

## Noodle-mania

New quarterly targets gay Asian-Americans with upscale focus.

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# Activists working to get out the vote



Municipal elections on Tuesday feature two lesbians: **Annise Parker**, a three-term city council member seeking to become city controller, and **Sue Lovell**, a Houston activist and member of the Democratic National Committee. (Parker photo by Dalton DeHart)

### Two lesbians on Tuesday's ballot; gay voters could swing races, observer says

By **BINNIE K. FISHER**

In any election, gay activists would be sounding the call to get out and vote. But with the municipal elections on Tuesday, they say, the fate of the city is at stake.

"The thing that is so important now is that progressives have control, just barely, of the City Council," said Richard Jones, president of the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus. "Conservatives are try-

ing to take over the City Council. If you lose one progressive vote, then the conservatives control it."

Voters will decide who will occupy two key positions, mayor and city controller, and they will fill nine seats on the City Council.

Based on answers to surveys that gauge the candidates' sensitivity to gay issues, the caucus endorsed one candidate in each race. In the race for mayor, the group surprised some political observers by endorsing business executive Bill White over Sylvester Turner, a longtime gay-friendly politician.

"Both candidates screened very well," Jones said. "Sylvester has a long history

Please see **CITY ELECTIONS** on Page 3

# Gays face the trouble with Tina

### Sex on crystal meth linked to rise in HIV infections

By **JOSEF MOLNAR**

The rush of energy drew Brent to crystal methamphetamine, beginning a struggle between the drug's allure and its sometimes devastating side effects.

Brent, 32, began snorting the drug recreationally five years ago. But it took only a few weeks for him to discover the addictive nature of the drug.

"I felt like the music was talking to me in the bars," he said. "Everything was very personalized, my senses were so heightened."

The drug's dark side left Brent, who lived in Austin at the time, to continue its use even when he was partying on the weekends in Houston. Returning to work in the telecommunications industry each Monday became harder to handle.

"I look on it now as sort of being bipolar," he said. "You're two different people, from smiling all the time and feeling great, no one can knock you down. But when you're down, things are gray and dark, and everything moves really slow. It felt like I was working a full work week on Mondays, everything was that slow."

This pleasure-tension cycle led to a loss of control of what was initially a recreational drug, and he said using more crystal became a way of overcoming its downside.

"In the morning I thought, 'Oh, my god, I can't function,' and you have to do more to get yourself going again," Brent said.

Crystal methamphetamine — also known as crystal, crank, tweak, T, go-fast, speed and Tina — is an amphetamine-based drug designed to stimulate the central nervous system. It is typically snorted, smoked, injected or swallowed and has become a favorite drug among club-goers, notably among gay men.

After he moved to Houston and began a new job at a local club, Brent said he

dove into the club crowd and his use increased. He became a popular point for drug connections, and soon he was considering other ways to do crystal meth. Within six months he graduated from snorting the drug to smoking it, and then finally injecting it.

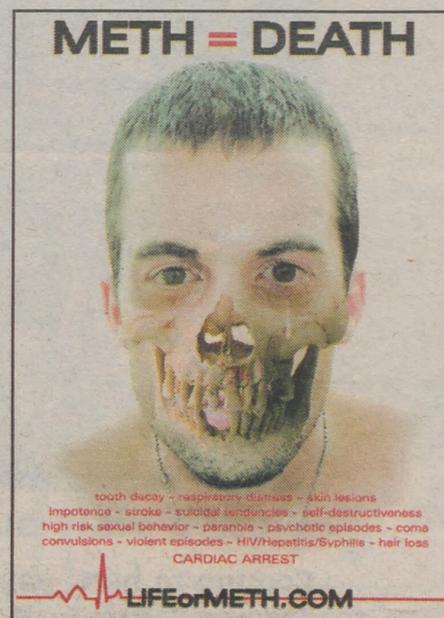
"It opened all the floodgates to uninhibited sex, whatever. You tried it, that's fine. You don't judge people for anything," he said. "I went to out-of-town sex parties that lasted for days."

### Meth use more common in gay men

An estimated 8.8 million people (four percent of the population) have tried methamphetamine at some time in their lives, up from 4.8 million in 1996, according to the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse.

But that national percentage is more than doubled for gay men, according to a 2001 Urban Men's Health Study conducted

Please see **CRYSTAL METH** on Page 8



An ad from the Crystal Meth Community Educational Forum includes a graphic depiction of the damage the groups claims can be done by crystal meth use.



**HARSH RHETORIC:** Threats surround Gene Robinson as he nears consecration as first gay bishop. Page 6

**GAY GAMES:** Montreal stumbles as host of '06 sporting event. Page 6

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## local news

## Parker expects runoff in controller race

CITY ELECTIONS, continued from Page 1

of helping our community in the state legislature. We really respect that, but we felt that Bill White had more management experience."

White is former deputy energy secretary for the Clinton administration. Turner currently holds the District 139 seat in the Texas House of Representatives.

Jones said that the third frontrunner in the mayoral race, conservative Orlando Sanchez, did not respond to caucus surveys.

## Parker seeks higher office

Several races presented the caucus with difficult choices because many candidates scored well, he said.

"It wasn't like the devil and the angel this year," Jones said.

Besides the mayoral race, two other contests at City Hall have garnered the interest of gay political observers — city controller and the council's Position 4 at-large post.

Three-term council member Annise Parker is running for controller amid a field of six contenders. Sue Lovell, a past president of the caucus, is among four candidates for the Position 4 council seat. Both are lesbians, and both have received the endorsement of the caucus and other endorsing organizations.

Parker went into the home stretch the frontrunner in her race, endorsed also by the Houston Chronicle, two police unions, the Jewish Herald Voice and the Sierra Club, but she doesn't expect it to end there. The week before the election, she said, polls indicated that a third of potential voters were undecided.

"Six candidates, there will be a run off," Parker said. "With that many undecided voters, it's a roll of the dice."

In the race for controller, Parker said, her sexual orientation has been an issue only in the sense that critics contend that running for controller is "all part of my plan to be the first lesbian mayor in Houston." She said history reveals that in the last 25 years, the controller advanced to the mayor's office only once.

Lovell, the mother of three, has helped welfare moms find work through the Mills Access to Training & Service program at Katy Mills Mall. She is running in a field of four candidates.

Both Lovell and Parker stressed the importance of a high turnout among gay voters.

"The gay and lesbian vote in this election is so very important," Lovell said. "We have to turn out our numbers. Our community works best when we ring that fire bell."

Lovell hopes the prospect of electing the city's first lesbian controller, putting another lesbian on city council and choosing a new mayor will be enough to



After heated debate, former Clinton aide and Houston mayoral candidate **Bill White** received the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus Political Action Committee endorsement over another high-profile, gay-friendly candidate, Sylvester Turner.

bring out gay voters.

"When our community votes in large numbers, we make the difference in our people making the runoff," she said.

## Partisan politics

Though city elections are non-partisan, observers say the last six years have politicized the landscape.

Before term limits were instituted, officials who served their constituencies well usually spent long enough in office to build a support base, said Houston attorney and political observer Dalia Stokes.

"When elected officials can only serve three two-year terms, in order to position themselves for their next run, they have to have a base," she said.

That base has ended up being a political party, Stokes added.

Observers see the danger in city elections that run along party lines. For that reason, the gay Log Cabin Republicans did not endorse candidates in this election cycle.

"As a partisan organization, getting involved in the election is just inappropriate," said Log Cabin President Shari Goldsberry. "If our members need some guidance in the runoff, then we may offer it."

She echoed the importance of gay voters heading to the polls, regardless of political affiliation.

"I hope Houston will be able to deliver a block vote to make us relevant in the future," she said.

Stokes, who heads up River Oaks Democratic Women, said she us worried

## HGLPC-PAC endorsements

Mayor: Bill White

Controller: Annise Parker

At-Large Position 1: Brian Wozniak

At-Large Position 2: Gordon Quan

At-Large Position 3: Jolanda Jones

At-Large Position 4: Sue Lovell

At-Large Position 5: Dwight Boykins

City Council District C: Malaki Sims

City Council District D: Ada Edwards

City Council District E: Vickie Keller

City Council District F: Derrick Wesley

HISD Position 3: Michael Gomez

HISD Position 4: G. San Miguel

HISD Position 8: Joseph Rodriguez

that recent gains such as the passage of a non-discrimination ordinance two years ago and the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn the Texas sodomy law has left some gay men and lesbians complacent.

"A lot of people, because there seems to be more acceptance in the air, there is a sense that there's nothing to be concerned about," she said. "They're not plugged in enough to realize they don't have full legal rights."

The reality Stokes said she wants to convey is this: "You're as vulnerable as you ever were. We're on the cusp of getting some of these rights, but the city of Houston is still behind other cities."

Richard Murray, a political science professor at the University of Houston, said gay voters could play a major role in the election on Tuesday.

In his 37-page paper, "Power in the City: Mayoral Elections and Patterns of Political Influence in Houston, Texas," Murray noted that in 1997, gay men and lesbians were a major force in the election of former chief of police Lee Brown to the city's top office.

"Gay voters now make up an estimated five to six percent of the city electorate, and they can be a critical 'swing' vote in close elections like the 1997 mayoral runoff," he said.

Lovell said on Tuesday, she would like to see a continuation of the excitement caused by the U.S. Supreme Court decision in June striking down the state's sodomy law.

"Let's not forget that it was Houston that liberated a nation with Lawrence v. Texas," she said.

## i MORE INFO

Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus  
www.hglpc.org

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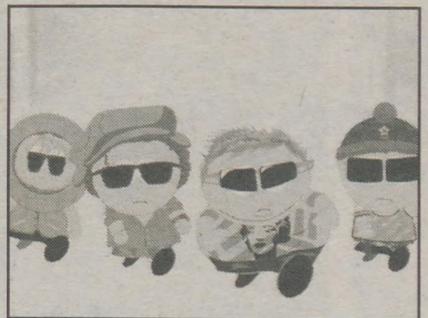
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**DRAG MUSICAL:** Robert Leeds (left), Michael Harren and Chris Pool as a trio of religious singers in the fun production 'The Stops.' Theater, Page 19



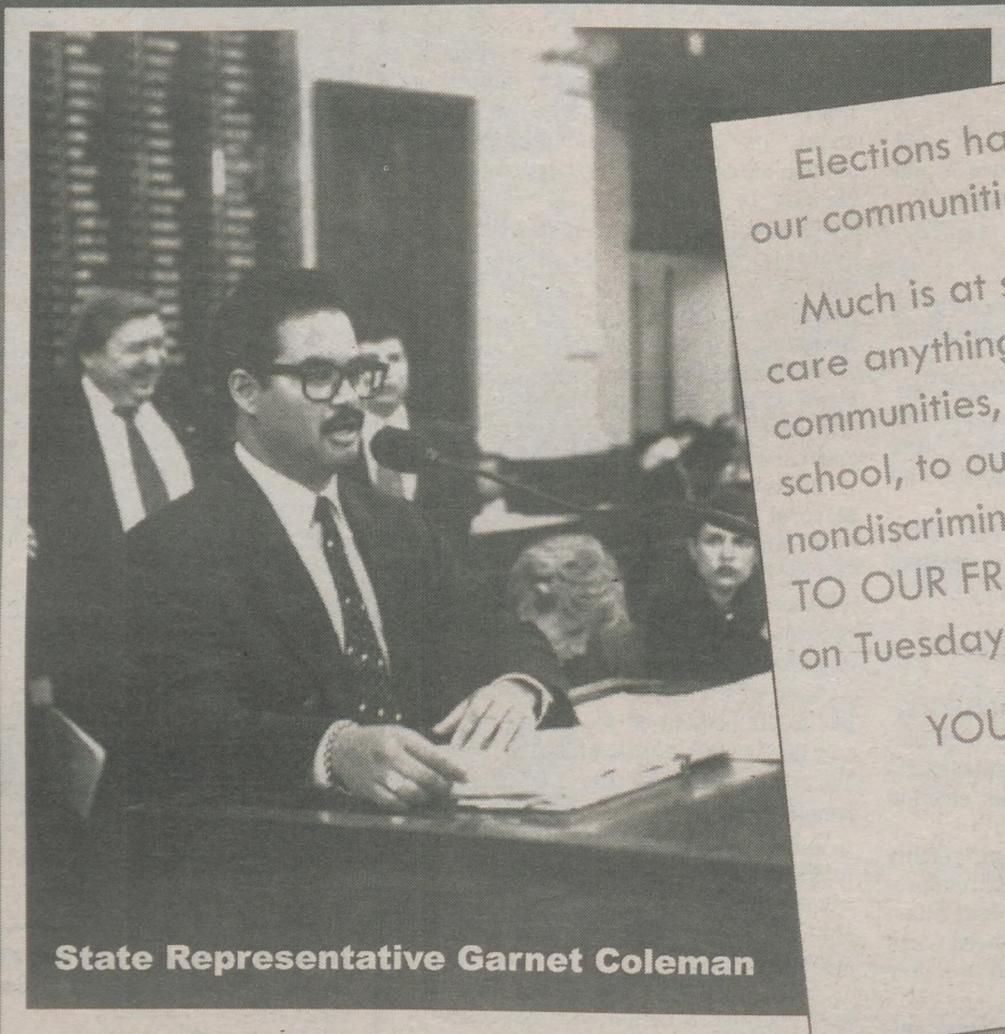
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# YOU CAN'T SPELL HOUSTON WITHOUT US.



