring of a public relations machine in full retreat than a Macon good ole boy.

Last week, Braves President Stan Kasten announced that Rocker had personally elaborated on that public apology behind closed doors, in a Dec. 29 meeting where the 25-year-

old surely knew his job was on the line.

"What we have here is a player who has expressed remorse. Under those circumstances, I am not going to abandon a player or an employee or a friend," Kasten said.

The Braves organization, which has thus far shown all the signs of circling the wagons around its talented young prospect, asks too much of its fans and the city to expect that we trust a stiff public apology of doubtful authenticity and a private apology given with the pitcher's livelihood on the line.

Then, this week, Rocker finally spoke up, in his own words, in an interview broadcast by ESPN. He did, indeed, express remorse, but it sounded more along the lines of, "I'm sorry those New York fans treated me so horribly, inciting me to say things that made me look like a jerk."

Not only was Rocker not particularly contrite, he failed to take full responsibility for his remarks, blaming the *S.I.* reporter for misrepresenting his views, though he didn't challenge the accuracy of the tape-recorded interview.

Rocker also failed to address all the groups smeared by his screed, especially those "queers" and people with AIDS. Peter Gammon, the ESPN interviewer, couldn't even bring himself to repeat Rocker's slur, summarizing the insult as "the thing about AIDS."

Before we can put this controversy behind us, we need to hear Rocker recant—or

defend—his real views on homosexuality and AIDS, since the *S.I.* interview apparently "wasn't him."

Unleashing Rocker's big mouth would also please his many conservative fans, who have been quick to defend his "First Amendment right" to speak his mind.

A quick civics history lesson would remind these patriotic defenders that the First Amendment right of free speech, like all constitutional rights, protects us from punishment by the government, not private employers like the Atlanta Braves or Major League Baseball.

The "free speech" battle cry is as hypocritical as it is ahistorical, coming from the same conservatives who are the first to attack gay rights protections in the workplace by championing an employer's basic right to hire and fire employees for whatever reason they choose.

There's an exception, apparently, when the employee is trashing the ethnicity and national heritage of his teammates, damaging the reputation of his employer, and tarring the reputation of a cherished American sport.

If Rocker is to redeem himself with the Braves, their fans, and the city of Atlanta, and baseball supporters generally, we need to hear more.

Let's hear Rocker, unplugged, wax eloquent about his true feelings on homosexuality and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Then maybe we can all judge whether his apology is genuine.

Military leaders have already failed the 'litmus test'

Al Gore could be excused for feeling a little *deja vu* last week when he was blasted from all sides for falling victim to a clever debate question about whether he'd adopt a "litmus test" demanding that his high-level military appointees agree with his opposition to "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

It was almost exactly seven years ago that

the Clinton-Gore administration saw its post-inauguration honeymoon evaporate when the president announced his plan to follow through on a campaign promise to end the ban on gays in the military.

Last week, many of the same military leaders who back-sniped from the Pentagon in 1993 were talking to the New

York Times from the comfortable perch of retirement, blasting Gore for allegedly introducing a new qualification for office in his proposed administration.

In fact, Gore's "litmus test" could have been interpreted much as he "clarified" it later, as demanding a willingness to enforce the commander-in-chief's position on the issue, putting aside personal misgivings.

That's an important issue in a military that has abjectly failed to carry out the spirit or letter of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," which was supposed to have facilitated service by gays but which has resulted in dramatically increased discharges.

It's especially telling that these same military leaders (and other critics) have not taken issue with the GOP front-runner, Texas Gov. George Bush, who said in a debate days later that he would impose a litmus test, too, only his appointees would have to support the existing, DADT policy.

The real "litmus test" for military appointments and any others, for that matter, ought to examine the prejudices of the applicants, including any hostility toward gay men and lesbians.

The DADT policy was enacted as a sacrifice to that prejudice, which is what actually would undermine "unit cohesion" if gays served openly. And it is that prejudice, from the command to the troops, that has made the policy unworkable in practice.





VIEWPOINT

Conquering the queer virus that infects us

by MARIA E. MINICUCCI

We're certainly aware that gay men and lesbians are beginning not only a new year, but are on the verge of a new era. Media hype aside, our reactions range from nonchalance to hopefulness to anxiousness.

Most of us, on some level, are hoping, if not expecting, that our world will be a better place for us. And better means a place free of prejudice, free of violence, free to love and to live. The recent court decision in Vermont over gay marriages gives us a glance at what could be in store for our community.

And over the years, it's been the tireless work of many to help create such a place for all of us "sexual outlaws." Our efforts are sometimes valiant in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds and insidious obstacles thrown in our path. We have been strident in identifying these obstacles and diligent in working through, around, and with them.

Our work needs to be cheered, celebrated and carried into this new era. But the work is hampered by our inability, or unwillingness, to identify and attack a serious source of contamination. It is helping to undermine and sabotage our objectives.

It's the queer virus.

The virus is running rampant among some of us. Unfortunately, it's not endemic to Houston—it reaches queer communities throughout North America. And it has the potential to be lethal to us as individuals and to our civil rights work.

In a simple definition, the queer virus is trashing ourselves, what seems to be the unique ability by gay men and lesbians to eat our own. Sometimes it's the casual, off the cuff remark or attitude in criticizing a person or some group or organization without regard to the consequence of what we're saying. It's easy to see—eavesdrop on the crowd at local gay coffee shop or read through the daily postings to the Houston Activist Network.

The queer virus has left behind scores of the walking wounded, folks like me who have worked in the community and watched as the virus eats away at organizations with a good mission. They end up dismantled, stagnant, or fraught with discontented members.

Some of us disregard the nature of the virus and feel justified in spreading it, a sort of barebacking without regard. "Can you believe this group had the nerve to do this, this and that?" I can hear the grumblings.

A quick reaction to why this happens might point to internalized oppression and homophobia. But whatever the causes, we

The virus is running rampant among some of us. Unfortunately, it's not endemic to Houston—it reaches queer communities throughout North America. And it has the potential to be lethal to us as individuals and to our civil rights work.

need to be reminded how all of this serves as a major impediment to our work on civil rights for our community. We need to take responsibility for it.

Rather than recycle these old, harmful mindsets, resentments and self-righteous attitudes, we need to rebuild our political platforms, psyches and relationships that have been infected with this queer virus.

Taking on this rebuilding is essential if we are to claim that we're committed to success. It's not an easy thing to do; it's

much easier to damn and criticize than rework and rebuild. But we should consider the cost of not doing it. That cost is much higher.

Let us step into a new era with a commitment to new and positive ways of thinking, new approaches to old problems, a positive regard for our differences. Rebuild not recycle.

Maria E. Minicucci is president of the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.



Let us know what you think

Send the editor your letters (400 words maximum) or op-ed submissions (800 words maximum).

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Braves pitcher says he spoke like a 'jerk'

by LAURA BROWN

Just days after he was ordered to undergo psychological evaluation, Atlanta Braves relief pitcher admitted Wednesday that his comments about minorities and gays in a magazine article made him sound like "a complete jerk."

In his first interview since the uproar, the 25-year-old relief pitcher spoke to ESPN at his home in Macon, and again apologized, repeating that he is not a racist.

Major League Baseball last week ordered Rocker to undergo psychological evaluation to help determine what was in his head when he railed against racial and ethnic minorities, women, immigrants and "a queer with AIDS" in an interview last month.

But there is no simple psychological diagnosis to explain bigotry, psychologists pointed out, while a coalition of activists in Atlanta warned nothing less than "Rocker's head on a platter" will dissuade them from launching pickets and protests against the Braves.

"It seems to me this is stalling by the commissioner of baseball," Dr. James Jones, a professor of psychology at the University of Delaware, told the *Houston Voice*. "I don't see any basis for psychological evaluation—he didn't engage in any bizarre behavior."

"He said things that are intemperate and inappropriate, but people say things like that all the time," said Jones, an expert in both racism and sports psychology. "He is a bigoted guy, but you can't explain that by suggesting he is not competent mentally, which is kind of the implication of having to undergo psychological evaluation."

Alvin F. Poussaint, a clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, offered a similar assessment, calling the plan a "dodge" because "psychological testing is not set up to evaluate racism."

Racism and prejudice are not listed in the American Psychiatric Association's manual of mental disorders, Poussaint noted in the *New York Times*, and "officially, mental health professionals believe racism is so common in America that it represents a social problem rather than personal pathology."

Activists opposing Rocker's statements agreed.

"John Rocker is not crazy. His hateful remarks are not a result of what is in his head, but rather a result of a hate-filled heart," said Michael Langford, president of the United Youth-Adult Conference, which organized a protest Jan. 7 in front of the Braves stadium at Turner Field.

Although several of Atlanta's most prominent gay organizations were among those participating in the local protest, some also expressed frustration that Rocker's comments against gays and people with AIDS appeared to be getting less and less attention as the story continued.

After promising action would take place in January, Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig issued a statement last week calling Rocker's comments "reprehensible and completely inexcusable."

"I am profoundly concerned about the nature of those comments as well as by certain other aspects of his behavior," Selig said, explaining that he will take "whatever additional action" deemed necessary after the psychological tests are completed.

Braves President Stan Kasten and General Manager John Schuerholz held a press conference the same day, reiterating their disagreement with Rocker's comments, but saying they would wait for a decision from Major League Baseball before taking further action.

Kasten and Schuerholz said Rocker apologized for the remarks in a meeting with them on Dec. 29, and Kasten suggested Rocker may be able to stay with the team.

At a protest Jan. 7, some accused the Braves of "passing the buck" on Rocker's punishment. But Braves spokesman Jim Schultz told the *Houston Voice* it wasn't the team that decided Major League Baseball would handle the problem.

"It was our intention to handle this until Major League Baseball stepped in and said, 'We feel this affects the entire sport,'" Schultz said.

"Whatever they do would not preclude a different action by the Braves," he added.

In the ESPN interview Wednesday, Rocker pointed out that teammates Andruw Jones, Bruce Chen and Odalis Perez—all minorities from outside the U.S.—lived with his family in Macon while they were playing for the Braves minor league affiliate in Macon.

