Community Pride Reporter, 08/1994

Community Pride Reporter

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Clinton to Maine, "When the chips were down, Tom Andrews didn’t blink."

President Clinton came to Portland, Maine, July 18, to raise money for Democratic candidates, but foremost on his agenda, revealed in his speech at the Sonesta to 250 party faithful who paid $100 each to be there, was to boost Tom Andrews’ chances of beating Olympia Snowe for George Mitchell’s Senate seat.

The president gave an enthusiastic speech highlighting the economic achievements made since he took office and of the dire need for health care reform. He particularly focused on the one-vote margins, in both houses of Congress, that passed his budget. He said, "When the chips were down Tom Andrews didn’t blink," but the Republicans, every one of them, including Snowe, took their orders from their party leadership and voted NO.

An Andrews victory is of great importance to the White House, not only because it is Mitchell’s seat being filled but because the Democrats are in real danger of losing control of the Senate. If the Republicans take control of the Senate that would elevate Jesse Helms, Strom Thurmond, Orrin Hatch and Alfonse D’Amato among others, to committee chairmanships.

Thurmond, the nonagenarian racist from South Carolina, would head the Armed Services Committee. Does the phrase ‘southern justice’ mean anything to you? Helms, the rabid, homophobic racist from North Carolina, would head the Foreign Relations Committee. Hatch, from Utah, would take over Judiciary and D’Amato (New York), perhaps the most corrupt man in the Senate, would actually become Chairman of Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs — talk about a fox in the henhouse. Olympia Snowe's election to the Senate would bring about this nightmare in the national government.

Clinton’s remarks on health care

See CLINTON, page 3

Gessner to use alleged sexual abuse as defense in murder trial:

The entering of these two pleas gives Perino two options. If Perino thinks the state’s case is weak he will ask for a two-stage trial. If Gessner is found guilty in the first part of the trial Perino would then try to have him found not responsible by reason of insanity. The other option is a one stage trial in which all the evidence is presented and the jury decides if he is guilty, innocent or innocent by reason of insanity.

Perino said that the state cannot provide a motive for the killing which is why the retaliation for alleged sexual

Militant fundamentalists harass Bangor's Pride marchers.

See GESSNER, page 2

Bangor Pride remembers . . .

"We gather here 10 years after the death of Charlie Howard to recognize the diversity of members of our community," So said Bangor’s Mayor Don Soucy at the city’s Pride Festival in Paul Bunyan Park, July 10. Nearly 300 gays, lesbians, bisexuals and their supporters were gathered in the park following their march through the downtown district, a route that took them within a block of the site of Howard’s murder.

Martin Swinger greeted the marchers as they filed into the park with songs most easily described as gay folk. Later the African drumming group Inanna had the crowd on its feet calling for more.

Even the presence of the fundamentalist protestors from a church in Brewer didn’t seem to darken the celebratory mood. The suit-and-tie-clad protestors, who had lined the parade route shouting bible verses, arrayed themselves on a hill overlooking the festival when the parade was finished.

See PRIDE, page 2
Soon left. One attendee said it seemed respondents by blowing whistles to cover those who refused them. At the festival, they attracted little attention, and event's organizers. He attributed the according to Jim Martin, one of the ors a flower, or laying one at the feet of like the men came looking for a fight, but when they realized they were being ignored, "they picked up their toys and went home."

Attendance was nearly double that of the parade held here two years ago according to Jim Martin, one of the event's organizers. He attributed the high numbers not only to the anniversay of Howard's murder, but to new attacks by the right on the civil rights of gays and lesbians. In his remarks to the crowd, he asked, "Has society truly adressed the issues of homophobia, bigotry and hate? All you have to do is look at Concerned Maine Families to see that not a whole hell of a lot has changed" in the last decade.

Martin, co-chair of the Bangor chapter of Equal Protection Maine (EPM), the group that sponsored Bangor Pride, said one of the goals of this year's event was to make people aware of CMF's threat to their rights. The focus of the Mayor's comments to the crowd was hate crimes. He said the city's hate crimes division is committed to eradicating the problem, but they needed the gay and lesbian community's help. "In order to solve the problem... hate crimes must be re-

port, he said. He went on to say that though many hate crimes are being com-
mitt, "very few are reported, since your rights are not specifically protected by the State of Maine," adding that many victims fail to report their attacks out of fear of repercussions. In his request for gays and lesbians to report any hate crimes, he assured them that all investiga-
gative reports are kept confidential.