State Representative Garnet Coleman

Elections have serious consequences for our communities - for us. Trust me, I know.

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**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4**

**VOTE**

## national news

# Future uncertain for 2006 Gay Games in Montreal

Federation, local organizers cite 'good steps' in negotiations

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

MONTREAL — Negotiations continue between Montreal leaders and the Federation of Gay Games over the 2006 Gay Games contract, but a significant gap remains between the two parties, leaving the final destination of the next Gay Games uncertain.

Representatives from Montreal and the Federation held a telephone conference Oct. 28, where "good steps" were taken, according to Roberto Mantaci, male co-president of the Federation.

The most important progress from the phone conference was setting a date for the parties to meet "face-to-face" on Nov. 8, prior to the Federation's Nov. 10-14 annual meeting in Chicago, Mantaci said.

"Right now, what seems to be in the interest of both organizations is for both to work toward an agreement," he said.

Montreal 2006 shares the same hope, local leaders there said.

"I think both sides would like, more than anything else, to see this finish with a signed contract," said Mark Tewksbury, a former Olympic swimmer and co-president of the Montreal 2006 organizing committee.

Disputes over the degree of financial control that Montreal will allow the Federation surfaced publicly earlier this

month in a chat room on Outsports.com, a gay sports Web site.

"It is non-negotiable for Montreal," Tewksbury said. "We must have the final say."

But the Federation disagrees, wanting Montreal to downsize its projected budget. The Federation expects "basic and customary rights of approval that apply in contracts between the licensor of a trademark and a licensee," Mantaci said.

Those rights include oversight of merchandise and how the Gay Games trademark is used by third parties, Mantaci said.

The licensing fee for the Gay Games' trademark is \$600,000 — an amount that Sydney, host to the 2002 Gay Games, has yet to pay, Mantaci said. The total amount Sydney still owes to the Federation "is not final," he said.

"There are still some credits pending from Sydney," Mantaci said. "We are still accepting payments from Sydney."

Montreal hopes to avoid the debt-inducing budget shortfalls that plagued the past four Gay Games by planning for an event with 16,000 athletes, which is an increase from the 12,000 athletes budgeted to attend the Sydney games, according to Tewksbury.

"Given our polling, it would be irresponsible to plan for an event that is too small," Tewksbury said. "There is a big difference between planning for 12,000 athletes and 16,000 athletes. It is more than just an idea because it has a real impact on the bottom line."

Also, the responsibility for the event's financial status ultimately falls on the



Montreal organizers must enjoy financial autonomy from the Federation of Gay Games if Montreal is to host the mammoth sporting event, said Montreal 2003 co-president and former Olympian Mark Tewksbury.

shoulders of Montreal's organizers, Tewksbury said.

"The last thing we want to do is repeat the failures of the past," he said.

The current budget for Montreal is based on the amount it would cost to accommodate each athlete in attendance. Montreal organizers budgeted \$800-\$1,100 in Canadian dollars per athlete, and derived a projected "conservative" attendance of 16,000 athletes from a survey of 675 sports teams around the world, Tewksbury said.

Montreal's projected budget falls between \$12,432,000 and \$17,094,000 in Canadian currency.

The Federation is still open to negotiations for the number of athletes, but it proposed a more conservative budget based on a smaller participant base, with room to expand, Mantaci said.

## Montreal won't drop gay sporting event

Montreal will host a large gay sporting event July 29-Aug. 6, 2006, "regardless of the outcome of our negotiations with [the Federation]," Louise Roy, director of Montreal 2006, said in a statement released Oct. 17.

Presently, the Web site generated by Montreal to promote the games does not refer to the event as the Gay Games, but as "Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006."

During the annual meeting in November, the Federation's site selection committee will also present a new policy to use in the event that a chosen host city is not able to follow through, Mantaci said.

"We need a general policy for now and for the future," he said. "It is going to be approved by the board probably at the meeting as well."

The Federation and Atlanta organizers have already spoken about what could happen if Montreal does not host the official Gay Games, said Margie Archer, co-chair of Atlanta Games, Inc., the organization that assembled the Atlanta bid for the 2006 games.

"I think the Federation was thinking of doing something in 2007," Archer said.

In 2001, Montreal beat out three U.S. cities — Atlanta, Chicago and Los Angeles — to win the bid for the quadrennial sporting event. But there has been indication that Atlanta was the runner up to Montreal, Archer said.

"If and only if Montreal falls through, Atlanta Games, Inc. will move forward on every opportunity to bring it to Atlanta," Archer said.

# Gay bishop-elect set for consecration on Sunday

Robinson resists pressure over election as first openly gay Episcopal bishop

By JOE CREA

In the final days before his consecration as the first openly gay bishop in the Episcopal Church USA, Rev. Gene Robinson is on a spiritual retreat until Sunday's controversial ceremony, his spokesperson said.

As anxieties heighten, a fusillade of false news reports emerged stating that the bishop-elect was under FBI protection after receiving death threats from Christian fundamentalists and that the archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, arranged a final meeting with Robinson to urge him to step down.

"All are false and creations of the London tabloids," said Mike Barwell, a spokesperson for Robinson.

Robinson is not under FBI protection, but he noted Oct. 24 in an address to the conference of the Lesbian & Gay Christian

Movement at Manchester University in England that the diocese where he is to be consecrated spent "thousands of dollars" to protect him.

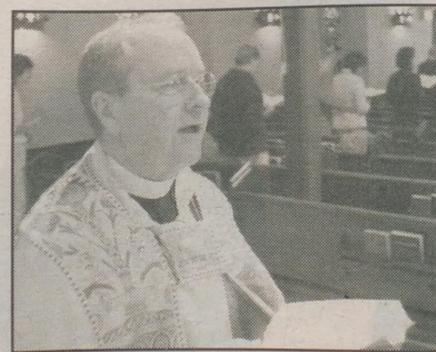
Robinson noted at the conference that he has received a measure of hate mail in addition to a number of favorable letters.

"I'm getting lots of hate mail — and lots of love letters of incredible passion and depth," Robinson told the gathering. "There have been all kinds of wonderful messages from this country and around the world about what this means to them, especially from people not yet in cities or churches where it is safe to be who they are."

The Episcopal Church USA is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. The 37 Anglican church leaders, called primates, signed a unanimous statement at an emergency meeting in London this month stating that Robinson's consecration was likely to "tear the fabric of our communion at its deepest level."

Many agree that a split in the 77-million-member Anglican Communion is likely, but no one knows exactly what that means.

"Several other provinces in the commu-



Canon Gene Robinson said he received hate mail and that the church spent thousands of dollars to protect him. (Photo by Jim Cole/AP)

nion will declare themselves out of communion with the church in the U.S., and what that means on a practical level is not clear to anybody," said Rev. Michael W. Hopkins, president of the Alliance of Lesbian & Gay Anglicans in Washington, D.C.

Jim Solheim, director of the Episcopal News Service, said the "threats are still hanging in the air," and everyone is taking them seriously. He noted that the archbishop appointed a commission to look into avoiding a split.

Solheim suggested the commission might consider alternative pastoral care that was implemented in conservative parishes in liberal dioceses. Typically, according to Solheim, the presiding bishop "invites" another bishop into the church to perform certain ceremonies.

He added that this was done in the past on an informal basis in situations like dioceses that object to female bishops.

Gay Episcopal activists sharply criticized Archbishop Williams for canceling his own appearance at the gay conference this weekend, especially after noting to the press that the date was "still free" in his diary, according to a BBC report.

LGCM General Secretary Richard Kirker said the archbishop is under "pressure" regarding gay issues and added that it was "all the more despicable" that Williams "felt unable to attend" the conference.

In recent days, some criticized Williams for saying that he personally believed Robinson should not become a bishop.

But many Robinson supporters acknowledge that Williams is in a difficult position and understand but disagree with some of his statements.



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but think  
for tomorrow.



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local news

# Social use of crystal meth can lead to addiction

CRYSTAL METH, continued from Page 1

by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies and the AIDS Research Institute at the University of California.

"Specifically, crystal methamphetamine is a drug that many gay men find to be addictive and that is hard to stop once you get heavily involved with it," said Ron Stall, chief of the Behavioral Intervention Branch in the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention at CDC.

The study's statistics, collected from a sampling in San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, show that nationally 9.5 percent of gay men used crystal methamphetamine in the six months prior to the study.

In San Francisco, officials at the Department of Public Health estimate that up to 40 percent of gay men in San Francisco have tried crystal meth. The department links the use of crystal meth to an increase of HIV infection in the area, according to a May 2003 report in the San Francisco Chronicle.

"The crystal meth epidemic showed up on the West Coast about five or six years ago in a big way," Stall said. "Like many of those trends that start in California, it has moved its way across America going east."

Eric Roland, education director at the Montrose Clinic, said crystal meth's popularity in the club circuit and among gay

people of all persuasions is edging out long-time favorites such as cocaine.

"It's a cheap drug, it's easy to get even if you don't have money, it's easy to use, and it gets you high for long periods of time," he said. "With cocaine, you can use it and after 30 minutes or an hour you need another bump; with crystal meth, one bump can last you four hours or more."

Roland said crystal meth is popular with people from every age, economic and social group.

"I think there are people who would be surprised to find that there are executives that work downtown and wear suits," he said. "It's not just street people and thieves. A lot of them are very successful people."

### Unsafe sex on meth risks HIV

One of the most life-threatening problems related to crystal meth abuse is its strong link to risky sex and HIV transmission, said Michael Siever, director of the Stonewall Project, a San Francisco-based harm reduction counseling program for gay and bisexual men.

"The two issues are intertwined," Siever said. "A lot of men shoot speed and that's a possible method of HIV transmission. And secondly, the reality for most gay men is that when they get high, they tend to have sex. Speed keeps them high for days on end. They fuck as many people as they can fuck with nary a



Recent statistics show that crystal methamphetamine use is on the rise. Nearly 9 million people are estimated to have tried the drug in 2000.

condom in sight."

The San Francisco Health Department found that at one high-risk clinic, 25 percent to 30 percent of gay men with new infections used crystal meth in the previous six months, according to the May 2003

San Francisco Chronicle article.

"What I hear again and again is that this drug is a very dangerous drug and it is fueling the AIDS epidemic on the West

Please see CRYSTAL METH on Page 9



**Bill White**  
for Mayor



**Annise Parker**  
for Controller

 <b>Brian Wozniak</b> for At-Large #1	 <b>Gordon Quan</b> for At-Large #2	 <b>Jolanda Jones</b> for At-Large #3	 <b>Sue Lovell</b> for At-Large #4	 <b>Dwight Boykins</b> for At-Large #5
 <b>Malaki Sims</b> for District C	 <b>Ada Edwards</b> for District D	 <b>Vickie Keller</b> for District E	 <b>Derrick Wesley</b> for District F	 <b>Adrian Garcia</b> for District H
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## local news

# Tina provides tough road to recovery

CRYSTAL METH, continued from Page 1

Coast," Stall said.

For Brent, crystal meth became the bond between him and his sex partners. Soon, combining sex and the drug became just as frequent.

"If I was going to hook with somebody in an average week, three out of the four I would party with and use crystal," he said. "It was the 'yay' or the 'nay' on whether we would hook up."

The sex parties Brent enjoyed included barebacking, or sex without condoms, a risky practice that puts participants at higher risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Brent also said that part of his life is a blur.

"I look back on those years now, and I can't remember," he said. "There are holidays that went by, and I was sitting in my apartment, and I didn't even know it was Christmas."

Crystal meth users sometimes create new concoctions to heighten their experience. It's often enhanced with ketamine, or Special K, which serves as a muscle relaxer for easier anal sex. Others add Viagra to counteract erectile dysfunction, a common side effect of the drug that interferes with the ability to get an erection.

"Some people call it trail mix," Roland said. "But it means something different to different people."

But those combinations can be dangerous, according to Roberto Mendez, a counselor at the Montrose Counseling Center, especially for people with HIV already on strong drug cocktails.

"These drug combinations are unpredictable," Mendez said. "A bump of crystal meth can have a stronger affect on someone on medication, when the same amount won't affect another person that way."

## Tough road to recovery

Although he tried quitting several times, Brent said he kept returning to crystal meth, in part because he remained in the club scene. But testing positive for HIV in May 2000 served as his wake-up call.

"I said, 'You can't do this anymore,'" Brent said. "You've already used your last 'get out of jail free' card."

A few months later, Brent quit the drug and sought help.

"American culture is addicted to speed: Red Bull, Starbucks and diet pills," Roland said. "Crystal meth just falls into that. It doesn't mean it's not dangerous, it doesn't mean it's not illegal, it doesn't mean it's not addictive."

Roland said education is the key to helping people understand the drug's downside and ways to cut back on its use.

"There needs to be more services out there for crystal meth," Roland said. "It's going untouched in our community. There are no harm reduction, no recovery programs out there to talk about this."



The 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse found that about 4 percent of the U.S. population has tried methamphetamine. But the percentage more than doubles for gay men, according to a study by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. (Photo illustration by John Nail)

The Montrose Clinic is developing a new program to promote harm reduction in sexually-oriented chat rooms. CyberEd, which Roland said will debut before the end of the year, is designed to offer a passive resource for interested drug users to get more information and support.