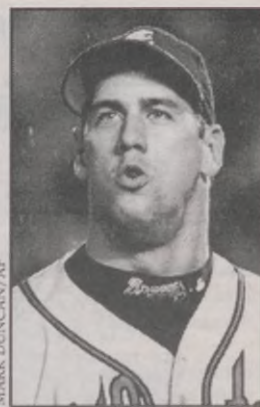
"If I was a racist, would I want a black guy living in my house and would I invite him to come to my house? I did that three times over," Rocker said.

Other than a brief written statement, the interview marked the first time Rocker spoke publicly about the controversy.

Rocker said he "just lost (his) cool" and said things he didn't mean about New York fans because he wanted "to inflict some emotional pain in retaliation to the pain that had been inflicted on me."

Rocker said he was frustrated by New York Yankees' fans who threw batteries at him during the World Series. He said Mets' fans spit in his face, poured beer on him and beat a likeness of him during the NL Championship Series.

"You hit one home run in the big leagues, it doesn't make you a home-run hitter," Rocker said. "To make one comment like this doesn't make you a racist."



Under orders from Major League Baseball, John Rocker underwent psychological evaluation last week.



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

Gore backs off pro-gay 'litmus test' for Joint Chiefs

The competition for gay votes in the Democratic presidential primary grew even more complicated last week, as Vice President Al Gore first pledged he would make support for gays in the military a "litmus test" for appointments to the military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, then apparently backtracked from the stand.

As Democratic presidential candidates continued their competition for gay votes this week, candidates in the Republican party lined up against allowing gays to serve openly in the military—further illustrating the wide gap between the two parties on many gay rights issues.

In a Jan. 5 televised debate in New Hampshire, where they face a critical Feb. 1 primary, both candidates were asked whether they would make support for allowing openly gay service members a "litmus test" for appointing the military's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Gore answered first, explaining he hoped to make progress on service by openly gay soldiers similar to President Harry Truman's racial integration of the military.

"I think that would require those who wanted to serve on the Joint Chiefs to be in agreement with that policy," Gore said. "I would insist before appointing anybody to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that that individual support my policy, and yes, I would make that a requirement."

Gore said there is a difference between using a "litmus test" for military officials and using them for appointing Supreme Court justices. In the case of military appointments, one is "not interfering with an independent judicial decision," he said.

Bradley offered a more nuanced answer, stating that military leaders are expected to follow the orders of the President, the Commander in Chief.

Bradley doesn't agree with the concept of litmus tests, but he could not imagine appointing anyone to the joint chiefs who didn't support allowing gays to serve openly, the candidate's staffers later said, according to the *New York Times*.

But faced with immediate outcry from sources ranging from some of his own supporters to military leaders and veterans groups, Gore backed away from his litmus test pledge later in the week—in what his campaign staff called a "clarification" of his position.

"I did not mean to imply that there should ever be any kind of inquiry into the personal political opinions of officers in the U.S. military," he told reporters at a hastily convened news conference after a campaign rally at a Des Moines-area high school.

"What I meant to convey was I would not tolerate, nor would any commander in chief, nor would any president tolerate orders not being followed," Gore said, insisting he never used the term "litmus test," although it was included in the wording of the question to which he answered "yes."

Several former members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, many opponents of gays in the military, told the *New York Times* Gore's initial pledge was wrong.

"Military officers certainly execute the orders of the president, but a litmus test beforehand would place an officer in an untenable position saying, 'Do you believe what I believe?'" said Gen. Carl E. Mundy, a retired commandant of the Marine Corps.

Even Sen. John Kerry, a Vietnam veteran campaigning for Gore in New Hampshire, said he disagreed with Gore's pledge, although he generally supports allowing gays in the military.

Sen. John McCain, a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, said at a GOP debate in South Carolina that Gore's pledge was "a disgraceful statement," while a Pentagon spokesman offered a reminder that campaign promises don't always translate into action.

"Candidates for political office are certainly free to do that and must do that in order to explain their views to the American people," said Rear Adm. Craig Quigley, a spokesman for Defense Secretary William Cohen. "But I would not speculate as to what that may or may not mean a year from now."

Changing the policy will be impossible without Congressional support, President Clinton agreed last week.

While Democrats Al Gore and Bill Bradley debated how to appoint military leaders who share their opposition to "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" last week, Republican candidates spoke out in favor of the military's ban on openly gay servicemembers in their own televised debates.

Responding to Gore's statement in a debate that he would have a "litmus test" for military appointees to support openly gay service members, Texas Gov. George Bush, currently the party's front-runner, went so far as to say he would adopt a "litmus test" requiring that appointees agree to keep gays from serving openly.

At the same time, the Republican National Committee said it plans a new TV ad accusing Gore of advocating a policy that would prohibit Gulf War heroes Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf from serving on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, looking to exploit Gore's.

The ad features shots of soldiers at work, of Powell and Schwarzkopf and ends with: "Call Al Gore. Tell him the only litmus test ought to be for patriotism." The ad will reportedly air in Iowa, New Hampshire and a few other states with early primary dates.



'One of the nice things about military people is they're straight'.—GOP presidential contender Alan Keyes, who chastised his opponents for not calling for a return to a complete ban on gays in the military.

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—From staff and wire reports

Youth takes on school officials to form student-led gay group

Continued from Page 1

"I guess you could say I'm an 'in your face' kind of guy," he says during an interview last week at LSU in Baton Rouge, where he takes several hours of classes after leaving McKinley High School. "But hey, I'm gay, I'm queer, I'm out, I'm proud—have I missed anything?" He grins broadly. "Could you tell?"

Could it be by the rainbow rings he wears around his neck? Or the rainbow tag pinned to a shoulder strap on his backpack? Or the rainbow flag on the back of his mom's car?

Perhaps another telltale sign is the way he eagerly whips out his wallet and pulls out two photographs of his boyfriend, who attends another Baton Rouge high school.

For a moment, Pfeiffer's face clouds. "He has a hard time sometimes," he said of his boyfriend. "He's taunted and teased at school, but he says it's okay, that it's become 'normal'

for him. That's disgusting. I wish I could do more to help him."

"Do more" doesn't adequately describe what Marty Pfeiffer is doing—for himself, his boyfriend, and countless other gay teens in Baton Rouge.

Pfeiffer has taken on the East Baton Rouge-Parish School Board, McKinley High where he wants to start a Gay-Straight Alliance for gay and gay-supportive students, and homophobes who have unsuccessfully tried to skewer him and his sexual orientation on radio programs—all at great risk for being so public at a time when fanatics think nothing of sending hate mail, or worse.

"Yes, there are consequences for my actions and for being so out, but the benefits far outweigh any negative consequences," Pfeiffer said. "People have to know it's okay to be gay, to be out, to be themselves, and they don't have to take the



GLSEN's Brenda Barron says only two school systems—in California and Utah—have not allowed chapters of gay-straight alliances.

harassment, that they can fight back. I'm not afraid, no matter what may happen. I'm never going back into the closet. Never."

A rough road to take

Pfeiffer's transformation to gay activist didn't occur without personal angst and pain.

Although he suspected he was gay for many years, it wasn't until he was a teenager that he came to grips with the reality. During middle school years—sixth through eighth grades—he endured perpetual taunting and teasing.

"I was preppy in those days," he says. "I sensed I was different, and at that age 'different' is bad. The worst thing you could assign to yourself was that you're gay."

"I was called 'fag' daily, teased, and picked on. Why? Because I was quiet and kept to myself, and I didn't like girls."

Pfeiffer said his depression deepened. As he moved into high school, rumors that he was gay persisted "and I was making a real effort to hide it."

When his mother "had the big sex talk with me, I told her I'd never have sex with a woman, so she knew something was up." Sensing her son's growing despair, his mother got him into therapy. By ninth grade, Pfeiffer said, he had had enough.

"There were a lot of things going on in the news, and I was beginning to mourn the fact that I never had a childhood because of the way other students treated me."

"One day, my mom and I were in Wal-Mart—I could show you the exact spot—and she asked me what was wrong, why I was so quiet. So I just blurted it out. ... She said it wasn't a complete surprise. I think she talked to my aunt, who's really cool. ... I know it wasn't easy for her, but my mother made it very clear she loved me no matter what."

It was his mother who found a gay youth group at the Baton Rouge Lambda Center, and who continues to provide constant support.

"My father, well, that's a different story," Pfeiffer says quietly. His father believes homosexuality is wrong "so we don't talk about it much." Family counseling has eased some of the stress, he adds, "but it's still very hard."

Rebel with a cause

Pfeiffer began networking through Lambda, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, and the Internet, and his transformation from timid closet-case to out-and-proud gay activist continues.

"Being gay is not about sexual behavior, you know," he says. "Why characterize someone that way? People want to reduce it to sex, but that's unfair. ... Everyone assumes you're heterosexual, but how do you know that? How do you know you're gay? You just know by the way you react to people. But we receive signals and have internalized messages society has sent us: Don't buck the system; don't

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

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

PRECAUTIONS: General: Nevirapine is extensively metabolized by the liver and nevirapine metabolites are extensively eliminated by the kidney. However, the pharmacokinetics of nevirapine have not been evaluated in patients with either hepatic or renal dysfunction. Therefore, VIRAMUNE® should be used with caution in these patient populations. The duration of clinical benefit from antiretroviral therapy may be limited. Patients receiving VIRAMUNE® or any other antiretroviral therapy may continue to develop opportunistic infections and other complications of HIV infection, and therefore should remain under close clinical observation by physicians experienced in the treatment of patients with associated HIV disease.

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

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

Ritampirin/Ribavirin: There are insufficient data to assess whether dose adjustments are necessary when nevirapine and ritampirin or ribavirin are coadministered. Therefore, these drugs should only be used in combination if clearly indicated and with careful monitoring.