The most powerful speaker of the day was Peg Cruikshank, Visiting Pro-

fessor of Gay and Lesbian Studies at the University of Maine in Orono. She urged the crowd to remember their ac-

complishments, which she listed as sur-

vival, "We didn't go away," education, "We're teaching America about sexual-

ity," and improved media coverage.

She also urged them to speak up, to come out, "to say to those demonstrators on the hill that we are our brothers and sis-
ters, sons and daughters, mothers and fathers."

Cruikshank applauded the crowd for its role in the greater struggle for gay and lesbian rights on a national level. She said celebrations such as Stonewall 25 in the power centers of New York and San Francisco were important, but that the fu-
ture of the movement is with places like Bangor. "This is where the battle will in any case and that statement is accurate.

In the latest development, on July 25th, Gessner was denied bail. At the hearing, the State police revealed that they had recovered the murder weapon and that Gessner's fingerprints are on the barrel. In denying bail, Judge Bruce Chandler said, "I am satisfied beyond any question at all that there is probable cause" to believe Gessner killed Melvin Henderson. The trial date has not been set.

Among the most baffling aspects of what is already a bizarre case and Bath's first murder in 22 years is the statement of Henderson's daughter which she made at her father's funeral. "My father died as he lived-violently, and full of deep, deep anguish." She has steadfastly refused to explain this assertion. In any case, Perino's plan to use sexual abuse as a defense for murder, 14 years after the fact, is bound to be explosive.

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Singing ability not a necessary requirement;
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COME JOIN THE EXCITEMENT

GESSNER, from page 1

Site of the murder of Melvin Henderson on North Street in Bath.

GESSNER shortly after the May 5th shoot-

ing and at that time Ricker refused to talk to the press. Since then he has given two interviews to the Portland Press Herald. The first appeared on July 15th and at that time Ricker stated that Gessner had told him years ago of the alleged sexual abuse committed by Henderson. In the next interview, on July 22nd, Ricker said that that statement is inaccurate.

More Bangor Pride on pages 4 & 5

Peabody House benefit canceled

by Winnie Weir, Editor

Recent telephone calls to the Community Pride Reporter office confirmed that the "Red Ribbon Restau-

rant Night" benefit has been cancelled for the time being.

The benefit was planned for August 20th between 12 noon and 10 pm at area restaurants. A portion of the pro-
cceeds from eating out at participating restaurants was going to be donated to Peabody House, located at 14 Orchard Street in Portland.

Peabody House is an AIDS hos-
pice and assisted living home for PWA's which has recently been opened after undergoing extensive renovations and improvements. CPR was not able to find out why this benefit has been put on hold, but we hope it will not be long before we can carry the announcement that it will happen. In the meantime, if you would like more information on Peabody House and how you might make independent contributions to their important work, call their business office at 774-6281.
Clinton, continued from page 1

were perhaps his most impassioned. He reminded the audience that it was none other than President Richard Nixon who once offered a plan for health care reform similar to his own and that Republicans now brand these ideas as "liberal."

Clinton drew comparisons between himself and Harry Truman in terms of the bitterness of the criticism he receives and he artfully drew the connection between skyrocketing health care costs and not having enough money to spend on education, technology and housing.

The president avoided any detailed discussion of the various health care reform plans but alluded to protesters who claim he is trying to introduce socialized medicine to America which he said is not true because he is relying on private insurance.

Ironically, the protests in Portland were in support of the single-payer system which is similar to the Canadian health insurance plan which many refer to as socialized medicine.

**ACT-UP greets Clinton with a pointed message**

Sue Enos, a member of ACT-UP Portland (ACT-UP = AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) who was at the Holiday Inn to protest in support of single payer health care said that "single payer is the only plan that would cover everybody with comprehensive health insurance, unlike managed care which would leave gaps and not provide equal care."

Enos said that rich communities would have better health coverage than poor under a managed care system.

**Clinton arrives at Portland Jetport, July 18, 1994. Ballioni Photo**

**Clinton and Brennan greet supporters. Press denied access to President**

This reporter had hoped that the press passes obtained from the White House press office for CPR would have allowed access to the president so that questions relevant to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community could be asked, but even though press passes get you in to these events, access to the president himself is strictly limited. No opportunity for questions was permitted. During his speech, Clinton did not mention the AIDS crisis nor did he refer to the anti-gay referendum drive now underway in this state.

**Mitchell and Clinton argue for the courage to "change"**

One of the central themes of Clinton’s speech as well as of the introductory remarks of the other politicians present was the need for "change." Réiring Senate Majority Leader, George Mitchell, said in his introduction that Clinton has been subjected to inordinate criticism, hostility “and personal vilification by those who fear change." Mitchell said that because of Clinton’s courage and ability to lead, our nation has been turned in the right direction.