"This is one way for the Montrose Clinic to do an Internet outreach program to be there as a source for men to talk to," Roland said. "We will be in chat rooms and then announce ourselves when we're there."

Other Internet venues have opened up to promote harm reduction, such as Tweaker.org, a comprehensive Web site which provides education about crystal meth, as well as a chat room forum for people to share their experiences.

Mendez estimated that about 80 percent of people in the drug recovery program at the Montrose Counseling Center use crystal meth as their primary drug. Many of the center's clients don't look for help until after the drug has taken a heavy toll, he said.

"They've been arrested for drug possession or their life is a mess," Mendez said. "Sometimes they are homeless, they lose their jobs, and their health is compromised."

The center uses an eight-week drug treatment program that includes participation in Crystal Meth Anonymous meetings. Mendez said the program includes a workshop, Post Acute Withdrawal Symptoms, which helps drug users under-

standing the effect crystal meth has on the body and what to expect from the withdrawal process, which usually involves physical withdrawal and mood swings.

"Sometimes it takes up to two months to clear the drug from the system," Mendez said. "If necessary, we'll consider whether they also need medication."

The program requires complete abstinence from drug and alcohol use.

"We feel that alcohol opens the way to other things," Mendez said. "They may say, 'I don't have problems with alcohol,' but eventually the martinis or whatever they are will allow them to reach their drug of choice."

He said giving up old patterns revolving around crystal meth use clears the way to establish new patterns.

"The biggest hurdles for my clients is that they need to give up their lifestyle," Mendez said. "They need to give up the bars and their friends and establish a new support system. We try to motivate them to change, but it has to come from the client."

Brent said the decision to quit didn't end his problems with the drug. He continued to hallucinate for months and had trouble relating to others until he could learn to function again without crystal meth.

"It's taken two years to be able to say that when I see people high, I don't want to be with them anymore," Brent said. "I see people I used to hang out with and partied with and who look worse and worse."

Brent said he still suffers physical and

psychological effects from crystal use, and continuing connections with his memories have caused him to end one relationship.

"When I get behind a closed bedroom door, I still have a lot of fear, and it's made it very difficult to function normally," he said. "I try to have an exchange of passion, to feel caring and love. I'm trying to have sex and see the person I'm with, and I have flashbacks."

But Brent said his days of crystal meth use are behind him.

"I can't change the past, and going forward is a clean life for me," he said. "I know I can't pick up once, because if I do, it's going to be forever. And I don't want to go through that again."

Joe Crea and Christopher Seely contributed to this report.

## MORE INFO

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**Crystal Meth Anonymous group**  
<http://www.crystalmeth.org/>  
WEDNESDAY: 8:15 PM  
Montrose Counseling Center, Room 15

**Montrose Clinic**  
215 Westheimer  
713-830-3000  
[admin@montrosecclinic.org](mailto:admin@montrosecclinic.org)

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Issue 1201

## editorial

# 'L' is for invisible

Showtime's new show, 'The L Word,' promises lesbians a 'Queer as Folk' of our own. But the real target audience is heterosexual men.

By WINNIE McCROY

# W

WHEN I FIRST HEARD rumors that Showtime was developing a "Queer as Folk"-type program for lesbians, I was curious to see the end product. So I wel-

comed the invitation to attend an opening party for "The L Word," scheduled to air in January, at a restaurant in Times Square last week.

Media and show-business types milled around — as they do at such events — drinking ice-blue martinis and interviewing cast members. Among the actors were some stars and film veterans, including Jennifer ("Flashdance") Beals, Leisha Hailey, Mia Kirshner, Karina Lombard, Katherine Moenning and Pam ("Foxy Brown") Grier.

All good-looking, straight-looking women.

As the cast members played to the photographers, shaking back their long tresses and flashing a little leg, I began to wonder exactly which ones were supposed to be playing the lesbians on the show.

At lunch, I was seated next to a couple of butch lesbians from a cable-access program, "Dyke TV," when Showtime began rolling clips from the upcoming first season.

But while the heterosexual sex scenes came close to soft-core, the lesbians were limited to kisses and panty shots.

And all the lesbian characters on "The L Word" are tall, beautiful and pretty much all femme.

Don't get me wrong: I know a lot of beautiful lesbians who fit into this mold. But even when I get together with my Upper West Side, Columbia Prep-spawned ultra-femme friends, there are still always a roughly equal number of cute butches.

In fact, the only cast member who looked like she could even pass as a lesbian (not even a "real" lesbian, but a Gina Gershon-dream-ideal-lesbian-type lesbian) was Katherine Moenning, who plays "Shane," the requisite scruffy-headed bad girl.

WAS SHE SUPPOSED TO BE THE BUTCH? As luck had it, she was sitting at the table

adjacent to mine, so I tapped her on the shoulder and asked her that very question.

"My character's not very butch," she replied.

"She sure isn't," I readily agreed and explained our confusion.

Moenning talked for awhile about our complaint that "real-looking" lesbians had been omitted from the show.

I kept referring back to the classic butch/femme balance so prevalent (for better or worse) in contemporary lesbian circles. She kept countering, "It's TV, not reality, and sex sells. It doesn't try to represent the reality of every lesbian, just this group of friends."

She hinted at future plot twists in which the Pam Grier character hooks up with a drag king, and encouraged me to give it a chance. I agreed, however uneasily, with a nagging feeling that again real lesbians had been kicked to the curb in favor of the fantasy lesbians of straight men's porn.

My suspicions were confirmed several days later, when I came across comments made by Gary Levine, Showtime's executive vice president of original programming, in a Daily News TV column.

"Lesbian sex, girl-on-girl, is a whole cottage industry for heterosexual men," Levine told Daily News Editor Richard Huff, noting the popularity of talk shock jock Howard Stern's frequent references to lesbians.

So we're a cottage industry now, neatly and conveniently packaged for heterosexual men.

Of course TV executives are generally scumbags, whoring themselves for ratings, but that only slightly tempered Levine's extremely offensive sound bite.

I laughed when I heard the show described as "something quite bold, something unexpected" by creator Ilene Chaiken. I guess if you consider that lesbians are otherwise invisible, even fake lesbians come across as "quite bold."

BUT I WAS TRULY DISGUSTED WHEN I read comments by Scott Seomin, enter-

tainment media director at the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, about the show's promise as a tool for consciousness-raising.

"If they pull them in and they get hooked on the titillation factor, that straight male is going to learn about the lives of lesbians," Seomin told the Daily News, adding, "The straight men are going to sexualize beautiful lesbians anyway. Let's educate them along the way."

What?! The nation's leading voice for promoting realistic and positive images of gay men and lesbians in the media is giving the thumbs-up to the idea of lesbians as jack-off fodder for straight men?

Not to mention that a look into the fake lives of a bunch of ersatz lesbians probably isn't going to be the least bit real or insightful or educational to the problems real lesbians face. I'll hold my breath waiting for story lines dealing with affordable health care, domestic partnerships and having children.

GLAAD gave a similar high sign to the new ABC sitcom, "It's All Relative," which pits a desexualized, namby-pamby gay couple against an equally stereotypical Irish-Catholic working class couple, a la "La Cage Aux Folles." (The show's gay couple was also featured on an Advocate cover hailing the show as a breakthrough.)

Does any programming with gay characters, no matter how misleading, stereotypical or one-dimensional, score high marks with GLAAD and the Advocate? Are they waiting for Archie Bunker to settle into his armchair pulpit before they speak up? Or is it the money and clout of big networks like Showtime and ABC that keep them smiling and scraping like gay Uncle Toms?

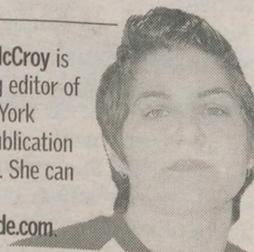
I also blame some of our brethren in the gay media, who feature actresses playing lesbians on mainstream TV shows as though they were heroes. Do we even care about their opinions about our lives? Are we supposed to be grateful for these miserable crumbs?

We should challenge ourselves to demand more from those who claim to be speaking for us. If lesbians have to choose between remaining invisible to the mainstream, or being represented by Showtime's clipped and plucked "lesbians," I choose invisibility.

After all, real lesbians will still remain invisible — at least until our lives become more than a marketing tool or cottage industry or pud fodder for Joe Sixpack.

Is it so much to ask that a TV show purportedly dedicated to showing our lives actually portray real multi-faceted, inherently dramatic, women-for-women reality?

@ Winnie McCroy is managing editor of the New York Blade, a sister publication of Houston Voice. She can be reached at [wmccroy@nyblade.com](mailto:wmccroy@nyblade.com).



**viewpoint** PAULA MARTINAC



When it comes to religious role models, Gene Robinson is more like MLK, Gandhi or even Jesus than he is our opponents.

# Listening to whose God?

**EPISCOPAL BISHOP-ELECT GENE ROBINSON'S** devout response to those pressuring him to step down has been both powerful and instructive, particularly to those of us who aren't religious.

Although a lot of gay people, myself included, have felt oppressed or alienated by organized religion, Robinson's deep commitment to his vocation reminds us that there are many queers who feel the pull of religious faith just as strongly as straight believers do.

Repeatedly since Anglican leaders met for an emergency session on the "homosexual crisis" in their church, Robinson has made clear that he is simply carrying out God's wishes. "I believe with my whole heart that it is God's will," Robinson has said of his election as bishop. "God has brought me this far. I cannot imagine that God would ask me to stop now."

If the spiritual head of the Anglican Church, the archbishop of Canterbury himself, asked Robinson to resign his post, "I would pray about it," Robinson responded. "This is not our church to win or lose," Robinson further pointed out. "It's God's church."

Personally, I don't have anything close to Robinson's kind of relationship with God; my faith is fuzzy and doesn't occupy a

prominent place in my life. Raised Catholic, I left the church when I was in college because of its archaic positions on reproductive rights, homosexuality, the ordination of women, and the marriage of priests. Since official Catholic doctrine hasn't changed a whit in almost 30 years, I've had no reason to go back.

But I'm not just critical of Catholicism and other mainstream religions. I've also publicly questioned the actions of gay religious leaders and thinkers who sometimes seem as intractable and evangelical as the antigay Christian right. For example, when the Rev. Mel White and his life partner moved across the street from Rev. Jerry Falwell to try to persuade him to stop publicly reviling homosexuality.

ROBINSON, HOWEVER, STRIKES ME AS different. His steadfastness reminds me of other holy people — Moses, Joan of Arc, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and even Jesus himself — who stood their ground because they believed their God was guiding them on a mission.

The question is, of course, who gets to say whose "mission" is right and just? A recent feature story from the BBC cleverly demonstrated the two distinct ways that



the Bible has been interpreted on the subject of homosexuality, by juxtaposing the opposing viewpoints on various passages.

"Both sides," the BBC noted, "hold their views sincerely and after much study. So how can their views be so contradictory?"

In Robinson's case, there are pro-gay supporters like Episcopal Bishop Clifton Daniel of North Carolina, who responded to some parishioners' concerns about the gay bishop's election by observing that "the holy spirit always pulls the church into the future." Anglicans, Daniel and others have pointed out, also once debated whether people of color should be admitted to the church or women should be ordained as priests. Church doctrine, they say, should evolve to meet the concerns and needs of a changing world.

BUT ON THE OTHER HAND ARE THE many clerics and church members who believe just as strongly that God spoke to us through the Bible and in it unmistakably condemned homosexuality; not just for people thousands of years ago, but forever.

Clearly, "God" speaks to many different people in many different ways, and sometimes with conflicting messages. And

though some may see this as the devil's work, it's a conundrum at the root of some of history's greatest struggles; that is, while people's experience of God is subjective, they may fiercely believe that their specific take on God is objective reality.

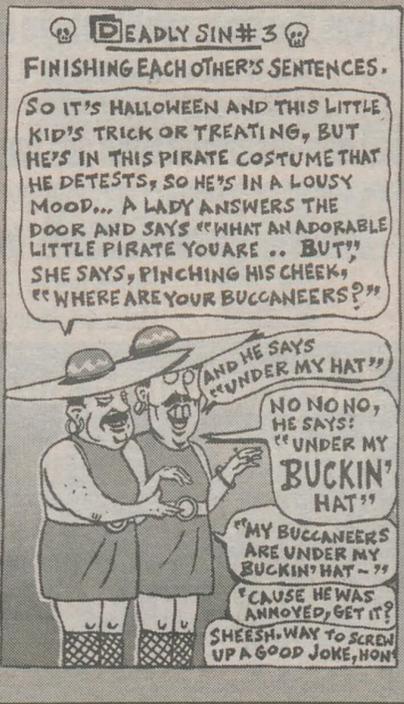
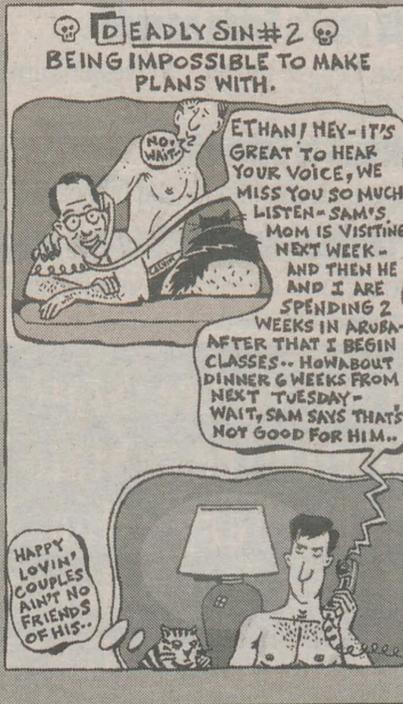
As a young parochial school student, for example, I was taught that our church was the "true" one and that anyone not baptized Roman Catholic wouldn't be saved — end of story. It's not a huge leap from this sort of "we own God" thinking to the religious wars in Northern Ireland, Yugoslavia and the Middle East.