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

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

Information for Patients: Patients should be instructed that the major toxicity of VIRAMUNE® is rash and should be advised to promptly notify their physician of any rash. The majority of rashes associated with VIRAMUNE® occur within the first 6 weeks of initiation of therapy. Patients should be instructed that if any rash occurs during the two-week lead-in period, the VIRAMUNE® dose should not be escalated until the rash resolves. Any patient experiencing severe rash or a rash accompanied by constitutional symptoms such as fever, blistering, oral lesions, conjunctivitis, swelling, muscle or joint aches, or general malaise should immediately discontinue medication and consult a physician. Patients should be instructed that abnormal liver function tests and cases of clinical hepatitis, including fatal hepatotoxicity, have been reported with VIRAMUNE®. Liver function tests should be monitored, especially during the first six months of therapy. VIRAMUNE® administration should be interrupted in patients experiencing moderate or severe liver function test abnormalities, until liver function tests return to baseline values. VIRAMUNE® should be permanently discontinued if liver function abnormalities recur upon readministration. Patients should be instructed to consult their physicians immediately should symptoms of hepatitis occur.

Oral contraceptives and other hormonal methods of birth control should not be used as a method of contraception in women taking VIRAMUNE®. (See PRECAUTIONS, Drug Interactions.) Patients should be informed that VIRAMUNE® therapy has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV-1 to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. The long-term effects of VIRAMUNE® are unknown at this time. VIRAMUNE® is not a cure for HIV-1 infection; patients may continue to experience illnesses associated with advanced HIV-1 infection, including opportunistic infections. Treatment with VIRAMUNE® has not been shown to reduce the incidence or frequency of such illnesses; patients should be instructed to remain under the care of a physician when using VIRAMUNE®.

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

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

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

Pediatric Use: Safety was assessed in trial BI 882 in which patients were followed for a mean duration of 23.9 months (range: 6.8 months to 5.3 years), including long-term follow-up to 29 of these patients in trial BI 882. The most frequently reported adverse events related to VIRAMUNE® in pediatric patients were similar to those observed in adults, with the exception of granulocytopenia which was more commonly observed in children. Serious adverse events were assessed in ACTG 245, a double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of VIRAMUNE® (n = 305) in which pediatric patients received combination treatment with VIRAMUNE®. In this trial two patients were reported to experience Stevens-Johnson syndrome or Stevens-Johnson-like epidermal necrolysis transition syndrome. Cases of allergic reaction, including one case of anaphylaxis, were also reported. The evaluation of the overall activity of VIRAMUNE® in pediatric patients is ongoing.

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

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

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

ADVERSE REACTIONS: Adults: The most frequently reported adverse events related to VIRAMUNE® therapy were rash, fever, nausea, headache, and abnormal liver function tests. Rash is usually mild to moderate, maculopapular erythematous cutaneous eruptions, with or without pruritus, located on the trunk, face and extremities. The majority of severe rashes occurred within the first 28 days of treatment; 25% of the patients with severe rashes required hospitalization, and one patient required surgical intervention. All patients recovered. Overall, 7% of patients discontinued VIRAMUNE® due to rash.

Table 2. Percentage of Patients with Rashes in Adult Controlled Trials*

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

* At recommended dose of one 200 mg tablet daily for the first 14 days followed by one 200 mg tablet twice daily.

^b Trial ACTG 241 was designed to report Grade 3/4 (severe or life-threatening) events, except for several pre-specified events including rash for which all grades are reported.

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

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

	ACTG 241		Trial BI 1037 and BI 1011	
	NVP+ZDV+ddI	ZDV+ddI	NVP+ZDV	ZDV alone
Number of patients	197	201	55	30
Overall incidence of related adverse events	31%	23%	42%	33%
Rash	8	2	20	3
Fever	3	3	11	3
Nausea	5	4	9	3
Headache	3	3	11	0
Diarrhea	2	2	0	0
Abdominal pain	1	2	2	0
Upper respiratory tract infection	0	0	4	0
Peripheral neuropathy	0	2	0	0
Paresthesia	1	0	2	0
Myalgia	1	0	2	7
Hepatitis	1	0	4	0

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

Table 4. Percentage of Adult Patients with Marked Laboratory Abnormalities

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

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

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

OVERDOSE: There is no known antidote for VIRAMUNE® overdose. Cases of VIRAMUNE® overdose at doses ranging from 800 to 1900 mg per day for up to 15 days have been reported. Patients have experienced events including edema, erythema nodosum, fatigue, fever, headache, insomnia, nausea, pulmonary infiltrates, rash, vertigo, vomiting and weight decrease. All events subsided following discontinuation of VIRAMUNE®.

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MELINDA SHERIDAN

Lambda director Tim Vining (left) supports Marty Pfeiffer's efforts to start a Gay-Straight Alliance in Baton Rouge.

be 'different,' whatever that means.

"The hatred directed toward gays is because we're seen as a threat to society's status quo. 'We don't care if you're gay as long as you don't flaunt it.' So we learn to hide it, to deny it, to internalize the pain, and that's incredibly unhealthy."

Pfeiffer said his education and contact with adult peers—particularly Lambda director Tim Vining—and interaction with other gay youth bolstered his desire to help other students—and himself.

Last year, after attending a national GLSEN conference, Pfeiffer decided to start a Gay-Straight Alliance club at McKinley High. A GSA, he stresses, is a student-run organization that has a faculty sponsor, a mission statement, and provides a safe space for kids who are gay or gay-supportive.

"Our goal is to reduce harassment of these kids, to make school safer for all students," Pfeiffer explains. "We'll do some education and awareness about GLBT issues, and probably do some community outreach, some volunteering."

"[A GSA club] is basically a place for kids to talk and feel safe. Gay and gay-supportive kids catch all kinds of hell. In fact, the suicide rate among gay teens is much higher than straight kids. The harassment, cruelty, isolation and depression are very hard to take, so support is very important."

Brenda Barron, Southern assistant field director for GLSEN, said unlike detractors say, students in GSAs do not discuss sex or teach sex education. GLSEN's Student Pride USA offers support to more than 700 GSA chapters in schools across the nation, "and there have been only two instances—in Orange County in California and in Utah—where chapters haven't been allowed."

Taking it to the board

Pfeiffer felt the atmosphere at McKinley High seemed conducive to the formation of a Gay-Straight Alliance group. The school is comprised of traditional and gifted students, "very mixed racially, with a large number of non-conformists like myself," he says.

To his surprise, Principal Alma Warren refused his request.

Pfeiffer next approached East Baton Rouge public school officials. One director of high school programs told him school was no place for a gay organization. Higher powers, however, proved to be more diplomatic.

He received a letter from Schools Superintendent Gary Mathews assuring the teen that action would be taken to establish—because none existed—official policy for the formation of extra-curricular clubs, including the Gay-Straight Alliance. Similar reassurances came from Don Mercer, associate superintendent of curriculum and instruction, Pfeiffer says. Policy, however, does not guarantee creation of PSAs.

Calls to Mathews and Mercer were not returned by press time.

"It's my understanding that once the policy is set, it's up to the principals to decide if and how to implement it," Pfeiffer says. "I think—I hope—Ms. Warren will allow the GSA."

An school system subcommittee is expected to discuss policy parameters and language during a Jan. 20 meeting. The matter should go before the full board a week later. Pfeiffer plans to attend both meetings and expects anti-gay forces to be there as well.

"I'm enough of a pragmatist to know I have to 'conform' a little," he says, referring to the board meetings. "I probably won't wear the earrings and other things [because] it's important that my message is heard and that my appearance doesn't cause interference."

Vining, who teaches at St. Joseph's Academy, is leading a Lambda card-signing campaign to show support for Pfeiffer and GSA clubs in every school that wants one. He also has urged supporters to contact Mathews directly to express their support, and to attend both sessions.

"We're expecting opposition by the usual people who are bigoted and filled with hatred toward gays," Vining said, "so it's important that people—gay and straight—get out and support Marty and the GSAs."

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Double homicide still unsolved



MATTHEW A. HENNE

Betty Parker, the mother of a gay man slain in Texas City, is organizing a vigil to mark the one year anniversary of the unsolved case.

> Continued from Page 1

"There is nothing new as far as breaking it," Capt. Ron Schoolcraft said. "The fire did damage, destroyed a lot of stuff. We just haven't got a break yet."

A month after the slayings, friends and relatives of the two men held an emotional vigil to renew interest in the case. Family members held candles and wore white T-shirts emblazoned "In Loving Memory" and a large photo of Morris. A local pastor led them in prayer.

"We are praying for each other, and for those who did this," the Rev. Tyron Collins said. "For the Lord said, 'Vengeance is mine.'

We must leave it with him."

Family members of the victims have said the brutality of the slayings showed hate was a factor.

"It was overkill, a brutal murder. I just don't understand how they can sleep at night. I just keep praying that they can get one of them," Parker said.

The two men were friendly and traveled heavily, family members said. Morris, a hairdresser, had returned to Texas City a year earlier after living in Las Vegas. Tryals, unemployed for nearly a year, always kept a positive outlook and uplifted people with his compliments, said Gwendolyn Tryals, his sister.

"Every time you saw him, he had a smile on his face," Gwendolyn Tryals said. "He always tried to make you feel good. He didn't have that kind of an enemy that would do that to him."

But her brother was too trusting, something she had warned him about in the past.

"It is sad that we hate people because of their race, their gender," Gwendolyn Tryals said. "I told him to be careful, 'You are black and gay—you have two strikes against you.' I told him he needs to watch himself."

Family members remain hopeful that the case will be solved.

"It's a small town, somebody knows something," Parker said. "The leads they did have when it first happened, it went nowhere. The only hope I have is God to make [the suspects] show their face, at least one of them. You feel like your hands are tied."

Dallas woman charged in slaying of roommate

Police say 'abusive relationship' ended in slaying

by TAMMYE NASH
Dallas Voice

DALLAS—A north Dallas woman has been arrested and charged with killing her long-time roommate, police said.

Lisa Rae Meeks, 35, was arrested on Dec. 28 after the body of her roommate, Danielle D'Alexandris, 35, was discovered on Christmas Day in a pond at the apartment complex where the two women lived.