Mitchell described the great economic benefits achieved under Clinton and said that the economy has expanded so rapidly that the Federal Reserve Bank Board has had to raise interest rates 4 times in the past year. The crowd booed. Mitchell laughed saying that he’d never heard the Fed get such a reaction and said he would tell Alan Greenspan.

Mitchell went on to say that Clinton is the first president in a quarter century to tackle health care and that with his leadership there will be universal coverage. He then introduced Clinton to thunderous applause. ΔΔ

**KATAHDIN**

We hope you have noticed that you haven’t heard from us in a while. Quite honestly we ran out of things to say, and rather than bore everyone to death we had some friends help us with our ads. But, that’s all changed. (For now.)

So much has happened up here on our end of town. While the councils, boards and bureaucrats have been busy snoozing with their noses buried in studies by expensive consultants, our neighborhood has blossomed. All it took was a bunch of shopkeepers with good ideas and lots of energy. What a shock!

Mitchell for her. Sara’s Delilah pottery has had very successful showings at Nancy Margolis and June Fitzpatrick Galleries. Congratulations to Sarah and her studio mates Louise and Lacy.

Speaking of June Fitzpatrick, how nice it is to be able to run next door for a minute in the afternoon for a quick look at work by some of Maines foremost painters and sculptors. And from what we can see through the kitchen window, her openings every other Thursday have got to be one of the best invitations in town. And, by the way, we continue after three years to have the freshest, fairest priced dinners in town.

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Jim Wise, a 43-year-old activist who was set to initiate the first run of ACT-UP in Portland in 1989-1990, attended this year's Bangor Pride March on July 9th. Jim lived in Bangor when Charlie Howard was murdered and he knew Charlie personally.

During the march, Wise confronted the radical religious bigots who carried signs containing "texts of terror," as he calls them. There were eight, middle-aged men carrying these signs. Wise's position is that queer Christians need to stand up and confront these people non-violently.

Wise states that the Christians "harrassed and hounded us halfway into the march. They were positioned on top of the hill by the bridge that goes over to Brewer, holding their signs and yelling and screaming scripture at us as we marched by on our way to the park."

"I chose to blow whistles and shout back at them. They all gathered in one group as we were marching into the park, and I marched right up to them and through them and one of them engaged me and said something to the effect that I needed to repent. I said lesbians and gay men are part of the body of Christ if they choose to be and then I walked on. There was a bigger group of people (10-12) who surrounded one or two of the picketers and shouted "shame" at them."

One fundamentalist was shouting scripture. Jim went up to him and blew his whistle so no one could hear him. The preaching stopped whereupon Wise said, "God bless you" and walked on.

Wise thinks it is important to state his motive for these confrontational acts. He refers to a book entitled "Jesus Acted" by Robert Goss, who is an ex-Jesuit priest and member of ACT-UP, Kansas City. Wise quotes from this book to show that there is a rational foundation for the behavior of those who choose to be confrontational. He states firmly that there is a reason for the shouting and that much of that reason can be found in the aforementioned book. He reads: "Queer Christians need to follow the steps of Jesus. They need to act up against the churches and stop the hatred."

Queers need to stop the churches before the churches stop queer people from their death struggle. Gay men and lesbians are dying and suffering at the hands of fundamentalist Christians in the name of Christ. They are denied their civil rights in the name of a national campaign to restore traditional family values. They are discriminated against in employment, housing, the legal system, foster care and so forth. Just as the churches are bringing their campaign of hatred into politics, so queer Christians must bring the battle for truth back to the churches.

"When a priest or minister gets up in the pulpit and condemning queer, queer Christians need to stand up and demand gospel justice. It is just and right to blow whistles during homophobic homicides. It is appropriate to bring the battle for queer truth into the churches, into the pew and into the altars. The battle against church hatred requires a commitment to justice. Queer Christians need to intensify their presence within the churches. Invisibility harms the gay and lesbian movement and ignores Jesus' (practice of justice-doing. Clovered gay and lesbian clergy need to come out. It is only by coming out and affirming our sexual diversity that we can change the churches. Many clergy who have fol­lowed in the footsteps of the queer Christ have suffered exclusion, silencing and discrimination."

Wise confronted the Christian fundamentalists at Bangor Pride and at the Concerned Maine Families meeting at the Church of the Nazarene in South Portland last May in order to challenge them to live up to a more authentic Christianity. Wise cites the fallacy that Sodom and Gomorrah was one big gay city — that never happened. Wise states that the true meaning of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah is lack of hospitality, not anal intercourse.