The challenge facing Bishop-elect Robinson — and anyone who hears a different message from God — may be best encapsulated by an invocation by Mother Teresa, who was recently beatified by the pope.

"People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered; forgive them anyway," she said. "You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God; it was never between you and them anyway."

**@** Paula Martinac is an author and syndicated writer and can be reached at [PMcolumn@aol.com](mailto:PMcolumn@aol.com).

## Ethan Encore



DEADLY SINS

There are words some candidates just won't say...

"GAY"

OutSmart Magazine asked candidates where they stood on our issues... Bill White & Orlando Sanchez wouldn't say "gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender" or "HIV/AIDS" \*OutSmartMagazine, October 2003 (Page 50)

WHO DO YOU TRUST?

"Sylvester is right on the issues that I care about: public health, gay rights; and he's been a champion for those in the legislature. He was one of the two Democrats on the Appropriations Committee and some of our public health funding would have been worse if he hadn't been there." - Katy Caldwell

"Rep. Turner has a longstanding and public record of support for our community and concerns. From being the only candidate in his year's Pride parade to his support for the James Byrd Hate Crimes Act, he is a vocal and visible ally." - Dr. Deb Osterman

"While it is obvious from his educational and professional background and experience that Sylvester Turner is very qualified to be mayor. I know as a transgender activist that whenever I was lobbying in Austin on transgender, GLBT or HIV/AIDS issues, Sylvester was always open, always helpful and always giving guidance." - Phyllis Frye

Sylvester was the only candidate in this year's Pride parade.

Bill White's excuse is the Urban League dinner. Sylvester Turner attended both the dinner and parade. Orlando Sanchez, absent as usual.

Hate crimes, fighting extremist groups and non-discrimination are important to Sylvester.

Bill White says the LGBT community's "top three" priorities are "transportation, neighborhoods and billboards." Orlando Sanchez, absent as usual.

Sylvester increased funds for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program in Texas' budget.

Bill White will count focus on federal assistance, under a George W. Bush administration. Orlando Sanchez, absent as usual.

OUR FRIENDS SUPPORT SYLVESTER Turner for Mayor

- Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee State Rep. Harold Dutton
State Sen. John Whitmire State Rep. Al Edwards
State Rep. Scott Hochberg Hon. David Minberg
State Rep. Dora Olivo Hon. Sue Schechter
State Rep. Kevin Bailey Hon. Ken Yarbrough

# on the record



*"Imagine Queer Eye: Chattanooga. ... One of the things that makes our show work is that every new straight guy has a different story. That could only be enhanced by going to different parts of the country."*

**Ted Allen**, food and wine expert on Bravo's "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," on changes to the show under consideration as the Fab Five negotiated as a group, a la "Friends," for new, more lucrative contracts (Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 24)

*"The argument in the ACLU brief is a direct assault on the institution of marriage and also various criminal laws that protect children from sexual exploitation by adults."*

Kansas Attorney General Phil Kline, on a case involving an 18-year-old developmentally disabled

male who was sentenced to more than 17 years in prison for having sex with a 14-year-old male; if either teen had been female, the maximum jail time would have been one year (Associated Press, Sept. 15)

*"Jeers to Barbara Walters. Interviewing Macaulay Culkin, who plays a gay, drug-abusing murderer and mutilator in his latest movie ['Party Monster'], Walters asked, 'Are you concerned that people may think you're gay?' No word on whether Mac is worried about the murder and mutilation part."*

"Cheers and Jeers" column (TV Guide, Oct. 4)



*"The reason we're talking about a constitutional amendment is because, but for a constitutional amendment, there is a great fear out there — a legitimate fear — that the Constitution will be amended without us. It's called a court decision."*

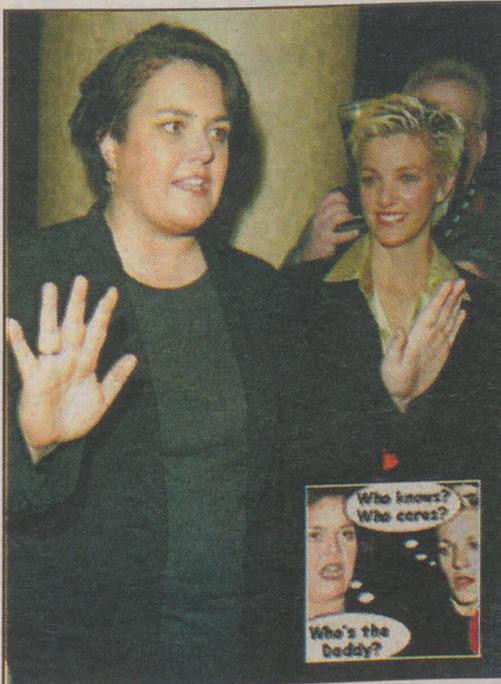
Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), at a news conference announcing his support for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibiting legal recognition of gay marriages (Washington Times, Sept. 18)

*"Homosexuality is a method by which there is some threat to society because of the disease it promotes. We cut men's life short because they cause AIDS and become more susceptible to pneumonia. I would raise the concern that homosexuality is not good in that it is a threat to the overall health of the society as a whole."*

Karen Testerman, nominated by N.H. Gov. Craig Benson (R) to the state's Commission on the Status of Women (Associated Press, Sept. 18)

*"If 10 percent of men are gay, then it's a reasonable assumption that 10 percent of priests and 10 percent of bishops are gay, but it is what you do about it. If they are living a celibate life, then God bless the men."*

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, archbishop of Glasgow, Scotland, on homosexuality (Times of London, Oct. 1)



*"Mr. (?) and Mrs. (?) Rosie O'Donnell."*

A T-shirt (inset) depicting Rosie O'Donnell and her partner Kelli O'Donnell, sold at a recent College Republicans convention in Washington, D.C., and later criticized by Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry (365gay.com, Sept. 25)

*"If you view lesbian and gay citizens as inseparable from all American citizens, then the Republican Party has done more to improve the lives of gays and lesbians materially, irrespective of sexual orientation, by providing tax cuts and benefits, jobs, security from foreign threats, etc."*

Christopher Gilbertson, 43, vice chair of Log Cabin Republicans of California, on why Republicans have done more for gays (Orange County Weekly, Oct. 2)

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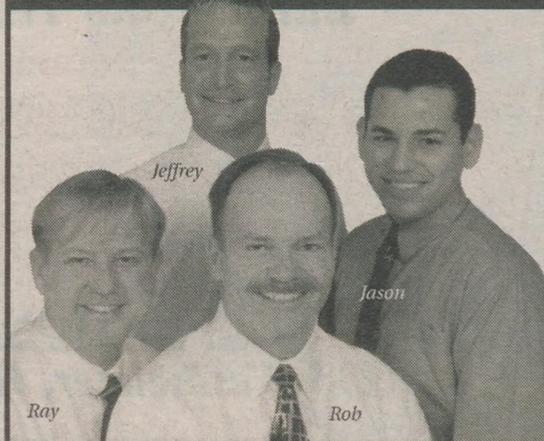
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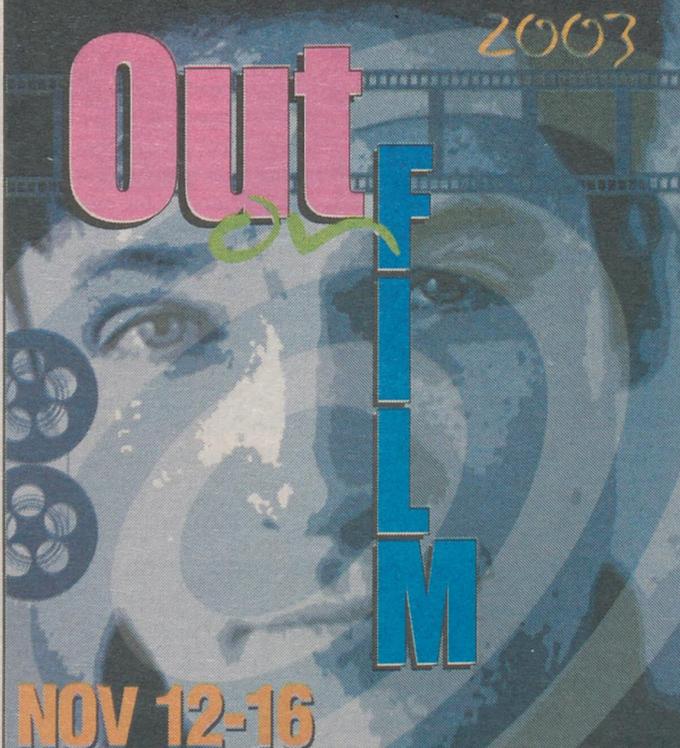
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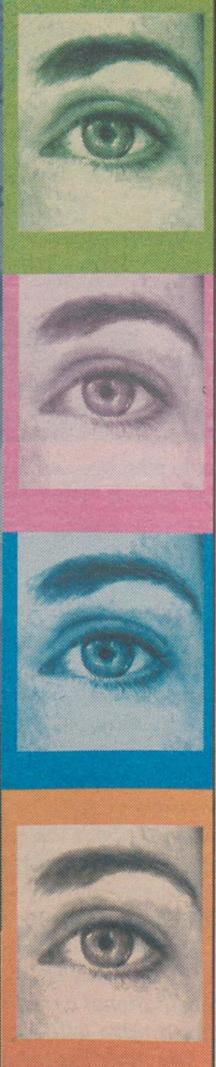


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# Out on the Bayou

HOUSTON VOICE  
OCTOBER 31, 2003  
PAGE 15

## All in the 'noodle'

New gay mag targets Asian American men

By MARK REILLEY

**I**F BOOKSTORES WERE GAY BARS AND MAGAZINES WERE men, "Out" would be the stylish guy glancing in the mirror and gushing about Jason Priestly's new goatee.

"The Advocate" would hold court in the corner, adjusting his glasses and pontificating about the safety of gay inmates in today's prison system. "XY" would dance on the box, flashing his pierced navel and tattoos.

And walking in the door would be a new guy on the rack named "noodle." He's only been in town for a year — with just five quarterly issues. But he's already catching the fickle eye of the young, upscale crowd.

Noodle looks a lot like those other gay men's magazines. Flip through its pages to find the requisite shirtless (and occasionally pantless) waifs, the bitchy advice columnist and the avant-garde film reviews.

But upon closer examination, there is one major difference: This magazine is written by and for gay Asian-American men.

Last year, in the face of various potential roadblocks and a chilly economic environment, the magazine's 31-year-old publisher, Max Lau, forged ahead with \$20,000 and the mission to create noodle and, "showcase the talents of the [gay Asian] community and bring out the issues, good and bad."

It's hard to launch a new magazine and even harder when it exists in a niche — just ask Oprah or Martha Stewart.

Asian/Pacific Islanders may be the fastest-growing group in the United States, but many A/PI immigrants don't speak English as their primary language. So instead of English magazines, they usually prefer native-language or broadcast media.

Plus, homosexuality is not necessarily embraced with open arms in A/PI cultures so, despite the large population and its relative affluence, advertising contracts are difficult to land.

Lau, whose parents are Chinese, says he wanted the magazine to be relevant to the Asian/Pacific Islander audience — a community that, according to Managing Editor Chris Bucoy Brown, "has been ignored or 'tokenized' by the prevalent queer media or objectified in photo books or porn mags."

WITH CIRCULATION AROUND 10,000, NOODLE BLENDS CEREBRAL THINK-pieces with eye-catching photo spreads targeted at a 20- to 30-something demographic. The first issues covered topics ranging from mixed-race relationships to the impact of hepatitis and Sept. 11's effect on immigrants.

"Other magazines may run a story on Stephen Funk, the gay Marine who became a conscientious objector, but as is the journalistic tendency to report in a color-blind fashion, no one asked about (or at least printed) his story as an Asian American," Bucoy Brown explains.