"From what we know so far, it appears that there was an argument, and the suspect killed her roommate," said Dallas police Sgt. Ross Salverino. "In an attempt to dispose of the body, the suspect then put the body in a trash bag and left it in a pond there on the [apartment complex] property."

Meeks' court-appointed attorney, Tim Menchu of Dallas, had no comment.

Salverino said the two roommates had lived for "six or seven years in something of an abusive relationship." But he said he was unable to confirm rumors that the two women were lesbian lovers or provide details about the alleged abusive nature of the relationship between the two women.

Two residents of the apartment complex where the women lived found D'Alexandris' body on Dec. 25, investigators said. The residents had noticed a garbage bag in the pond a day earlier. Because of the cold weather, they waited for warmer weather before attempting to retrieve the bag, police said.

As they pulled it from the water, the trash bag opened and the residents saw the dead woman's hand, according to a police report. The two residents then summoned authorities.

Meeks was arrested after investigators found trash bags in her apartment matching the one used to dispose of D'Alexandris' body. Investigators also said Meeks had several bruises indicating that she may have been in a physical altercation.



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A GUIDE FOR YOUR LEISURE TIME



THE SHAG'S THE THING



The challenging, boldly erotic British TV series 'Queer as Folk' will come to American television thanks to a two-hour pilot that begins production this spring and will air on Showtime

by DAVID GOLDMAN

Fifteen-year-old Nathan grins with cocky charm that he's "dead proud" he got laid on his first foray into the gay world. Stuart, 29, picks up the virgin, tops him, then drops him like an empty drug baggy as he races after his next conquest. A friend's mother rings up Vince to tell him her son has died of an overdose. He takes the call on his cell—where else?—at the disco, in the midst of yet another night of wild partying.

The furor that erupted when Britain's Channel 4 exported its "Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City" to the United States virtually ensures that the broadcaster's "Queer as Folk" will never, ever be widely telecast on this side of the Atlantic.

That's because the eight-part soap opera about the lives and lays of two gay men and a gay boy in Manchester, England, is extraordinarily bold and explicit—so much so that it was blasted by watchdogs on the right and the left when it aired in Britain last year. Ironically, the eight episodes contain just

three explicit sex scenes—but these are incredibly raw in their intensity. And the characters' sex talk—as when Nathan ecstatically describes his first anal sex experience—sets a new standard for frankness.

Britain's Broadcasting Standards Commission rushed to investigate the show when it received 30 complaints after the first episode aired. Reviews were largely hostile: the Daily Telegraph's James Watson called it "uncompromisingly rude."

The BBC issued an apology after its breakfast show ran a 20-second "Queer" clip of two men kissing. "It contains the most explicit gay sex scenes that have been seen on TV," said BBC Online.

"Every libel hurled at the gay community over the years seems vindicated by 'Queer as Folk,'" wrote John MacLeod in the Herald of Glasgow.

Even the gay rights group Stonewall cried foul, objecting in particular to the portrayal of sex machine Stuart. (Later, the group essentially apologized for its initial reaction.)

> Continued on page 21



Not only is Gore Vidal a prolific writer, he's being written about. Biographer Frank Kaplan's 'Gore Vidal,' at 850 pages, was published in November.

Vivid Vidal

Gay author Gore Vidal, whose newest novel deals with time travel and the alteration of history, speaks frankly of the end being near and the government needing to stay out of bedrooms

by VINCENT KOVAR

Essayist, novelist, playwright, congressional candidate and excoriating social-historical critic, Gore Vidal is a queer pioneer who not only defined what it is to be gay but then managed to escape the pigeon-hole of that definition—gloriously.

Latest of his many works is "The Smithsonian Institution" in which a 13-year-old prodigy is called from (Vidal's alma mater) St. Albans school to the Smithsonian museum, whose halls stretch both through time and space and where a secret project to create the atom bomb is taking place.

Humorous, touching and insightful, the novel is one of Vidal's most accessible works and (borrowing from Vidal's autobiography) a palimpsest of many layers. This interview

> Continued on page 22

Out In Print

BOOK NEWS

Brooding over death, follies and the emperor's clothes

by ELLA TYLER

If you're in the mood for some light reading, there's a trio of gay-themed mysteries that can help feed that yen for less than strenuous bedtime reading.

Local writer Tim Hemlin throws everything in the pot for his fifth book, **DEAD MAN'S BROTH**, and the result is hearty and satisfying. Neil Marshall is the chef for a catering firm and a student in University of Houston's creative writing program. As the book begins, he and a friend are leaving a gay bar and interrupt a group of skin-heads beating a man.

Both men wade into the melee, and as the police arrive and the skin-heads leave, Neil recognizes a nearby anti-gay protester as a prominent hate-mongering minister. One of the skin-heads threatens Neil, and since he has picked up Neil's wallet, it may not be an idle threat.

But all that happens is a series of ugly letters with the recipe for "dead man's broth" arriving at the catering office. They threaten "queers" like Neil's boss and "queer-lovers" like Neil. Then, the other prominent caterer in town is murdered and his office trashed. Neil thinks it's the skin-heads, but his boss is arrested.

Then the main witness, a disgruntled employee of the catering firm, is killed and

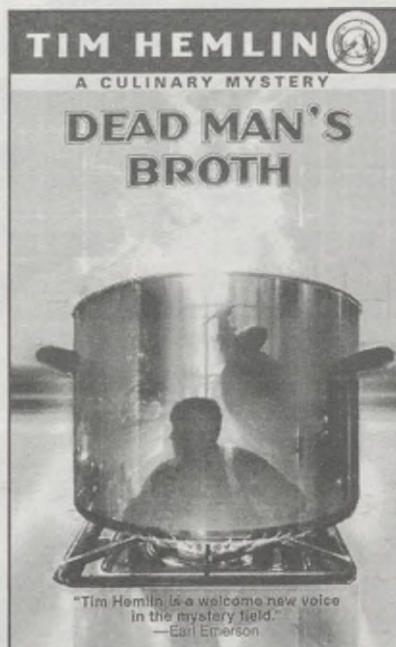
Neil becomes the prime suspect. As Neil and the colorful private detective C.J. McDaniels investigate (and eat their way across town) they discover that the dead men, the publisher of a local magazine, and the minister have several things in common, including a few closets.

It's entertaining to see Houston through a writer's eyes and Hemlin tosses out a few cooking tips and some of the most interesting metaphors around.

Orland Outland's motto must be "too much of a good thing is wonderful." **DEATH WORE THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES**, the third in the series featuring Doan McCandler, who prefers to wear dresses, and Binky Van de Kamp, a poor heiress, sends our duo and their respective lovers to New York. The guys have taken jobs with gay billionaire Andrew Weatherall, who has made a fortune for himself and many others speculating on computer stocks.

Weatherall hires Van de Kamp to oversee his charitable fund, and McCandler finds a job as muse to a dress designer. Weatherall has always been out of the closet, and is unabashedly liberal. His arch-enemy is a right-wind media magnate, Herbert Kildare, who begins his war on Weatherall by outing Weatherall's lover, a professional baseball player.

Kildare owns the team that acquires the



player and soon after, when it looks like his intention is to ruin the player's career, he is murdered in Binky's office. When Weatherall is arrested and the bank accounts are shut down, Binky and Tim, Doan's lover, go undercover to work for Kildare's enterprises to see what they can find out. It's Doan, though, who discovers the odd love triangle that is behind the murders. The book is totally improbable, but lots of fun.

Richard Stevenson's **STRACHEY'S FOLLY** begins as private investigator Donald Strachey and his lover are visiting an old friend in Washington, D.C. to see the AIDS Memorial Quilt. The friend spots a panel for a former lover, Washington insider Jim Suter, but he had seen the man alive and well in Mexico only two weeks before. The other shock is that also viewing the panel is a heavily disguised, former congresswoman. Her politics were notoriously conservative, and she resigned after a campaign finance scandal.

Strachey's friend hires him to investigate and then is nearly killed. Strachey finds out that plenty of people wanted Suter dead, including a drag queen who impersonated Hillary Clinton and Liddy Dole. Strachey finally locates Suter, alive, but a virtual prisoner of his wealthy Mexican lover. He obviously knows something, but what?

Stevenson's work is an entertaining look at the dark side of politics.