Wise thinks that if proper translations and interpretations of the bible are made, there is an answer for the gay movement in theology. He thinks that if the bible is read correctly, gays and lesbians are not excluded and condemned, and that queers should use the bible and theology to fight back. Wise says that same sex practices are not of predominant concern in biblical tradi­tion. However, fundamentalists base their condemnation on 10 or 12 inaccurately translated biblical texts.

I pointed out that many people believe that looking for an answer to a political question in the bible is not the way to go. Regardless of the bible's teachings, this is still a secular society, and its laws should be outside the influence of religious writings. Wise still thinks it is effective to defeat the "fascist" fundamentalists on their own turf, and even though he supports separation of church and state, he sees one aspect of this struggle as a question of faith. His faith is in a queer Christ.

In commenting further on Bangor Pride, Wise speculated that if lesbian and gay activists were present at a Christian rally the cops would have cornered them in one spot, or removed them from the area, "These men (the fundamentalists) were allowed to circle the festival and hold up their protest signs."

Wise recalls Charlie Howard

Wise said the march was especially important to him because this is the 10th anniversary of Charlie Howard's murder and Charlie was a friend of his. Wise says, "You can't tell me the police didn't know what was going on in that part of town." Wise says that back in '75 and '76 an incredible change occurred in Bangor. A cruising area had come into being in the downtown area (there was no gay bar). This area and the people who frequented it were subjected to a rampage of homophobic vandalism in full knowledge of police who did nothing to stop it.

Wise said Howard was a stand-out. He was very pretty but was just trying to be himself. The same men who murdered Howard had assaulted Wise a week earlier but he fought them off. These three "had been down there (the cruising area) for months and I think the police knew it and I think they didn't let them do it (the vandalism). They were there for months breaking windshields, putting cars in neutral to let them roll down the hill and pulling guys out of their cars. Three of them surrounded me and some of them knew karate but I'm husky so they left me alone."

Wise connects the homophobic teachings of Bangor area churches with Howard's murder. He recounts that right after the murder there was a candlelight march to the police station and the cops were very put off by it. Wise recalls the homophobic reaction of police in the Bangor Bagel Shop when he and other protesters at Howard's murder trial gathered there. He then links it to today, 10 years later, when during the Pride march he witnessed a Bangor police man shak­ ing his head in disgust, along with a motorist, at the sight of the march. Wise challenged them, "Why are you shak­ ing your head and I think they looked away.

Wise came out publicly in the wake of Howard's murder. Howard's death changed Wise's life. Wise recalls that the Bangor Police would yell "taggot" at him as he walked the streets of Bangor and he speculated that they let these kids terrorize homosexuals as a rite of pas­ sage. Bangor's fundamentalist churches have been teaching hatred and their kids continue to be brought up to hate. 

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Gay Pride March, Bangor July 9, 1994
by Ron King, Contributor

Just another Gay Pride March. I would go, no doubt about that, but I was not all that excited. My partner and I had planned to go together. I was looking forward to that but on the morning of the march he decided not to go and I was not sure if it was because he was mad at me, over a pretty stupid thing I had done, or was not feeling well enough to go.

On the way to Bangor I was thinking about all the other Pride marches I had been to over the past 25 years. I thought, “here we go again.” Even though I had been to many Pride marches I was looking forward to sharing this event with two friends that had never been to one before. Sharing the march with them would make the day even better.

The march was to gather at Fleet Bank at 11:00 AM. As I pulled into the parking lot there were many queers starting to gather. It felt great gathering on the sidewalk on Exchange Street. I was reminded of the incredible diversity of our community, all the different kinds of folks. I greeted many old friends with a hug and a kiss. Watching my two friends watch all the 200 or so queers gather was great fun.

There were lots of banners of the various groups of queers. There were Unitarians, AIDS groups, social groups, education groups and men in drag in a limousine. Lots of boas. Someone gave me a rose and told me to give it to a protester if I saw one. I said I would rather throw it over the bridge for Charlie Howard if the Pride route took us over THE bridge. After a bit of milling around we got started.

There were a few spectators either just looking at the queers or giving us the thumbs up or applauding. My feelings alternated between, “what the fuck is this all about,” and, “look at me motherfuckers, here is a real queer, now you can’t say you have never seen one.”

I was walking with my friends who had never been to a Pride march before. They seemed to be having the time of their lives. As we started up the hill towards the intersection of Union and Main Streets, we saw the Christians. There were maybe half a dozen people carrying signs with quotes from the bible or something like that. Some were waving bibles in the air. The one I gave my flower to was reading from a bible. I have lots of mixed feelings about how to react publicly to those bible-wielding fools. I feel that any energy I use, even to acknowledge them, gives them power and that is the last thing I want to do. On the other hand, I appreciate the symbolic gesture of confronting them in public. I am not sure where my feelings come from. Is it because I am a pacifist and any confrontation is abhorrent to me, or is it because I am a sissy? They remind me of all those bullies from the playing fields of my childhood. Whatever it is, most of the time, I just want to get away.