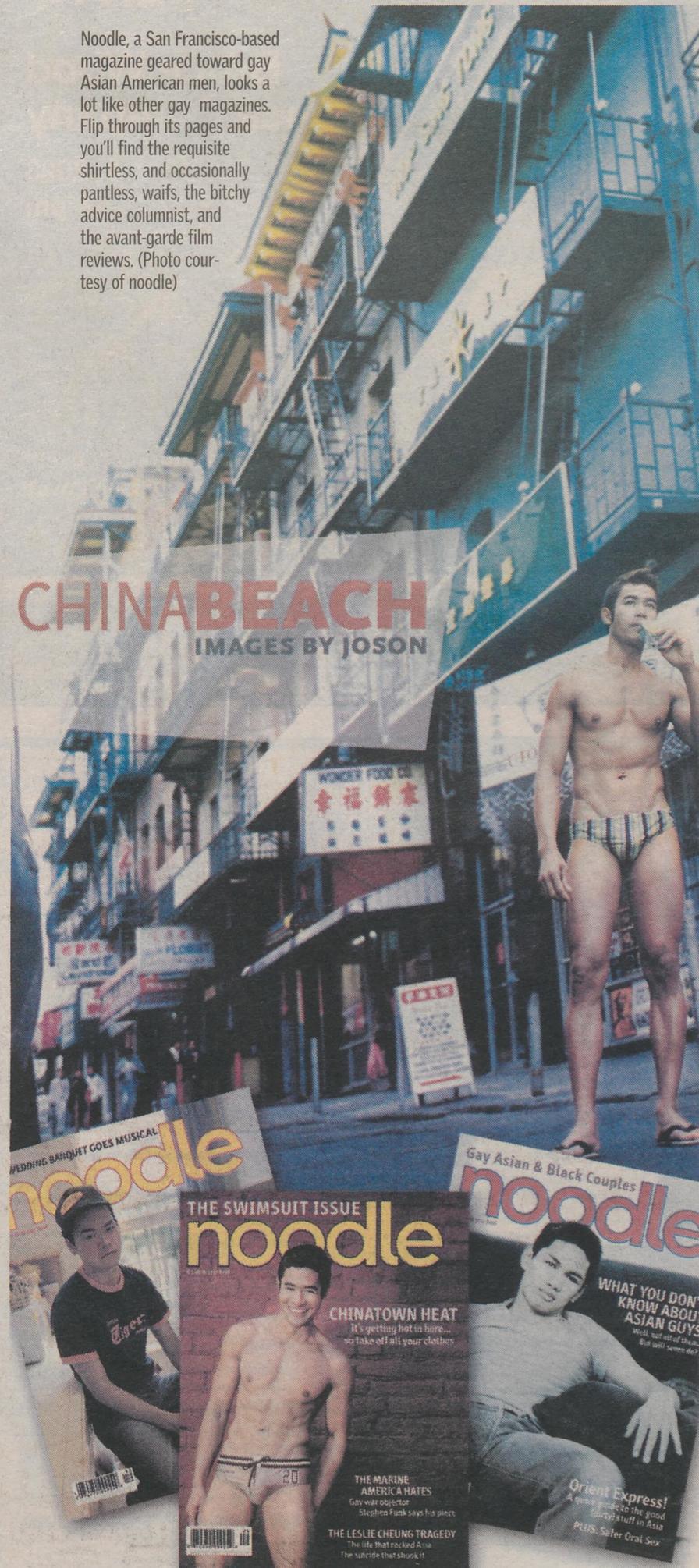
Not all noodle articles are focused completely on the A/PI experience. In one issue, there's a profile of a drug dealer, a look at athletes competing in the Gay Games and a puff piece about Destiny's Child Kelly Rowland.

Still, the intent of the magazine is to embrace — even celebrate — the diversity of Asian culture and to "reflect the reality of our gay urban centers in the West Village, in WeHo, in the Castro, in Hillcrest, in Dupont Circle," editors there say.

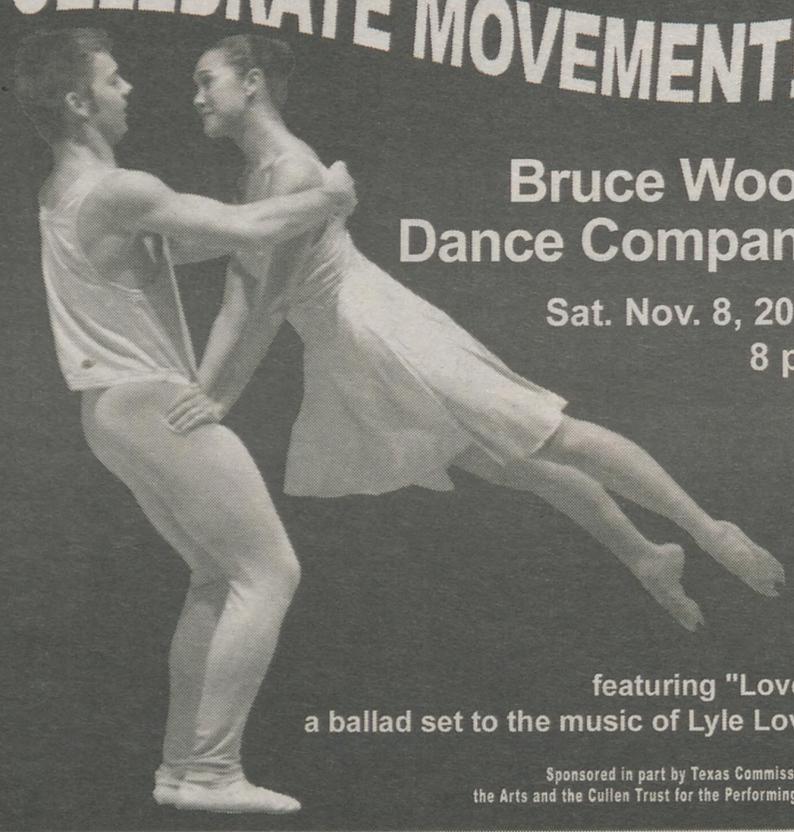
Please see GAY ASIANS on Page 21

Noodle, a San Francisco-based magazine geared toward gay Asian American men, looks a lot like other gay magazines. Flip through its pages and you'll find the requisite shirtless, and occasionally pantless, waifs, the bitchy advice columnist, and the avant-garde film reviews. (Photo courtesy of noodle)

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IMAGES BY JOSON



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**Jolanda Jones**, a native Houstonian, was raised in a single family household and survived a childhood which led many in her family to welfare, prison and death. Jolanda won four U.S. track championships and a Rhodes Scholar nomination. Jolanda is now a lawyer and community activist who helped shut down the HPD Crime Lab, gives life skills seminars to at-risk youth and under-educated adults, provides pro bono legal work and works with communities to resolve their problems.



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- al flooding del control
- para construir seguro y limpie las vecindades
- para proporcionar servicios de la ciudad de la calidad a cada uno

**Jolanda Jones**, natural Houstonian, fue levantado en una sola casa del padre y sobrevivió una niñez que condujo muchos en su familia al bienestar, a la prisión y a la muerte. Jolanda ganó cuatro campeonatos de la pista de los E.E.U.U. y un nombramiento del estudio de Rhodes. Jolanda ahora es abogada y una activista de la comunidad que ayudó cerrar el laboratorio del crimen de HPD; da seminarios de las habilidades de la vida en la juventud del riesgo y a los adultos debajo-educados; proporciona el trabajo legal del favorable bono y trabaja con las comunidades para resolver sus problemas.

**www.jolandajonesforhoustoncitycouncil.com**  
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## music RICH ARENSCHIEDT

Renowned local opera company finds rousing success with 'Tosca,' season opener bodes well for energetic year.

## Operatic religious experience

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA BRINGS Puccini's "Tosca" to Houston Wortham Theater Center in a brilliant season opener. This nearly perennial Puccini favorite is one of his most exciting works.

Forget those dreary operatic yawnings, "Tosca" is a 19th Century version of "Italy's Most Wanted" — fast paced, gutsy and intense. Opera buffs know that Puccini operas are packed with drama, but only in "Tosca" do characters chase each other around the living room wielding steak knives.

Composed in 1900, "Tosca" is a departure for Puccini. Its elements focus on raw emotions rather than events that take place over which the characters have no control. In "Tosca," the villains are much more tangible, and the action is much more sexual and violent.

Betrayal is at the heart of this work. Even the minor players are incapable of telling the truth.

From the onset, suspicion reigns as Tosca (Maria Guleghina) accuses her lover Cavaradossi (Alfredo Portilla) of flagrantly coveting another woman. Cavaradossi assures Tosca there is no other amor but her.

Suddenly, an escaped prisoner, Angelotti (Nikolay Didenko) appears on the doorstep followed by Chief of Police Baron Scarpia, (Franz Grundheber). The prisoner narrowly escapes.

In a whirlwind, Scarpia tortures the lover to find the prisoner. The prisoner is betrayed by the heroine, who subsequently releases information to the villain and is then herself betrayed by the villain. She eventually hops off a castle parapet so the villain cannot exact retribution upon her.

PUCCHINI PACKS AN ABUNDANCE of action into two and a half hours, the equivalent of an operatic novella.

In real time, "Tosca" takes place within a single day. As a result, every scene sizzles with immediacy. In this production, the tension is real — a rare feat, especially with an operatic warhorse like this one.

The cast, headed by Russian sensation Maria Guleghina has all the "chops" necessary to bring Puccini's most intense work to life.

Guleghina triumphs in this production. "Tosca" is full of declamatory excess, something well within this soprano's ability. Even though her character spends three quarters of this production mad as a hungry Siberian bear, there are poignant moments where Guleghina exhibits complete mastery of the role's subtlety.

Even when Wortham audience cowpokes interrupted her "Vissi d'arte" with applause in mid-aria (mistaking a musical pause for a conclusion), she maintained



International treasure **Maria Guleghina** plays the title role in Houston Grand Opera's rousing season opener 'Tosca,' now playing at Wortham Theatre through Nov. 9.

vocal and emotional composure until the last measure.

THE ASPECT THAT MAKES THIS production memorable is the force with which the characters are realized. Many audiences have seen "Tosca" more than once, so the trick is to make them believe it on subsequent viewings.

In this production, the venom that is traded between Tosca and the smarmy Baron Scarpia is so real that they should hand out snakebite antidote with each program.

Every time Scarpia touches Tosca, she repels in horror. Their fight scenes, usually operatically as exciting as chewing gum, are terrific.

People move, run and hurl one another about, just as they might in real life. There's no one saying, "Don't hurt the Diva! Don't hurt the Diva!" Instead, a woman who happens to be an international vocal treasure wears a sumptuously beaded 20-pound gown and hauls ass across the stage simultaneously kicking butt and taking names.

Scarpia is just loathsome. His Bela Lagosi hairdo and menacing stage presence is perfect. Scarpia is the best Puccini villain, and bass-baritone Grundheber meets the challenge dramatically and vocally.

Mexican tenor Alfredo Portilla and HGO studio member Nikolay Didenko both make excellent HGO debuts rounding out a terrific cast. The show is wonderfully directed in a tightly led performance by Italian conductor Antonello Allemandi.

### **i** MORE INFO

HGO's 'Tosca'  
Through Nov. 9  
Wortham Theater  
500 Texas St.  
713-228-OPERA

## television BRIAN MOYLAN



New all-gay episode of 'South Park' begs question: what would TV-land be if everyone on the air was queer?



The boys of 'South Park' get their gay on in last week's season premiere episode. (Photo courtesy Comedy Central)

# Fairy dusting the TV

BETWEEN SADAAM HUSSEIN AND Satan as lovers, gay school teacher Mr. Garrison and of course, Big Gay Al, animated series "South Park" is always pretty gay — as in homosexual, not gay like when Cartman says, "You guys are so gay."

The show really outdid itself last week, when it began a string of new episodes with a half-hour where being gay was the new cool thing in town.

Always with its cartoon finger on the pulse of pop culture, the show picked up on the gay vibe that has swept the country since the historic summer of 2003. "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" became a runaway success, it became legal in all 50 states to have same-sex sex, and Canadian gays got the right to marry.

On the episode, all the "South Park" townsfolk tried to outdo each other and be the "gayest." Mr. Garrison retorted, "If straight people are gonna steal our culture, then us real gays are just gonna have to step it up a notch!"

MR. GARRISON MAY HAVE SOMETHING there. TV Guide reports ABC's sitcom "Less Than Perfect" cast Joanna Kerns ("Growing Pains") and Valerie Harper ("Rhoda," "Valerie's Family") as the lesbian moms of the character played by Andy Dick.

The stunt casting is reminiscent of when Sally Struthers and Debbie Allen played lesbian moms on Lifetime's "The Division."

Apparently, the show tried to get Tyne Daly and Sharon Gless, who played "Cagney and Lacey," for the roles, but Daly passed.

These developments just mean that being gay is the new cool thing in TV-land, and with a little sprinkling of fairy dust, soon every show on the air is going gay, even reruns.

On "Judging Amy," guest star Rosie O'Donnell would reprise her role as a stern judge while trying to woo Daly's Maxine for behind-the-bench visits.

On "Tarzan," Jane would leave the title character for the jungle man's aunt (the lovely Lucy Lawless) and the heartbroken Tarzan (ex-underwear model Travis Fimmel) will go skulking off to drag a television columnist back to his hut.

As for "Trading Spaces,"... well, there is nothing that anyone could do to make this show any gayer, especially after a recent episode featuring a gay couple and their lesbian neighbors and an impromptu visit by a Divine-esque drag queen.

BUT IF HOT CARPENTER TY Pennington wanted to work with power tools shirtless like he's working the room at a circuit party, there are more than a few people who wouldn't complain — probably even some of the designers.

Even reruns of "The Brady Bunch" would have to be revamped. Mike (gay actor Robert Reed) and Carol (Florence Henderson) would finally tell the kids that they got married to be each other's beards. They would explain the reason that Alice (Ann B. Davis) lives in the house is because she's shackin' up with Mrs. Brady, and that Sam the Butcher is really Mike's leather-loving boyfriend.