Dead Man's Broth

by Tim Hemlin
Ballantine Books, 289 pages, \$5.99

Strachey's Folly

by Richard Stevenson
St. Martin's Press, 216 pages, \$11.95

Death Wore the Emperor's New Clothes

by Orland Outland
Berkley Prime Crime, 198 pages, \$5.99

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- 5 Whole Lesbian Sex Book
by Felice Newman, \$21.95
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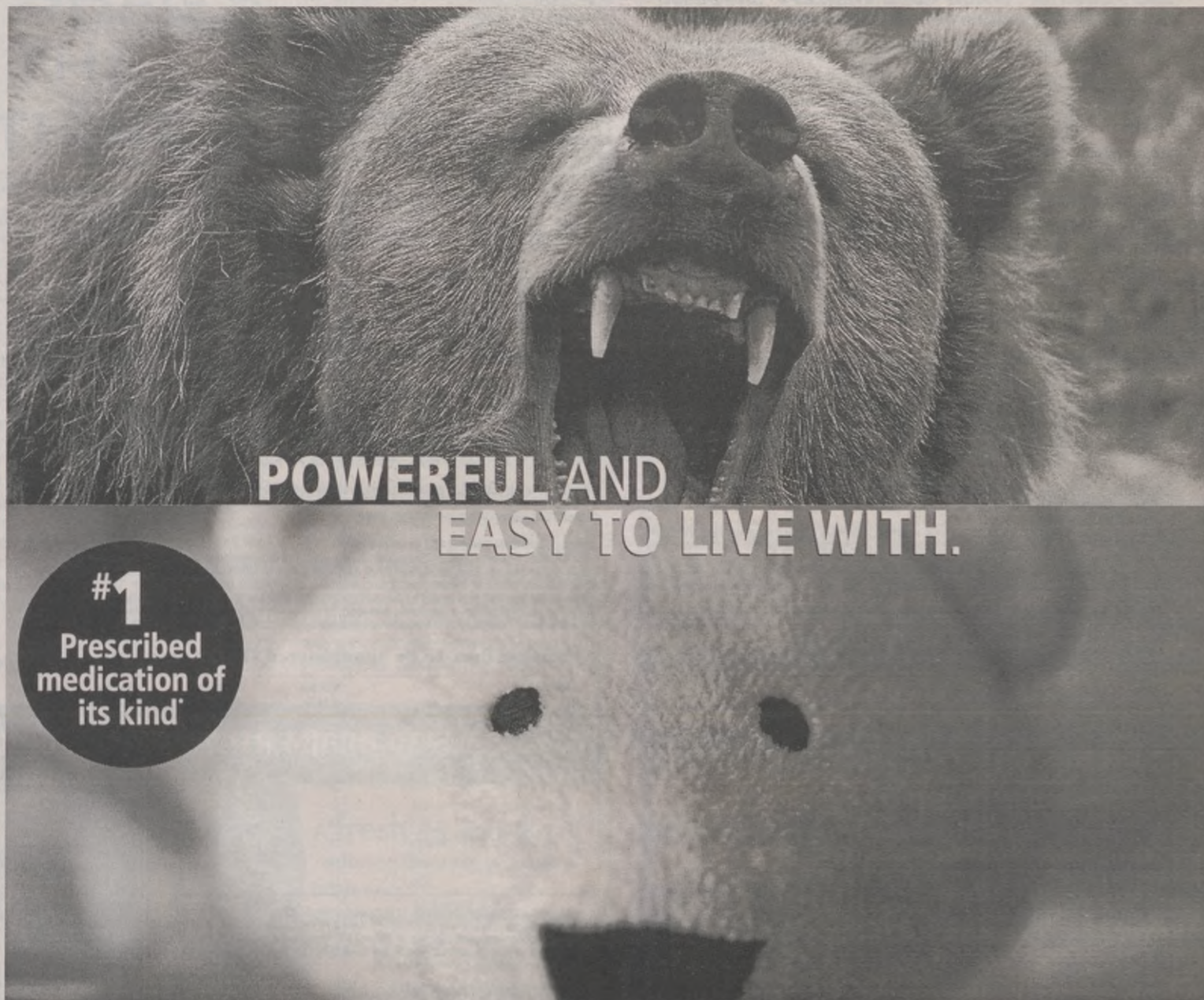
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VIRACEPT IS EASY TO LIVE WITH Take it three times a day with your normal meals or light snacks. **VIRACEPT IS GENERALLY WELL TOLERATED** People treated with VIRACEPT may experience some side effects; the most common is diarrhea of moderate or greater intensity in 20% of people in clinical trials. **VIRACEPT WORKS** It's indicated

for the treatment of HIV infection when anti-HIV drug therapy is warranted. It is not yet known whether taking VIRACEPT will help you live longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that can occur with HIV. Some common

medications and some HIV related medications should not be taken with VIRACEPT. For some people, protease inhibitors have been associated with the onset or worsening of diabetes mellitus and hyperglycemia, and with increased bleeding

in patients with hemophilia. Ask your doctor. For more information, call toll free **1-888-VIRACEPT** or visit **www.agouron.com**.

(Refer to the important information on the next page.)

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Information for Patients About VIRACEPT® (VI-ra-cept) Generic Name: nelfinavir (nel-FIN-na-veer) mesylate

For the Treatment of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection

Please read this information carefully before taking VIRACEPT. Also, please read this leaflet each time you renew the prescription, just in case anything has changed. This is a summary and not a replacement for a careful discussion with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss VIRACEPT when you start taking this medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when taking VIRACEPT and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

WHAT IS VIRACEPT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

VIRACEPT is used in the treatment of people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Infection with HIV leads to the destruction of CD4 T cells, which are important to the immune system. After a large number of CD4 cells have been destroyed, the infected person develops acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

VIRACEPT works by blocking HIV protease (a protein-cutting enzyme), which is required for HIV to multiply. VIRACEPT has been shown to significantly reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. You should be aware, however, that the effect of VIRACEPT on HIV in the blood has not been correlated with long-term health benefits. Patients who took VIRACEPT also had significant increases in their CD4 cell count.

VIRACEPT is usually taken together with other antiretroviral drugs such as Retrovir® (zidovudine, AZT), Epivir® (lamivudine, 3TC), or Zerit® (stavudine, d4T). Taking VIRACEPT in combination with other antiretroviral drugs reduces the amount of HIV in the body (viral load) and raises CD4 counts.

VIRACEPT may be taken by adults, adolescents, and children 2 years of age or older. Studies in infants younger than 2 years of age are now taking place.

DOES VIRACEPT CURE HIV OR AIDS?

VIRACEPT is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of VIRACEPT are not known at this time. People taking VIRACEPT may still develop opportunistic infections or other conditions associated with HIV infection. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections, and Kaposi's sarcoma.

It is not known whether VIRACEPT will help you live longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that may occur.

There is no proof that VIRACEPT can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

WHO SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT TAKE VIRACEPT?

Together with your doctor, you need to decide whether VIRACEPT is appropriate for you. In making your decision, the following should be considered:

Allergies: If you have had a serious allergic reaction to VIRACEPT, you must not take VIRACEPT. You should also inform your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist of any known allergies to substances such as other medicines, foods, preservatives, or dyes.

If you are pregnant: The effects of VIRACEPT on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

If you are breast-feeding: You should discuss with your doctor the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that it can be transmitted through breast-feeding. **Women should not breast-feed if they have HIV.**

Children: VIRACEPT is available for the treatment of children 2 through 13 years of age with HIV. There is a powder form of VIRACEPT that can be mixed with milk, baby formula, or foods like pudding. Instructions on how to take VIRACEPT powder can be found in a later section that discusses how VIRACEPT Oral Powder should be prepared.

If you have liver disease: VIRACEPT has not been studied in people with liver disease. If you have liver disease, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

Other medical problems: Certain medical problems may affect the use of VIRACEPT. Some people taking protease inhibitors have developed new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Some people with hemophilia have had increased bleeding. It is not known whether the protease inhibitors caused these problems. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have hemophilia types A and B, diabetes mellitus, or an increase in thirst and/or frequent urination.

CAN VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

VIRACEPT may interact with other drugs, including those you take without a prescription. You must discuss with your doctor any drugs that you are taking or are planning to take before you take VIRACEPT.

Drugs you should not take with VIRACEPT:

- Seldane® (terfenadine, for allergies)
- Hismanal® (astemizole, for allergies)
- Propulsid® (cisapride, for heartburn)
- Cordarone® (amiodarone, for irregular heartbeat)
- Quinidine (for irregular heartbeat), also known as Quinaglute®, Cardioquin®, Quinidex®, and others
- Ergot derivatives (Cafergot® and others, for migraine headache)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Taking the above drugs with VIRACEPT may cause serious and/or life-threatening adverse events.
- Rifampin (for tuberculosis), also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®
- This drug reduces blood levels of VIRACEPT.

Dose reduction required if you take VIRACEPT with:

Mycobutin® (rifabutin, for MAC); you will need to take a lower dose of Mycobutin.

A change of therapy should be considered if you are taking VIRACEPT with:

- Phenobarbital
- Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)
- Carbamazepine (Tegretol® and others)
- These agents may reduce the amount of VIRACEPT in your blood and make it less effective.
- Oral contraceptives ("the pill")
- If you are taking the pill to prevent pregnancy, you should use a different type of contraception since VIRACEPT may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER ANTI-HIV DRUGS?

Taking VIRACEPT together with other anti-HIV drugs increases their ability to fight the virus. It also reduces the opportunity for resistant viruses to grow. Based on your history of taking other anti-HIV medicine, your doctor will direct you on how to take VIRACEPT and other anti-HIV medicines. These drugs should be taken in a certain order or at specific times. This will depend on how many times a day each medicine should be taken. It will also depend on whether it should be taken with or without food.

Nucleoside analogues: No drug interaction problems were seen when VIRACEPT was given with:

- Retrovir (zidovudine, AZT)
- Epivir (lamivudine, 3TC)
- Zerit (stavudine, d4T)
- Videx® (didanosine, ddI)

If you are taking both Videx (ddI) and VIRACEPT: Videx should be taken without food, on an empty stomach. Therefore, you should take VIRACEPT with food one hour after or more than two hours before you take Videx.

Nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs):

- When VIRACEPT is taken together with:
- Viramune® (nevirapine)
- The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be reduced. Studies are now taking place to learn about the safety of combining VIRACEPT with Viramune.
- Other NNRTIs
- VIRACEPT has not been studied with other NNRTIs.

Other protease inhibitors:

When VIRACEPT is taken together with:

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- The amount of both drugs in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Norvir™ (ritonavir)
- The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Invirase® (saquinavir)
- The amount of saquinavir in your blood may be increased. If used in combination with saquinavir hard gelatin capsules at 600 mg three times daily, no dose adjustments are needed. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIRACEPT?

Like all medicines, VIRACEPT can cause side effects. Most of the side effects experienced with VIRACEPT have been mild to moderate. Diarrhea is the most common side effect in people taking VIRACEPT, and most adult patients had at least mild diarrhea at some point during treatment. In clinical studies, about 20% of patients receiving VIRACEPT 750 mg (three tablets) three times daily had four or more loose stools a day. In most cases, diarrhea can be controlled using antidiarrheal medicines, such as Imodium® A-D (loperamide) and others, which are available without a prescription.

Other side effects that occurred in 2% or more of patients receiving VIRACEPT include abdominal pain, asthenia, nausea, flatulence, and rash.

There were other side effects noted in clinical studies that occurred in less than 2% of patients receiving VIRACEPT. However, these side effects may have been due to other drugs that patients were taking or to the illness itself. Except for diarrhea, there were not many differences in side effects in patients who took VIRACEPT along with other drugs compared with those who took only the other drugs. For a complete list of side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD I TAKE VIRACEPT?