AS "SOUTH PARK" DEMONSTRATED, cartoons wouldn't be spared either. The subtext of the relationships between Dr. Quest and Johnny Quest with their "companions" Race Bannon and (the unpolitically-correct named) Hadji would come to the fore.

Gay viewers knew what's going on for years. Finally, it's cool to let everyone else in on the joke too. Thank you, "South Park," for making gay cool again.

### **i** MORE INFO

'South Park'  
Wednesdays at 9 p.m.  
Comedy Central

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## appts

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[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

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## theater J.B. BLACK

Comic trio wows audiences in side-splitting drag musical at venerable local gay theater.

### Pulling out all 'The Stops'

THESE LADIES ARE NO DRAG. MEET Ginny, Rose and Euglena, the terrific — and all-male — trio of "The Stops," a devilishly-delicious treat now playing at Houston's Theatre New West.

From beginning to end, "The Stops" is non-stop fun. The comedy is priceless and the considerable talent on display is flawless.

"The Stops" revolves around the trio from NALOG, the North American Lady Organists' Guild. The three ladies originally met during a trip to Las Vegas to see their mentor, church organist and flamboyant composer Dale Meadows.

When Dale is fired from his church for being gay — confesses Rose, "A gay male organist? Who knew?" — the trio embarks on a cross-country crusade to enlighten the public to Dale's plight and defend his not-so-closeted compositions.

Ginny (brilliantly played by Chris Pool) is the sassy Southern Baptist from Georgia. She has affection for good wine, good stories and more good wine. She also has a talent for creating church potluck desserts involving Oreos and alcohol.

Grinning magnificently beneath her blonde locks, she's always eager to share the tale of her "star-baby's" conception, saying proudly, "I don't remember much from that night, but I do remember what I was wearing."

WITH HER ROSE-COLORED GLASSES, shimmering pant suit and black gloves, Jewish/Catholic/Unitarian Rose (a winning Robert Leeds) brings a "Golden Girl"-like sensibility to the ensemble. Routinely admonishing others to "stick to the script," she's not above pausing to share the latest round of un-PC religious jokes.

Rose succinctly sums up the group by noting, "Jerry Falwell would like to have us killed."

Unlike her fellow singers, red headed Nazarene Euglena (Michael Harren, who also serves as the production's director/musical director) is torn between defending Dale and her conflicting views on homosexuality. She defends her lone position by saying, "We don't dislike homosexuals, we just dislike all the things they do."

The demure yet naïve singer fails to grasp the hidden meaning behind such Dale-composed numbers as "Fairies in My Foyer."

This is a production with three comedic powerhouse performances. Like their characters, the hugely talented and energetic actors are in sweet harmony. No one performance threatens to overshadow the others. Instead, all three rise to equal heavenly heights.

In addition, the performers have beautiful voices. This is especially impressive



Robert Leeds (left), Michael Harren and Chris Pool are fabulous as a trio of religious singers that pack more fun into two minutes that most shows do in two hours in 'The Stops.'

for male performers facing the challenge of singing as female characters. All three have extensive musical theater experience to their credits, and it shows.

"The Stops" also frequently allows Pool, Leeds and Harren to exercise their expert improvisational comedy skills. Their wit — both individually and collectively — is quick and sharp.

At the start of the second act, the NALOG trio improvises answers to several written questions from the audience. Given the question "What is the secret to eternal life?," Leeds quickly improvised, "That's simple. Don't die!"

It's clear that Pool, Leeds and Harren are having an all-out blast as Ginny, Rose and Euglena. Their fun is highly contagious.

ERIC LANE BARNES CREATED THE music and lyrics for "The Stops." Audiences are treated to inspired numbers such as "A Bossa Nova for Jehovah" and "Get a Faith Lift."

There's also "But You Are, Blanche," a wickedly funny examination of gay sensibilities played against the campiness of "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?"

Audience members — especially women — should also relish Barnes' ingenious answer to where true hell on earth resides.

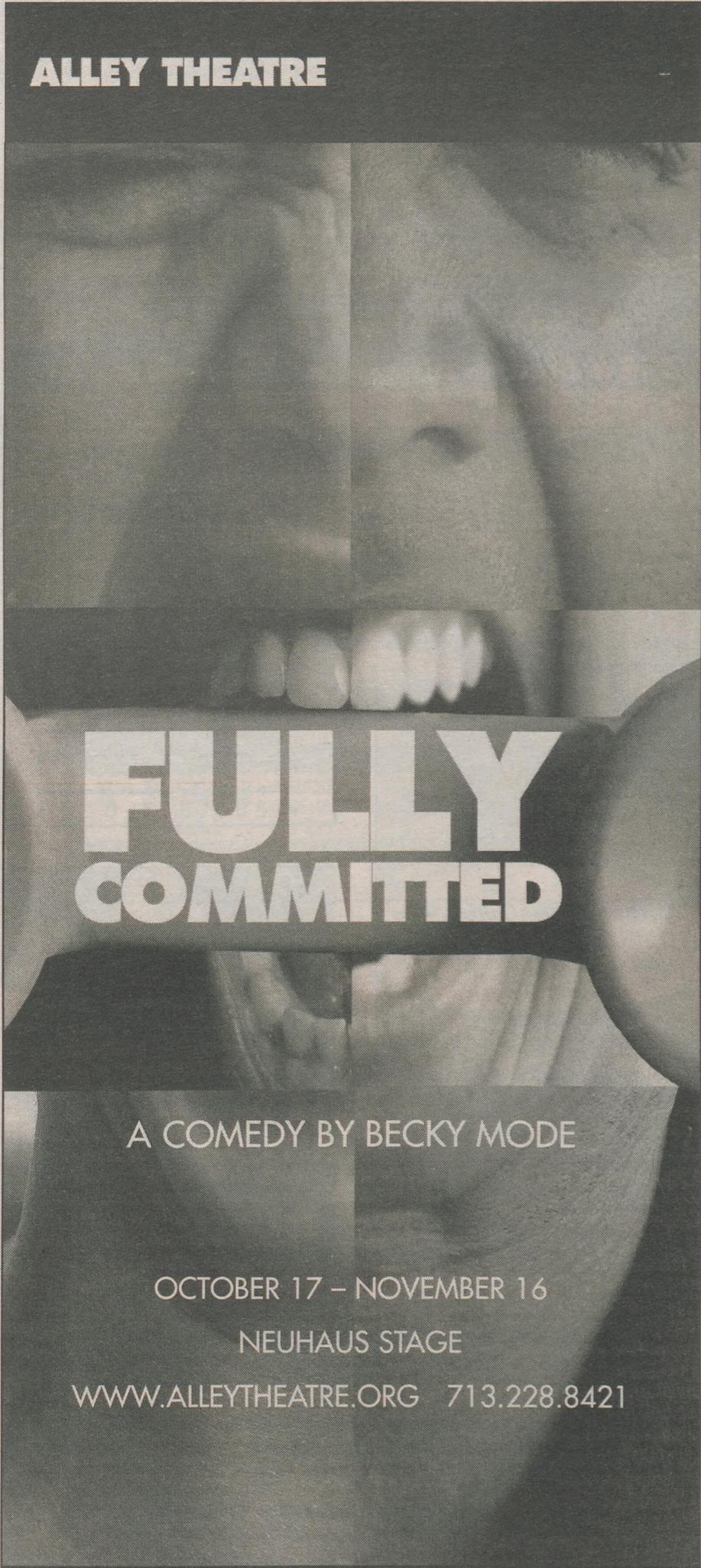
Credit should also be given to skilled choreographers Nita Lindley and Frank York. The pair created the clever dance routines that Pool, Leeds and Harren perform.

"The Stops" packs more laughs and talent into two minutes than most shows pack into two hours. Who knew spending a Saturday night with a bunch of church ladies could be so much fun?

#### MORE INFO

'The Stops'  
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Lively interiors and festive music doesn't compensate for mediocre food, drinks at much-hyped neighborhood Mexican cafe.

## Prepared for a fiesta

CABO IS READY TO PARTY. BRIGHT colors, upbeat music and plenty of food and drink create a festive atmosphere. Unfortunately for this Mix-Mex restaurant, the celebration doesn't live up to the hype.

Open in the location vacated by the Crossroads Market Bookstore & Café, Cabo Montrose offers a Mexican style menu with South and Central American influences, along with the occasional Southwestern touch.

A good value happy hour Monday through Friday from 4 ñ 7 p.m. brings in the after-work crowd and gets the place hopping.

Bright yellow walls, red glitter banquette seats and chrome diamond plate counters give Cabo an upbeat and casual feel. Menus above the counter lean outward for easy reading, and televisions show anything from news to sports.

A sizable patio facing Westheimer Road offers additional seating and prime people watching. If you want to escape the loud, pumping dance music and thick cigarette smoke, then the patio is a welcome refuge.

UNLIKE MOST MEXICAN RESTAURANTS in town, chips and salsa are not complimentary. The guacamole and chips (\$4.25) is an acceptable alternative, but the guacamole is over-spiced with black pepper.

A request for a bowl of salsa to accompany the guac and chips baffled the trainee waiter. Eventually, he brought one to the table, but the \$1.25 charge for a small bowl seemed excessive.

The margaritas are unimpressive. Tasting like they're made from a mix and served in small, disposable plastic cups filled mostly with ice, they're far from being worth the \$5.50 price tag.

Possibly this standard price explains why the restaurant emptied once happy hour was over.

The shrimp quesadillas (\$6.25) are a better deal. A generous serving of shrimp fills the tortillas, along with just the right amount of cheese and an addictive cilantro sauce. Watch out for the hidden fresh jalapeno slices, which add considerable heat. Charred corn salsa on the side contrasts nicely, providing a hint of sweetness.

The grilled chicken taco (\$3.95) is a lackluster version of this classic. The chicken is shredded and tastes baked, not grilled. Better is the grilled fish taco (\$3.95). Chunks of tender white fish mingle with lettuce, tomato and that creamy cilantro sauce.

The chicken fajita salad (\$7.25) proves

disappointing. The salads are billed as a mix of romaine and iceberg lettuce, but the romaine is nowhere to be found. The occasional tiny piece of tomato and pepper plus a few shreds of carrot and cheese add little interest to the pale, past-its-best iceberg lettuce. The vigorous house balsamic vinaigrette is a pleasant surprise, doing its best to liven up the dish.

SERVICE AT CABO IS VARIABLE. AT dinner, the trainee waiter seemed lost. Food and drink were delivered late, and he had trouble answering questions about the menu. The supervising waiter never stepped in to help. But at a subsequent lunch visit, the service was quick and efficient.

Cabo is a quieter place at lunch. The loud dance music still fills the air, but a smaller crowd means less of a din. The air is decidedly less smoky at lunch time, but it's still a great place to go if you want to smoke during your meal, as most of the restaurant is a smoking section.

Overall, Cabo is a letdown. The food has its bright moments, but is sub-par for the most part. The festive atmosphere and the happy hour deals attract an appropriately eclectic cross-section of Montrose personalities.

The late hours and the cigar room add a different element. And the patio can't be beat for some of the best people watching in town.

Still, with all the great Mexican restaurants in the Montrose area, it's hard to understand why locals would choose to visit Cabo for their Tex-Mex fix.

Unless, of course, they've just got to have those delicious fish tacos.



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## out on the bayou

# Magazine for gay Asians asks readers to 'use your head'

GAY ASIANS, continued from Page 15

Village, in WeHo, in the Castro, in Hillcrest, in Dupont Circle," editors there say.

Some noodle readers fail to see the diversity. As one letter to the editor pointed out, "the diversity seems to disappear once the shirts come off."

It's true. Many of the photo spreads do feature the same smooth-chests and six-packs that grace the pages of most every other gay publication. In his published response, Lau insisted that future pictorials would not exclude any one type of Asian and Pacific Islander, and later issues of the magazine do show an ounce of flab here and an occasional non-hottie face there.

Curious to hear what gay Asians had to say about noodle, I took a stack of magazines to a happy hour hosted by Asians & Friends, a social group that seeks to increase understanding among gay Asians and non-Asians.

The crowd seemed to favor the Margaret Cho feature and the Swimsuit issue cover boys, but Asians & Friends member Boonloun suggested that even though the magazine prominently features Asians, he probably "wouldn't buy it just to support the community."

He said the pictures on the front might entice him to flip through it, but "it's really the content and the articles inside" that would get him to buy it.

His friend James agreed, saying that a magazine aimed at Asians is like a magazine aimed at gays.

"Some magazines think that just because they focus on a gay audience, gays will read them," James says.

As he skimmed the feature on the Gay Games, James guessed that the magazine would probably sell well in cities with large Asian populations like San Francisco. But he wasn't sure how it would do within the "conservative Asian community" further east.

JIMMY DINH, A STUDENT AT EL Camino Community College in Torrance, Calif., reads and occasionally provides illustrations for noodle. He believes that too many magazines pursue mass-market tastes by using the same styles of articles and models.

"The only [A/Pis] I see in the media are the ones that are typical in the minds of Americans: light skin with angled eyes," Dinh says. "When I pick up a copy of noodle, I am inspired by all the A/PI talents and characters. They come in all shapes and colors."

Throughout the magazine, Asian

Noodle founder Max Lau stands by the name, because he says in Chinese culture, strands of noodles symbolize long life.

and Pacific Island men of all types are pictured in the illustrations, ads and articles. They are also featured in "flavor of the month" photos and bios of available Asian bachelors.

Other sections include reader-written personal essays called "Slants" and humorous tongue-in-chic astrological "Fortune Cookies" based on the Chinese year of the cock, ram, stallion and so on.

Which brings up the magazine's naming conventions: Slants? Fortune Cookies? noodle? Some might consider the headings to be derogatory.

"Do Italians have a magazine called 'Pasta?'," one critic asks. "I don't appreciate it. It degrades our culture."

But Lau stands by the name, because he says in Chinese culture, strands of noodles symbolize long life.

None of the people at the Asians & Friends gathering seemed to appreciate the symbolism. Irena, a transsexual A/PI, said some people may understand it, but to her, the title "simplified the Asian community," by implying that all A/Pis have the same symbolic beliefs.

Bucoy Brown thinks the word "noodle" can also allude to the editorial content that "tries to be something that people would feed their brain — their noodle — with."

Indeed, on the magazine's Web site, [www.noodlemagazine.com](http://www.noodlemagazine.com), editors refer to it as "noodle — it's all in your head."

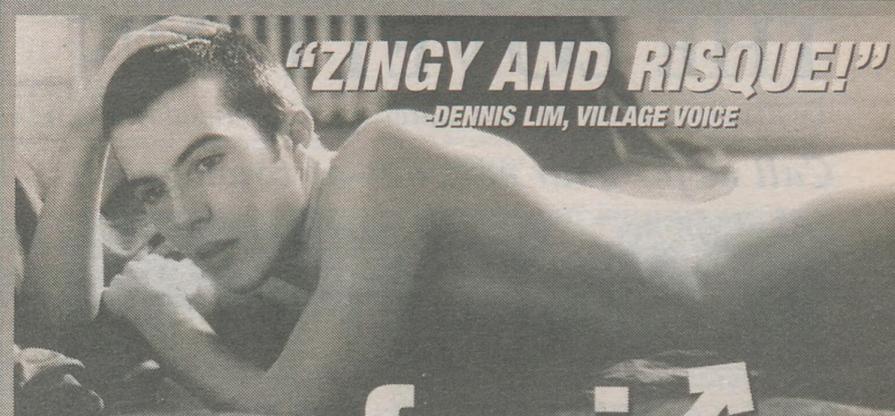
The name "helps shake the preconceptions of people who might assume we're a fetish magazine, or that we're a politically-correct-people-of-color journal, or whatever else they think a gay A/PI magazine is supposed to be," Lau says.

Despite the tough market and potential detractors, the magazine managed to land advertising contracts with Merrill Lynch, Hotel Nikko and HBO.

And with its respectable circulation, noodle's future appears to be anything but limp.

### MORE INFO

Noodle  
P.O. BOX 31028  
San Francisco, CA 94131-0028  
415-202-8524  
[www.noodlemagazine.com](http://www.noodlemagazine.com)



**"ZINGY AND RISQUE!"**  
-DENNIS LIM, VILLAGE VOICE

# confusion of genders

**"A FRISKY FRENCH ROMANCE... PASCAL GREGGORY GIVES A TERRIFIC PERFORMANCE!"**  
-GARY KRAMER, GAY CITY NEWS

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# community calendar

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## Gay Men Have Wonderful Relationships (if they know how)

Loving well brings the things we want most: comfort, companionship, fun, happiness, honesty, kindness, loyalty, mutual respect, satisfaction, security, sensuality, sexual fulfillment, understanding, warmth. These workshops will help you have these things.

### Finding the Right Partner, A workshop for single gay men

This workshop is designed to teach single gay men to have more successful, lasting, love relationships, and to help them avoid repeating old mistakes. It is also helpful to men who are beginning to date again.

### Loving and Being Loved Well, A workshop for gay couples

This workshop is excellent for enriching established relationships, for new couples who want to ensure the success of their relationships, and for couples who are considering breaking up.

Register for one of these weekend workshops which have helped thousands of gay men find and keep what they want in relationships. Although you will not be pressed into unpleasant or excessive self-disclosure, you will have the fun of meeting others who are taking positive steps toward attaining their dreams of loving and being loved. You'll be served lunch on Saturday and wine and cheese following the Sunday session.

All workshops are Saturday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm and Sunday 12:30 pm - 5:00 pm. Singles workshops are \$155 per person or \$290 if you bring a friend. Couples workshops are \$290. As space is limited, a deposit and reservations are required.

#### Single Men

December 13 & 14, 2003 or  
January 10 & 11, 2004  
\$155 each; \$290 for two

#### Gay Couples

December 6 & 7, 2003 or  
January 24 & 25, 2004  
\$290 per couple

For Reservations or More Information

**713-527-0000**  
Tony@HoustonTherapist.com

*houston*  
**Therapist** .com

## TONY CARROLL, LMSW-ACP

1006 Missouri Street, Houston, Texas 77006

### SATURDAY NOV. 1

All-Spanish Worship Service/Noche Espiritual 7 p.m. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2026 W. 11th. 713-861-9149.  
After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM. 1-4 a.m.  
Dignity mass. 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.  
Gay & Lesbian Breakfast Club. 9:30 a.m. 281-437-0636.  
Lambda Center. Alcoholics Anonymous. 11:30 a.m. Eye Opener Group. 8 p.m. Saturday Night Live, 9:30 p.m. Willing Ones Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.  
Montrose Soccer Club. 10 a.m. practice. Woodrow Wilson School, Fairview and Yupon. New players welcome, but beginners not currently being admitted. 713-862-9491. http://geocities.com/montrosesoccer. E-mail: montrosesoccer@yahoo.com.  
Q-Patrol. Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com  
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.  
Houston GLBT Community Center. Drop-in, noon-5 p.m. • CATS (Community Awareness for Transgender Support) board meeting, 2 p.m. 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

### SUNDAY NOV. 2

Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Services at 8:30 & 10:50 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 713-526-1017.  
Center for Spiritual Living. Services at 11 a.m., for children at 10:50 a.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808. The center also has commitment ceremonies, metaphysical bookstore and classes.  
Community Gospel. Service at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Sunday School for children 10 a.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.  
Community of Kindred Spirits in Beaumont. Worship at 6 p.m. 1575 Spindletop Ave. Beaumont, Texas. 409-813-2055. E-mail: cksrev3@netzoner.net  
Covenant Church, Ecumenical, Liberal Baptist. Service 9:30 a.m. & education hour 11 a.m. 713-668-8830.  
Emerson Unitarian Church. Adult education, 10 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. Lunch at noon. www.emersonhou.org.  
First Congregational Church (Memorial). Service at 10 a.m. Christian Education, 11:30 a.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.  
First Unitarian Universalist Church. Services at 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. Brunch at 10:30 a.m. 713-526-5200. church@firstuu.org.  
Gay Bowling Leagues. 7 p.m. Palace Lanes, 4191 Bellaire Blvd. 713-861-1187.  
Gay Catholics of St. Anne's-Houston. 5 p.m. worship service. Dinner and social. alexcam@wt.net. 713-623-0930.  
GLOBAL. Gay Lesbian Or Bisexual Alliance. University of Houston GLBT student group meeting, 2 p.m. at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.uh.edu/~global. E-mail: global@bayouuh.edu.  
Grace Assembly Church. Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 11 a.m. service. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttx.net.  
Grace Lutheran Church. Sunday school for all ages 9 a.m. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.  
H.A.T.C.H. Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets 6-9 p.m. For meeting information, call 713-529-3590. www.hatchyouth.org.  
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m.-noon. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com  
Lambda Center. Alcoholics Anonymous. 9:30 a.m. Came to Believe Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.  
Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church. 10 a.m. service. 3333 Fannin, Suite 106. 713-528-6756.  
Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Church. Services at 9:45 & 11:15 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 281-298-2780.  
Resurrection MCC. Services, 9 and 11 a.m. Children and Youth Sunday School, 10 a.m. Children's service, 11 a.m. 713-861-9149.  
St. Patrick's Reformed Catholic Mission. Sunday Mass at noon. Holy Unions available. Group meets at the Hair Express, 3310 Delaware, Beaumont, Texas 77703. 409-781-8152. E-mail: bwatson1@gt.rr.com.  
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 7:45 a.m.; Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 8:55 a.m.; Education hour, 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist, 11 a.m. 713-528-6665.  
Sunday Brunch. For HIV-positive men. 11 a.m. Riva's, 1117 Missouri St. Paul. 713-880-0690. e-mail: PoznBuff@aol.com.  
The Women's Group. Meeting and discussion. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.  
Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Adult discussion, 9 a.m. Service, 11:15 a.m. 281-277-8882. www.tuuc.org.  
Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County. 502 Church St. Service, 10:30 a.m. 409-765-8330.  
Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum, 10 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. 713-686-5876.  
Houston GLBT Community Center. Drop-in, 2-6 p.m. • GLBT Community Church with Rev. Melissa Wood: Bible study, 10-10:45 a.m., worship 11 a.m. www.geocities.com/glbtc • GLOBAL meeting, 6 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

### MONDAY NOV. 3

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.  
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.  
Gay Bowling Leagues. Women's league. 6:45 p.m. Dynamic Lanes, 6121 Tarnet Drive. 713-861-1187.  
Gay Fathers/Fathers First. Support group. 8-9:30 p.m. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Tom, 713-726-8736. www.geocities.com/gaydadsHouston/  
Grace Assembly Church. Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttx.net.  
Grief & Divorce Support Groups. 7 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, ext. 208.  
Kolbe Project. Eucharist 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.  
Lambda Center. Alcoholics Anonymous. 8 p.m. Beginners' Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.  
Montrose Clinic. Offers weekly peer support groups for gay and bisexual men with HIV. Spanish speaking group meets, 6:30 p.m. 215 Westheimer. 713-830-3050. Grupo de Apoyo para Latinos gay y bisexuales VIH positivos. Lunes 6:30. Para mas informacion llama al 713-830-3025.  
Queer Voices Radio Show. 8-10 p.m. KPFT 90.1.  
Houston GLBT Community Center. Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

### TUESDAY NOV. 4

Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang, 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.  
Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.  
GLBT Pentecostals. Bible study, prayer, 7 p.m. in the Heights. For info: 936-931-3761; e-mail: www.Wgb1947@cs.com.  
Houston Roughneck Rugby. Practice from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. For more information, log on to www.roughnecksrugby.org.  
Houston Women's Rugby Team. No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.  
Introduction to Buddhism. All welcome at 634 W. Temple in the Heights. 7 p.m. Carlton, 713-862-8129.  
Rainbow Ranglers. Free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. No partner needed. Beginner 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.  
Houston GLBT Community Center. Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • Lesbian Coming Out Group, 7 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

### WEDNESDAY NOV. 5

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.; SOM Discussion & Exploration, 7 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.  
OutSkate. This roller Rink skate club hosts Gay Skate Night at Zenith Roller Rink, 8075 Cook Road every Wednesday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. \$5 entry plus skate rental. 281-933-5818, Dobie367@aol.com.  
Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA). 8:15 p.m. meeting. Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond Ave., Room 15.  
Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Support Network Pot Luck Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Various support groups, 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.  
Bible Study. Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.  
Gay Bowling Leagues. 6:30 p.m. Palace Lanes, 4191 Bellaire Blvd. 713-861-1187.  
Grace Assembly Church. Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttx.net.  
Houston Pride Band. Open rehearsal, 7:30-9:30 p.m. 1307 Yale. 713-862-1488.  
Houston Tennis Club. 7-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com  
Spiritual Uplift service. 7 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.  
Houston GLBT Community Center. Drop-in, 2-9 p.m. • Free HIV testing, counseling, 7-9 p.m. • Houston Pride Band rehearsal, 7:30 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

### THURSDAY NOV. 6

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.  
Community Gospel. Service. 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235. www.community-gospel.org.  
FrontRunners. Running club. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021. Web site: http://home.swbell.net/larathon/houf.htm. E-mail: larathon@swbell.net.  
Gay Bowling Leagues. Luci Duos. 9 p.m. Dynamic Lanes, 6121 Tarnet Drive. 713-861-1187.  
GLOBAL. Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston-Central Campus. Weekly meeting, 6 p.m. e-mail: nguyeu0023@hotmail.com.  
Hep C Recovery. Support group. 6:30 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.  
Houston Roughneck Rugby. Practice from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. For more information, log on to www.roughnecksrugby.org.  
Houston Women's Rugby Team. No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.  
Lake Livingston GLBT Support Group. 7 p.m. dinner and discussion. Grace Assembly Church, 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttx.net.  
Lambda Skating Club. 8 p.m. Tradewinds Skating Rink. www.neosoft.com/~lrsc. 713-523-9620.  
Montrose Clinic. Offers weekly peer support groups for gay and bisexual men with HIV. English speaking group meets, 6:30 p.m. 215 Westheimer 713-830-3050.  
Rainbow Ranglers. Free C&W dance lessons. No partner required. Brazos River Bottom. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.  
Recovery From Food Addiction (RFA). Meeting for 12-step program open to all. Noon-1 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama St. RFA: 713-673-2848. www.geocities.com/rfa77235/. E-mail: rfaeworldservice@aol.com.  
Spanish Charla Conversation Group. Café Agora, 7 p.m. E-mail charla-houston@msn.com. 713-416-7203.  
Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.  
Houston GLBT Community Center. Drop in 2-9 p.m. • "Mending and Stitching," 2 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

### FRIDAY NOV. 7

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.  
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.  
Grace Assembly Church. Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttx.net.  
H.A.T.C.H. Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets 7-10 p.m. For meeting information, call 713-529-3590. www.hatchyouth.org.  
Houston Tennis Club. 7-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub.org  
Kolbe Project. Morning prayer, 10 a.m. 713-861-1800.  
Q-Patrol. Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com  
Houston GLBT Community Center. Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.