VIRACEPT is available only with your doctor's prescription. The light blue VIRACEPT Tablets should be taken three times a day. VIRACEPT should always be taken with a meal or a light snack. You do not have to take VIRACEPT exactly every 8 hours. Instead, you can take it at normal times when you are eating.

Take VIRACEPT exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not increase or decrease any dose or the number of doses per day. Also, take this medicine for the exact period of time that your doctor has instructed. **Do not stop taking VIRACEPT without first consulting with your doctor, even if you are feeling better.**

Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give VIRACEPT to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

The dosing of VIRACEPT may be different for you than for other patients. **Follow the directions from your doctor, exactly as written on the label.** The amount of VIRACEPT in the blood should remain somewhat consistent over time. Missing doses will cause the concentration of VIRACEPT to decrease; therefore, **you should not miss any doses.** However, if you miss a dose, you should take the dose as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose and future doses as originally scheduled.

Dosing in adults (including children 14 years of age and older)

The recommended adult dose of VIRACEPT is 750 mg (three tablets) taken three times a day. Each dose should be taken with a meal or light snack.

Dosing in children 2 through 13 years of age

The VIRACEPT dose in children depends on their weight. The recommended dose is 20 to 30 mg/kg (or 9 to 14 mg/pound) per dose, taken three times daily with a meal or light snack. This can be administered either in tablet form or, in children unable to take tablets, as VIRACEPT Oral Powder.

Dose instructions will be provided by the child's doctor. The dose will be given three times daily using the measuring scoop provided, a measuring teaspoon, or one or more tablets depending on the weight and age of the child. The amount of oral powder or tablets to be given to a child is described in the chart below.

Pediatric Dose to Be Administered Three Times Daily

Body Weight		Number of Level Scoops*	Number of Level Teaspoons†	Number of Tablets
Kg	Lb			
7	to < 8.5	15.5 to <18.5	4	1
8.5	to <10.5	18.5 to <23	5	1¼
10.5	to <12	23 to <26.5	6	1½
12	to <14	26.5 to <31	7	1¾
14	to <16	31 to <35	8	2
16	to <18	35 to <39.5	9	2¼
18	to <23	39.5 to <50.5	10	2½
	≥23	≥50.5	15	3¾

In measuring oral powder, the scoop or teaspoon should be level.

* 1 level scoop contains 50 mg of VIRACEPT. Use only the scoop provided with your VIRACEPT bottle.

† 1 level teaspoon contains 200 mg of VIRACEPT. Note: A measuring teaspoon used for dispensing medication should be used for measuring VIRACEPT Oral Powder. Ask your pharmacist to make sure you have a medication dispensing teaspoon.

How should VIRACEPT Oral Powder be prepared?

The oral powder may be mixed with a small amount of water, milk, formula, soy formula, soy milk, dietary supplements, or dairy foods such as pudding or ice cream. Once mixed, the entire amount must be taken to obtain the full dose.

Do not mix the powder with any acidic food or juice, such as orange or grapefruit juice, apple juice, or apple sauce, because this may create a bitter taste.

Once the powder is mixed, it may be stored at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 6 hours. Do not heat the mixed dose once it has been prepared.

Do not add water to bottles of oral powder.

VIRACEPT powder is supplied with a scoop for measuring. For help in determining the exact dose of powder for your child, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

VIRACEPT Oral Powder contains aspartame, a low-calorie sweetener, and therefore should not be taken by children with phenylketonuria (PKU).

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE STORED?

Keep VIRACEPT and all other medicines out of the reach of children. Keep bottle closed and store at room temperature (between 59°F and 86°F) away from sources of moisture such as a sink or other damp place. Heat and moisture may reduce the effectiveness of VIRACEPT.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is out of the reach of children.

Discuss all questions about your health with your doctor. If you have questions about VIRACEPT or any other medication you are taking, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You can also call 1.888.VIRACEPT (1.888.847.2237) toll free.

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THE SHAG'S THE THING

> Continued from page 17

And indeed, the series shows aspects of the gay life that many gay people would gladly join in covering up. Premiering as it did just in time for the Parliamentary debate over lowering the age of consent for gay sex, "Queer" seemed tailor-made for making trouble.

"Why doesn't anyone stop me?" taunts the lusty Stuart, the right-wing's worst nightmare of a sexual compulsive as he rushes off to "shag" his teenage lover. "It's not my fault—they should stop me."

Try though he might, the self-centered Stuart seems incapable of generating more than a casual interest in Alfred, his son, born to a lesbian friend in the first episode.

In the series' most chilling incident, one character collapses after snorting a line of heroin. The trick who gave him the drug simply slips out, leaving the victim to die alone on his kitchen floor. Later at the wake, Stuart memorizes the mother's heartbroken lament and cell-phones it into

the office to use in a mortuary's ad campaign. With keys he swipes at the funeral, Stuart raids the dead man's house for his porn collection. Stuart laughs at death—but not at age. His impending 30th birthday (still months away) fills him with incalculable dread.

"Frankly, I was expecting criticism from the gay community," said Russell T. Davies, the series openly gay co-creator and writer. "I know a lot of these gay politicians and gay spokespeople work hard, but they've fallen into the trap of living in a world of political correctness. That's not my problem; it's theirs. Not any of it has given me a sleepless night."

"I think I'm a little naive," said Nicola Shindler, the executive producer. "Me and Russell have a different threshold for shock. I don't think we were quite prepared for the level of impact it had. We were aware we would be attacked, because we weren't putting across positive images; we were putting across real people."

"Everything you see in other programs with gay sub-plots are issue-led," Davies said. "You give them three episodes before the gay character walks in and says, 'Oh, I'm HIV-positive,' or 'I was just beat up on the street.' [TV writers] have to stop introducing characters where his or her only characteristic is they're gay. That's not a character. That's rubbish."

According to one film industry insider, working on "Queer" was no picnic. Mark Levine now lives in Atlanta, but while he was a vice president-development with a production company working at Sony

Studios, he met Charlie Hunnam, the 18-year-old actor who played Nathan.

"Charlie said the entire process was a really miserable shoot. They were filming on a couple of drafty soundstages in England. The crew was an old-school, traditional, beer-drinking, straight blue-collar crowd. The actors would have to do all these wild sexual antics in front of the crew, and they were being harassed and snickered at.

"It was a really terrible environment, and by the end of the eight episodes, nobody wanted to come back," Levine said. Hunnam told him.

As word of the shocking show spread, its audience grew—eventually to more than 3 million. When the eight-week series ended, audiences wanted more of Nathan, Stuart and Vince. They'll get their chance when two one-hour sequel episodes air this year on Channel 4.

Writer Davies said to maintain its integrity, the show must end, not drag on for years. "We could have trotted it out; a lot of people would have been happy. I wouldn't, though.

"Thing is—if I do say so myself—there was such energy and originality in that first series, and that vitality has to be maintained. It has to stay fresh, it has to stay one step ahead of what everyone in bog-standard-telly would do. And this is the perfect solution. It was never a soap, it was a story. And every good story has an end."

But will it end?

Channel 4 has reportedly asked for plots for 20 half-hour episodes of a spin-off show

to air later in the year.

"We found a huge enthusiasm for the show, and it was quite clear we hadn't run out of stories," said Commissioning Editor Jonathan Young. "It's been a very successful show for Channel 4."

Furthermore, American audiences will get a U.S. version of "Queer" thanks to Showtime. Gay director Joel Schumacher ("Flawless," "Batman and Robin") is set to direct a two-hour pilot to introduce the U.S. series.

The show would seem to fit in with Showtime's bold slogan ("No Limits") and with its established reputation for testing boundaries (its "Sex and the City" prompted a rash of complaints when it aired in England).

But at least one big change from the original already seems certain: In Showtime's version, look for Nathan to be 18, not 15. And that change was recommended not by pro-censorship conservatives but rather by the image-conscious folks at Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD).

"When it comes down to that, that's an illegal act. It's statutory rape," Scott Seomin, GLAAD media director, told the Los Angeles Times. "Gay men since forever have been linked by the religious right and other groups [to] pedophilia."

The furor that greeted "Queer as Folk" in England only seems likely to escalate when the show debuts in its Americanized form. Shooting for the U.S. version—set in New Jersey—should begin this spring. Stay tuned...

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Vivid Vidal

> Continued from page 17

was conducted via fax from his hotel in New York.

Houston Voice: Where did the inspiration to write "The Smithsonian Institution" come from?

Gore Vidal: I enjoy inventing alternative universes like Myra, Breckinridge and Duluth and now Smithsonian. There are intricate structures and you must never cheat the reader. I started out with a premise: how could World War II have been avoided? Well, eliminate World War One and there would be no vengeful Germany falling for a psychopath like Hitler. So how to stop the First World War? Eliminate Woodrow Wilson as president. So my 13-year old prodigy hero, installed as of 1939 in the Smithsonian to work on the atomic bomb, does just that. But things go wrong. ... That's the plot.

HV: Is the novel a metaphorical approach to any modern issues?

GV: This is not 1939. No collision of great powers is in the offing despite what the military and their friendly politicians have to say at appropriations time. But it is clear that our military industrial political complex is longing for a major war with China.

This will probably kill us all but not before the few have made a great deal of money, our god.

HV: If you, like your character T. from your book, could set a view screen to look forward in time, what might you expect to see as the most important event of the next century or two?

GV: In a pessimistic mood, the end—either gradual or colorfully nuclear. In an optimistic mood, our departure from a planet that we are using up like a frayed piece of Kleenex to yet more pristine Kleenex in the heavens.

HV: At the end of chapter four, the living display dummy, Tom, indicates that more than one of the former Presidents made use of an all male escort service "pretty regularly." Who might those Presidents have been?

GV: You are prurient. It was said of life-long diplomat bachelor Buchanan and of Franklin Pierce in whose arms, in Plymouth, New Hampshire, Nathaniel Hawthorne died.

HV: You have described sexual orientation labels as adjectives describing acts rather than nouns describing people, do you still feel this way?

GV: It seems so obvious that I no longer repeat myself other than to add that only in a so weirdly superstitious and sectarian a country as the U.S. could a personal identity be forged out of sexual desire, the most fluctuating of all transient emotion.