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

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**CHARMING COUNTRY HOME** 25 minutes from downtown, 3/2/2 on 1 acre near The Woodlands. Big trees, large pond, fully landscaped. Large Master suite. Open Layout & large covered porches. Quiet neighborhood. JEAN'S PROPERTIES (936) 321-5252.

**MONTROSE** Live above your business. Great Montrose location on busy thoro fare. 1 BR, 1 BA 4-plex w/2 retail spaces on 1st flr & 2 apts on 2nd flr. \$389,900. AGENT (832) 338-1109.

**WESTBURY** \$69,000 charming 2 bedroom, 1.5 bath patio townhome in landscaped courtyard. Decorator colors throughout. Call David at (713) 283-0843. Agent.

## RENTAL SERVICES

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**MONTROSE** (709 Harold St) 2 story 3 BR, 2 BA, 1 car garage, LR, hdwd flrs, sunroom, lrg front porch, burglar bars, butler's pantry & bsmt. \$1,400/mo. (713) 874-0899.

**MONTROSE** (705 Harold St) 4-plex, 2 BR, 2 BA, 1 car garage, 2,000 sq ft, fpl, CAC & heat, lrg terrace, 2 patios, lots of storage, WD connections. \$1,200/mo + elec. (713) 874-0899.

**MONTROSE** Small quiet complex. 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment for \$800 overlooking courtyard. 1 bedroom, 1 bath loft style for \$650. Call David at (713) 283-0843. Agent.

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**OFF 610 N LOOP** 3 BR, 1 BA, 1 car garage home for rent. Hardwood floors, fresh paint, Located off 610 N. Loop, minutes from Downtown & Galleria. \$1,200/mo. Call (713) 686-9771 or (281) 537-7801.

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## SHARE / HOUSTON

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## COMMITMENT CEREMONIES

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## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITES

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## EMPLOYMENT

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**GAY MEN'S CHORUS** of Houston seeks full-time Executive Director. Job description & application available at gmch.org or contact (713) 521-7464.

**OWN YOUR OWN PARTY PLAN COMPANY** If you are selling, have sold, or thought about selling cookware, cutlery, or water filtration products contact this 56 year old international organization that will allow you to maximize your earning potential. Call Mr. Paige (800) 977-7687. All replies held in strictest confidence.

**PT ADMIN ASSISTANT** The Houston Voice, the region's GLBT media leader, is seeking a PT administrative assistant. If you're a self-starter who is organized, accustomed to multi-tasking & proficient in Microsoft Word & Excel, we'd like to hear more about you. We offer a dynamic environment, excellent compensation, flexible part-time hours (minimum 20 hours per week) & the opportunity for advancement. Send cover letter & resume to: General Manager, The Houston Voice, 500 Lovett, Suite 200, Houston, TX 77006. Fax: (713) 529-9531. E-mail: demerich@houstonvoice.com.

**RESEARCH ASST** needed to work PT on social & behavioral health research. Bilingual college student preferred. Send vita to: rtrevino@rthresearchgroup.com

## VOLUNTEERS

### VOLUNTEER IN AFRICA OR BRAZIL

- Work with Grassroots Projects: Health, Education, Street Children
- Fight HIV/AIDS: Orphans, Outreach & Prevention



For more information  
www.icid-volunteer.org or www.humana.org  
413-884-4272 • info@icid-volunteer.org

### VOLUNTEER IN AFRICA OR BRAZIL

Work with street children, Teacher Training or Health Education. Take part in fighting HIV/AIDS. Fees/scholarship. Local meeting in Austin 11/22. www.icid-volunteer.org. info@icid-volunteer.org. (413) 884-4272.

## TRAVEL / U.S.A.

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**FORT LAUDERDALE** It's HOTTER THAN EVER down here! www.TheCabanasGuesthouse.com or call (866) 564-7764.

**HILTON HEAD, SC** Planning to relocate? Need a vacation? Make your plans now to come to beautiful beaches of Hilton Head, South Carolina. Long term rentals or limited short term rentals. See some of our property listings at <http://homelistingstips.tripod.com/>. Feel free to send inquiries to Melroselongterm@aol.com.

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**MOOSE MEADOW LODGE** Vermont log home, Waterbury. Gay-owned, luxurious Adirondack-style B&B on 86 acres. Premier site for civil unions & romantic getaways. (802) 244-5378. www.moosemeadowlodge.com

**RSVP CRUISE VOUCHERS** Mexican Riviera: April 25 - May 2, 2004. Departs San Diego. Two vouchers; each worth \$500 per person within 1 cabin. Maximum 4 persons per cabin. \$250 per voucher. scottmapa@aol.com.

## NEARBY GETAWAYS

**GALVESTON ISLAND GETWAY** Fabulous selection of beachfront, beachside, & bayfront homes. Weekly & weekend rentals. Sand N' Sea Pirates Beach. Call (800) 880-2554 for a free brochure or visit [www.sandnsea.com](http://www.sandnsea.com) for photos, info & weekend specials.

**SOUTH BEACH, FL. ISLAND HOUSE.** Be in the middle of the sexiest strip at SoBe's largest gay guesthouse. Rooms/studios. Complimentary breakfast & weekend happy hour! Walk to gay beach, hot nightlife, the finest shopping & dining. 1428 Collins Ave. (800) 382-2422. www.islandhousesouthbeach.com

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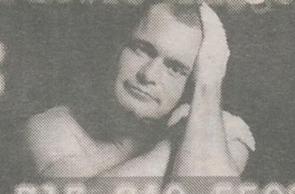
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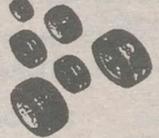


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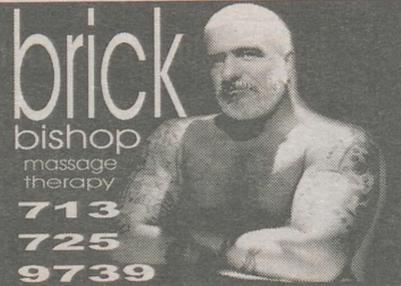


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## astrology JILL DEARMAN



A new moon Nov. 3 sits on the face  
of Mars and makes everyone lusty;  
every sign must carefully weigh desires.

## Follow your lust, Pisces

**♈ Aries (March 21 to April 20):**  
Venus and Pluto in your house  
of teaching and learning are here to  
instruct you that the best teachers are  
the best students. Stop telling people  
what they should know, and start listen-  
ing to the wisdom of your elders or per-  
ceptive pals. Another Aries wants to  
stay after class with you.

**♉ Taurus (April 21 to May 20):**  
The full moon in your sign Nov.  
8 brings you an opportunity to show the  
world that you are not just a follower,  
but a true leader — especially where  
love is concerned. If you want to pull  
out all romantic stops with a Leo, then  
go for it. This month it's better to risk  
looking foolish than to risk just looking  
— and never touching.

**♊ Gemini (May 21 to June 21):**  
Jupiter in your house of home  
and family pulls you closer to the ones  
who matter most. Enjoy the domestic-  
ated life for a while. You know that chaos  
will intrude sooner or later. See if you  
can make it to the holidays with a Libra  
by your side. Compromise gets you far  
emotionally these days — and into  
some sensually satisfying but compro-  
mising positions.

**♋ Cancer (June 22 to July 22):**  
Venus enters your health sector  
in early November and encourages you  
to beautify yourself on the outside in  
order to feel more balanced and  
happy on the inside. It's time for a  
makeover. An Aquarius wants to run  
some fingers through your hair and  
muss you up a bit.

**♌ Leo (July 23 to Aug. 22):** This  
is a fine time for you to take  
advantage of a lull at your workplace  
and work on your personal life. Your  
loved ones are especially needy now.  
Don't judge them. Draw them close. You  
can kick 'em back out into the cruel  
world in a couple of months. A Pisces  
wants to hide in your loving arms.

**♍ Virgo (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):**  
The moon meets passionate  
Mars in your house of love Nov. 3,  
bringing your desires closer to the sur-  
face. Everyone can smell the chemistry  
between you and a Taurus. You know  
that you want each other, so what are  
you waiting for? Don't stand on ceremo-  
ny when it comes to love or lust.

**♎ Libra (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):**  
Your charming and romantic  
ruler, Venus, moves into your social sec-  
tor Nov. 3 and puts you just where you  
want to be when it comes to partying,  
networking and 24-hour flirting. Spend  
a few extra bucks on an outfit that's  
camera-ready. You may get your 15 min-  
utes with a Scorpio.

**♏ Scorpio (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):**  
The sun and Mercury both tran-  
sit your sign through most of November,  
and the full moon lands in your house of  
love on Nov. 3. All in all, this should be a  
very hot time in your life. Lovers  
demand a lot from you, and there may  
not be enough of you to go around.

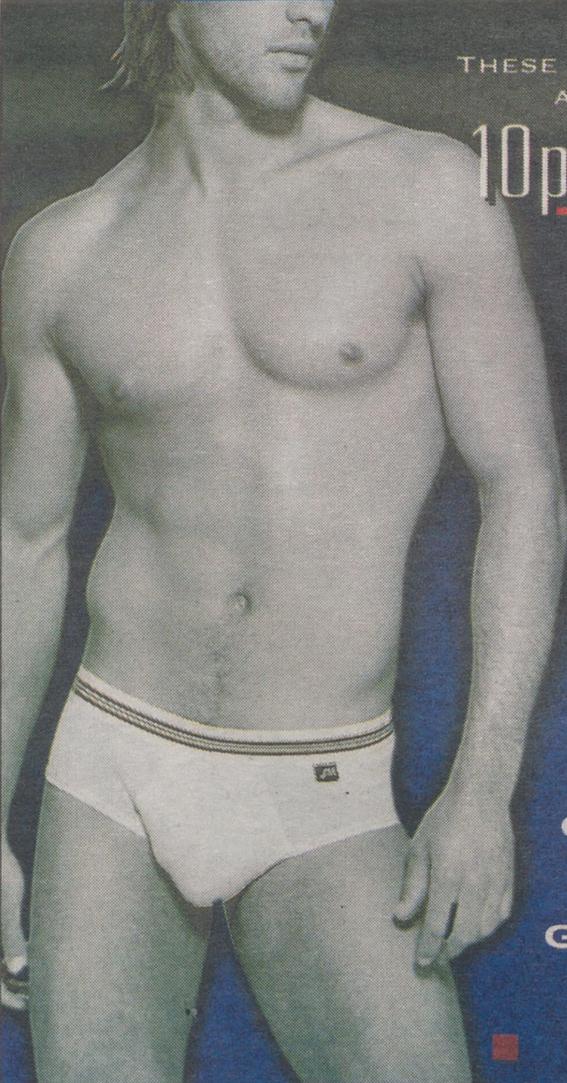
**♐ Sagittarius (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):**  
You may be tempted to take the  
moral high ground in an intimate rela-  
tionship, but it would be wise to look at  
your own history as a whore and a hyp-  
ocrite. Pull out those old diaries. A Leo  
wants a clean slate.

**♑ Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):**  
The full moon Nov. 3 falls in your  
house of creativity and drama. You  
have a choice: put your energy into art  
or into idiocy. A Cancer represents the  
latter. Be careful with any potential  
lover who whines more than woos. You  
need an equal.

**♒ Aquarius (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):**  
Jupiter's transit through your  
house of serious partnerships brings you  
closer to saying "I do" to your true love.  
But before you pop the question, be care-  
ful that you aren't fantasizing about pop-  
ping the cherry of a 20-something Virgo.  
You are not as ready to settle down as you  
think you are — but you are getting closer.

**♓ Pisces (Feb. 19 to March 20):**  
Your heart and your body are in  
sync in a most heated way on Nov. 3,  
when the emotional moon sits on the  
face of Mars, which are both in your  
sign. You cannot hide your horniness,  
and why should you? A Virgo likes it  
when you follow your lust instead of  
your logic.

**@** Jill Dearman is the author of the best-  
selling 'Queer Astrology for Men' and  
'Queer Astrology for Women' (both from  
St. Martin's Griffin). For information on  
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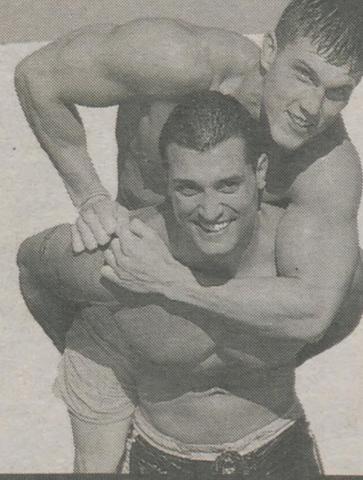
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