HV: Both presidential candidates Bill Bradley and Al Gore have shown support for domestic

partnerships but have opposed outright gay marriage. What are your feelings on their stances and this issue in general?

GV: Monogamy is hardly normative in the male, particularly in youth. The marriage issue, however, is a great boon for homophobes because it lets them sidestep all the things that should be set right, from sodomy laws in various states, to discrimination in the work place.

Also marriage makes people think of God, who is so very important to our poor, bamboozled folks. The founders (and I) wanted God thrown out the window at Philadelphia, but the crazies breed like chiggers and he keeps slithering back in. He now dominates so much of radio and TV. Until a stake has been driven through the heart of monotheism, the U.S. will never come within a continuum of civilization. That suits them chiggers real fine.

HV: Do you have a stance on the topic of gay adoptions?

GV: For most Americans, rather than expose the young to love and, in due course perhaps, desire, it is far better to lock them up in prisons, subject them to torture, sexual abuse and execution.

That is the American way. We are famed in the civilized world as the most barbarous of nations in the treatment of our citizens. But I reckon God wants us like that, doing his work. 4.9 million Americans are in prisons, under detention, under surveillance, on parole. Now the privatization of prisons is proving a bonanza for some of our crooked citizens.

George W. Bush exults in the fact that as

governor of Texas, he has barbequed 100 people. Good American George, God loves him.

HV: You once wrote (in 1966) that "in a civilized society, law should not function at all in the area of sex, except to protect people from being interfered with against their will," and said that "sex lives are of no consequence in civilized countries." What influences continue to make sex and sexual orientations such a controversy in America and does this mean we are not civilized?

GV: As you may by now suspect, I don't think we are civilized. The media is obsessed with sex, particularly in the private lives of politicians, due to the fact that as we do not have a representative government (offices are bought and paid for by corporate America), we are not allowed to discuss real politics.

This leaves us with nothing but private lives. What is politics? Who collects what money to pay for whom to buy what. That's it. In one handy phrase. But corporate America observes omerta [code of silence] on this delicate issue so we never know what goes on in the Senate Finance Committee. And never will now. The corporate owned media is happy to go along, smearing politicians who are, admittedly, of no great use to anyone in any case.

INFO

The Smithsonian Institution

by Gore Vidal

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Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEWS

Generous but jumbled platters

by KATHREEN LEE

TEALA'S provides an interesting study in juxtaposition.

Take, for example, the mingled roots of Teala's cuisine. While on a trip to the Yucatan, Teal Anomaiprasert, who also owns Thai Pepper, discovered that despite the different hemispheres, Thailand and Mexico have much in common when it comes to food.

Abundant seafood, fresh hot peppers, zesty lime and cilantro, and a hint of a wood burning grill flavor, are all culinary traits shared of both countries. One example Teala's offers is a special southeast Asian version of the traditional mole sauce—an exclusive house peanut mole sauce. But despite claims of a fused cuisine, outside of its particular mole sauce, Teala's offers nothing distinctive from the usual platos Mexicanos.

My dining companion and I started with the Chicken Fajita and Jack Cheese Quesadilla (\$8.50). The cheese and chicken grilled in fajita sauce provided a spicy punch to the dish and blended well with the heaps of extra guacamole from the Guacamole Salad (\$3.75).

The quesadillas were not arranged in the usual fan-like manner for easy access. Instead they were stacked on one another, seeming more like a jumbled bundle of chicken and tortilla. Nevertheless, the generous portions left us feeling like we had finished the entrée, not just the appetizer. My companion also ordered the Black Bean Soup (\$3.95), which she found to be rather ordinary and too salty.

For the main course, I ordered the half pound platter of chicken fajitas (\$10.95), which is served with the usual fare of onions, guacamole, rice, frijoles



charros and pico de gallo. Overall, the dish was predictable.

The same was true of the Vegetarian Enchiladas (\$8.95), served with spinach, soy bean strips, jack cheese and enchilada sauce. My dining companion described the dish as "pedestrian," complaining that the soy bean strips tasted more like dehydrated space food.

Though the entrées don't inspire any hint of distinctiveness, the raspberry cheesecake dessert (\$3.95) ended the meal on a positive note. The cheesecake had a lighter, grittier texture than most, and it didn't leave cakes of cream cheese plastered to my palate. The thick graham cracker crust had a homemade freshness that made it exceptional.

The distinguishing feature of Teala's is not its cuisine, but its décor. When you first enter the restaurant, there's an overwhelming sensation of having stepped into a western saloon. With a large wooden chandelier, a staircase leading to a balcony over the bar and a hitching post separating the bar from the dining area, you could stage an old-fashioned Western shootout in the place.

Again, in the décor, Teala's juxtaposes one style with another. For example, paintings ranging from a grainy portrait of a Mariachi band to Picasso-esque modern prints adorn the walls. Large paneled windows, which make up one side of the restaurant, face the parking lot and provide a ski lodge atmosphere quite disparate from a saloon.

A large dilapidated sign surrounded by flashing bulbs and painted with the word "favourite" hangs over the bar, adding to Teala's diverse and kitschy décor. If you're looking for a new place to dine, or for a quiet patio to converse with friends over a margarita, then Teala's may be the place for you.

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Value: ☺☺☺

Scene: ☺☺☺☺

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Past Out

by DAVID BIANCO

1983
GAY AND
LESBIAN HISTORY

A 'brave and foolish' darling

by DAVID BIANCO

Who was George Cukor?

Hollywood director George Cukor worked in a variety of film genres over his long career, but the comedy of sexual manners became his particular forte. A gay man whose homosexuality was an open secret in Hollywood, Cukor's comfort with both male and female sexuality and identity shines through many of his now classic comedies.

Cukor was born in New York City in 1899 to middle-class, Hungarian Jewish parents. If his family had gotten its way, he would have attended Columbia University and become a lawyer like his father and uncle. But Cukor, who had been entranced by New York theater since childhood, had Broadway in mind.

At first, he wanted to be a playwright, but he soon found he hated one unavoidable aspect of writing—working alone. Naturally gregarious and witty, Cukor discovered he was better suited to stage—managing and directing. He got his start in summer stock in the early 1920s and within a few years had founded his own seasonal company in Rochester, N.Y. In regional theater, Cukor gained a reputation as a director whom actors could trust because he both listened to them and modestly refused to take credit when their performances excelled. "He had great pride," one colleague recalled, "but no vanity." Cukor moved on to Broadway, where his productions were only moderate successes. Still, he was in demand because of his talent for working with actresses, whose roles he seemed to understand and empathize with better than straight male directors did.

The appellation "woman's director" (a slight, given the sexism in the entertainment industry) followed Cukor when he went to Hollywood in 1929, and over the years he made his mark with a number of so-called "women's films." Besides his affinity with actresses, though not particularly political or feminist, Cukor was sensitive to women's issues.

Cukor fell into comedy by accident, but it proved his strong suit. He once quipped that the studio moguls "used to judge your talent by your personality. If you walked into the front office with a long face, they gave you straight drama; if you cracked jokes, they gave you comedy. I cracked jokes."

His first few films were unremarkable. But in 1932, he garnered kudos for "A Bill of Divorcement," starring 24-year-old Katharine Hepburn in her first screen role. That movie launched a lifelong friendship with Hepburn, who went on to star in nine of his films.

Another collaboration with Hepburn was "Sylvia Scarlett," a gender-bending comedy co-starring Cary Grant. "Sylvia Scarlett" was Cukor's most personally revealing film, "brave as well as foolish," as he later phrased



Academy Award-winning director George Cukor was originally selected to direct 'Gone With the Wind,' until he and Clark Gable had a falling out on set.

it. The lead character is an embezzler's daughter, who cross-dresses to escape a run-in with authorities. The plot directly challenged traditional male-female roles and boldly winked at homosexuality.

Cukor was David O. Selznick's original choice to direct "Gone With the Wind." But after only a few weeks on the job, there were conflicts with Clark Gable, who hated Cukor's fey manner, especially the way he called cast members "darling." One day during filming, Gable stormed off the set, shouting, "I won't be directed by a fairy! I have to work with a 'real man!'" Shortly thereafter Cukor was replaced by Victor Fleming, a pal of Gable's.

Although the general public was unaware of Cukor's sexual orientation, his homosexuality was well-known in the industry. For years, he hosted soirees at his Hollywood villa, which had been decorated by gay actor William Haines. At these lavish affairs, the queer elite could see and be seen. Cukor's Sunday afternoon parties competed with the all-male fetes of Cole Porter, and the two were sometimes called "the rival queens of Hollywood."

Cukor's career spanned five decades, but he won only one Academy Award, for directing "My Fair Lady" (1964). When he made his last film, "Rich and Famous" (1981), he was 81, the oldest director still working in Hollywood. He died two years later.

Many of his films have become queer cult favorites: "Camille" (1937), with its exquisitely painful death scene; "The Women" (1939), with a campy "bitchiness" reminiscent of drag culture; and the musical remake of "A Star is Born" (1954), a comeback vehicle for gay icon Judy Garland.

David Bianco is the author of *Gay Essentials*, a collection of his history columns. He can be reached at DaveBianco@aol.com.

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community calendar

saturday, jan. 15

After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM, 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. 713-526-5738.
 Q-Patrol walks the streets at 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
 Visual Arts Alliance. 10 a.m. 281-583-8408.
 Dignity mass at 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary at 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.
 Houston Lesbian and Gay drop-in hours from noon to 4 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. Montrose Writer's Project 3 to 4:30 p.m. 2 p.m. 713-524-3818.
 Alternative Health Expo and Psychic Fair. 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1920 Hollister. 713-932-7224.

sunday, jan. 16

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

Faith and Hope Fellowship. Service at 11 a.m. 713-520-7847.
 First Congregational Church (Memorial). Service at 11 a.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.
 Church of Kindred Spirits (Beaumont). Service at 7 p.m. 409-835-4765.
 Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum at 10 a.m. Service at 11 a.m. and noon. Open Circle Family Support at 12:30 p.m. 1504 Wirt. 713-686-5876.
 Interfaith Worship Celebration. 7 p.m. 2515 Waugh Dr. 713-528-3601.
 Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation: Adult discussion at 9:45 a.m.; service at 11 a.m. 3945 Greenbriar. Stafford. 281-277-8882. www.neosoft.com/~thoreau.
 PFLAG-Woodlands satellite meeting at 2 p.m. 713-867-9020.

monday, jan. 17

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

tuesday, jan. 18

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

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

wednesday, jan. 19

Free HIV Testing at Thomas Street Clinic at 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2015 Thomas Street. 713-793-4026.
 Free HIV testing by the Montrose clinic at Mary's (4-8 p.m.) and Midtowne Spa (8 p.m. to midnight), and Ripcord (9 p.m. to midnight). 713-830-3000.
 BiNet Houston. 7:30 p.m. Social meeting at Cafe Toopees, 1830 W. Alabama. 713-467-4380
 Women's Network. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond. 713-529-0037.
 HIV survivor support group. 7 p.m. 713-782-4050.
 Mind/Body Connection: Alternative Approaches. 7 p.m. 1475 W. Gray. 713-524-2374.
 Project: Caesar. 7 p.m. AFH, 3203 Wesleyan. 713-623-6796.
 Out Skate Rollerskating Club, 8 to 10 p.m. at 8075 Cook Road. 281-933-5818.
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus monthly board meeting at 6 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

thursday, jan. 20

Free HIV testing at Toyz (9 p.m. to midnight) by the Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.
 Art Labs. The Art League at 1 p.m. 713-225-9411.
 Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Open rehearsal at 7 p.m. 713-521-7464.
 HIV+ Men Psychotherapy. Montrose Counseling Center, 1:15 p.m. 713-529-0037.
 Relapse Prevention. Montrose Counseling Center, 2 p.m. 713-529-0037.

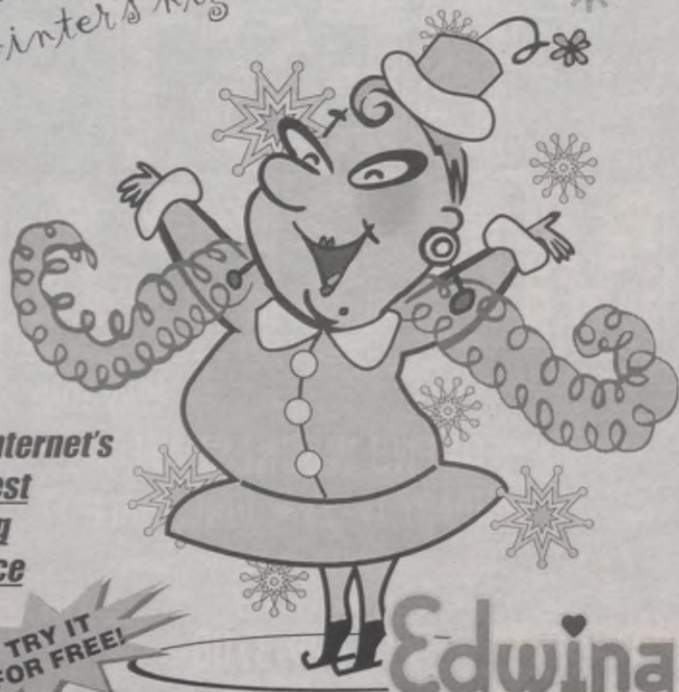
Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center, 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.
 Women's Therapy Group. Montrose Counseling Center, 5:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.
 Center for the Healing of Racism. 7:30 p.m. 713-738-RACE.
 FrontRunners at 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.
 HIV Art Course Program. 1 to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.
 Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic, 713-830-3000.
 Faith and Hope Fellowship. Bible study 7 p.m. 713-520-7847.
 Community Gospel. Choir practice. 6:30 p.m.; service at 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.
 HIV/AIDS Support Group, 2:30 at Family Service Center. 713-861-4849.
 Women's HIV/AIDS Support Group, 4:30 p.m. Family Service Center. 713-247-3810.
 HIV/AIDS Support Group, 7 p.m. Family Service Center in Conroe. 888-247-3810.
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. : HLGCC Tenant meeting at 7:30 p.m. 713-524-3818.
 HIV/POZ Social Club Singles Party. 7 p.m. at Club Paradise, 2312 Crocker. 713-807-7304.

friday, jan. 21

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

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

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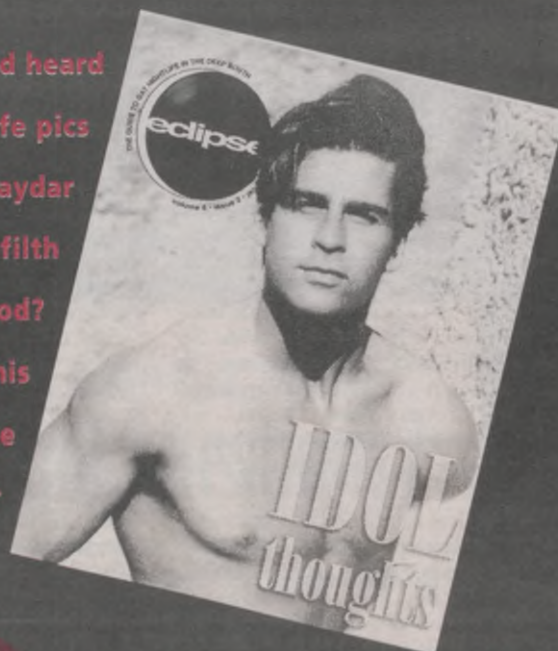
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Occasions

Birthdays

Local DJ Bubba Jimmy Dale spins in his birthday on Jan. 15.
 Happy birthday to Texas Renegades Wayne on Jan. 16.
 Hunky Mark Walker has a birthday on Jan. 18.

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



Bill O'Rourke (a.k.a. Daddy Blade and Fancy Pace Lawrence) dances in his birthday on Jan. 15.



Super sexy David, bartender at the Ripcord, toasts his birthday on Jan. 14.



Julian (a.k.a. Felisha Flesheater) does his birthday dance on Jan. 17.



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My Stars!

YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

by JILL DEARMAN

Jan. 14 - 20

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

Do something artistic and unusual, something that really pushes your limits, and you could unlock a hidden part of your personality. People want to talk to you and learn what you're all about. Practice the fine art of communication. Words are an aphrodisiac to a Leo.

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

Lucky Jupiter is in your house of the unconscious, which means that the psychic part of you is super-strong, so stick to your guns and stop second-guessing yourself. Be emotionally brave and you can get a lot done, professionally and personally. A Pisces thinks you're deep.

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

You are about to get a chance to travel and do the exciting things you've only dreamed about. Get rid of those uptight vibes and get ready to live. A relationship needs more attention than you've been giving it, especially if it's with a Libra.

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

The Sun moves into your house of permanent partnerships on Jan. 20, which means it's time for you to start making firm commitments. You have a chance to collaborate with someone witty, brilliant and challenging. Don't run away from an Aquarius out of fear.

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

Mars is passing through your house of other people's money, so it's a good time to invest, apply for grants or find yourself a nice benefactor. Go ahead and let yourself be a little irrational—in your love life. A Cancer will catch your fall.

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

Mercury moves into your work sector on Jan. 19, so use that way you have with words. Ideas you pitch now are well worth the effort. Closer to home, it's a good time to focus on a more healthy way of life. A Capricorn will give you a nice dessert if you eat your vegetables.

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

The full moon falls in your house of friendship on Jan. 20, so expect the unexpected from your inner circle. Your outer circle, too: Folks you flirt with could become business associates, so be careful to ride the line but not cross it. Save your mojo for a Taurus.

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

This is a great time for you to patch up old problems with your family. Just because you had a fight doesn't mean you can't be really close again. In your work life, you could experience a major turning point, but you'll have to put your ego on the line. Be forgiving with a Libra—and yourself.

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

While Mars is transiting your home sector you may want to throw out all the stuff that reminds you of past lovers and redo your boudoir in the sexy style that suits you now. A Taurus wants to play dirty with you, and you may have just met your match.

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

You may need a break from other people right now. Spend time being blissfully out of touch with all group experiences. After Jan. 20, it's easy for you to get what you want, financially and sexually, especially if a Gemini's involved. Your chutzpah is your greatest strength.

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

The Sun slips into your sign on Jan. 20, which means your time for glory and glamour has begun. Don't worry about what anyone thinks of you. Put all of your petty problems aside, and open up your heart. Stop talking yourself out of a great romance. A Cancer has the goods.

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

It's a strange time of year for you, as omens abound and disappointments weigh heavy on your heart. Experience all the joy and pain and don't block any of it out. You're slipping into your astrological incubation period (which happens right before your birthday season). Give yourself a break. A Leo is ready when you are.

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

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Announcements

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PRISM is an employee network for employees of Equilon Enterprises LLC, Motiva Enterprises, LLC, Equiva Services LLC, and Equiva Trading Company. This network is open to any employee of these companies and includes Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual employees and their friends. The mission of PRISM is to provide support for members and co-workers, promote equality for employees regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification and create awareness in management of issues and concerns affecting people in a diverse workplace inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identification. For more information call Jim at 281.544.8138, Robert at 713.241.1238 or Dick at 281.544.8730.

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

The Royal, Sovereign, and Imperial Court invites you all to vote for your favorite candidate for Emperor XVI and Empress XVI. A valid ID showing you live Harris County or a surrounding county. 500 Lovett Blvd. 2 a.m. to 6 p.m. January 22, 2000.

MARANATHA MCC

MARANATHA FELLOWSHIP MCC will be sharing the home of the Central Congregational Church, 1311 Holman (right across from HCC-Downtown campus). On January 20, their worship time is 6:30 p.m. and Bible Study at 5:30 p.m. Their offices will be at 117 Tuam. For more information, call 713.528.6756.

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Volunteers

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

Gay & Lesbian Switchboard

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


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