Climbing that hill was not fun for me because of my arteries, nor for my friends, because of their emphysema, but we made it over the hill and then continued on to Paul Bunyan Park. At the park there were booths selling queer stuff. We heard speeches by queers and a welcome from the Mayor of Bangor.

There was entertainment and a general good time. It felt great to be in a group of queers at least a couple hundred folks strong. I felt less vulnerable than when we were all strung out in the March.

It turned out to be a great day. It was cloudy and cool enough to avoid sweating. It was good to be there to show your face. It does not seem to me that we will ever stop having such marches. Even after laws are passed to protect our rights, I am not sure I want to assimilate. This community feels just right to me. ΔΔ

Bangor Pride on Parade

Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals are building their rainbow...

The crowd listens to Martin Swingers beautiful folk music.

The festival at Paul Bunyan Park provided a variety of entertainers.

Bangor Pride shines despite protesters
by Michael Rossetti, Contributor

On Saturday, July 9, some 500 people celebrated Bangor’s 2nd Gay and Lesbian Pride. The event featured a parade down Main Street, speakers, and a festival in Paul Bunyan Park.

The parade was exceptionally noisy and festive. With a large contingent from Mount Desert, members of MLGPA, P-FLAG, Bangor’s UU group, and others. The marchers shared Main Street with the Bangor Sidewalk Art Festival and a small but vocal (if not routine) group of “religious” protestors. Some of the protestors were walking about tapping the marchers with video cameras... No incidents occurred, due largely to the forethought and planning of the march organizers.

The festival that followed the march featured some exceptional folks. The Mayor of Bangor spoke in glowing support of the community and equal protection, noting the anniversary of Charlie Howard’s murder. Progressive folk singer Martin Swinger led the music off with a well received set of songs. The vibrant drumming group Inanna also enlivened the stage. Some dozen or so vendors sold everything from tofu hot dogs to hand made earrings.

The protestors were largely ignored but held out through the event. During the march, marchers carried flowers, many of which they left at the feet of the protestors. Some of the protestors were walking about taping the marchers with video cameras... No incidents occurred, due largely to the forethought and planning of the march organizers.

The Bangor event was sponsored by Equal Protection Bangor, which circulated pledge sheets for the walking distance of the march. EPM/Bangor managed to raise over $1,000 to help start the battle against ignorance and hate in the 1995 anti-gay referendum. ΔΔ
The deafening sound of silence
Jim Martin, Contributor and Co-Chair EPM/Bangor

I can’t remember exactly what I was doing on July 7, 1984, but I was probably enjoying my recent graduation from high school and making plans for the upcoming voyage to my new home, Maine. Unknown to me at that time was a man named Charlie Howard, a faceless image who would ultimately set me on a life’s journey beyond my expectations.

It was the reality of a life cut short that acted as the catalyst to my coming out process. At the first memorial service for Charlie, a friend and minister mentioned a conversation they had a couple of weeks before the burning ign- norance and hate by three young men erupted into hateful violence.

"Why can’t you just tone things down a bit," the minister questioned with the good intentions of a concerned friend.

"I can’t participate in my own oppression," was the reply of the man who lived life flamboyantly, marching to the beat of his own drum.

It wouldn’t be until later that day, once home and away from the company of many gay and lesbian brothers and sisters in my new community, that these words would take hold and set me on a new path of freedom and self-respect.

As we remember the tenth anniversary of Charlie’s death, there has been much attention in the press about how things have changed since then, but what would take hold and set me on a new path of freedom and self-respect.

In 1992 Maine amended its Hate Crimes Act to include sexual orientation as a recognized minority who are vic-timized by acts of hate-biased crimes. For the first time in Maine history, murdering someone because he or she was perceived to be gay became a more serious crime than murder itself.

In 1993 the Maine legislature over-came years of homophobia and passed the Human Rights’ amendment, making it illegal to discriminate in employment, housing and credit on the basis of sexual orientation as well as on the bases of race, marital status, ethnicity, age, and mental and physical disability. The celebration came to a crashing halt, however, when Governor McKernan cavied in to pressure from the radical right and vetoed the bill after making promises during his campaign that he would allow it to become law.

But now it’s 1994. Ten years have passed since that fateful night. While laws are on the books and police officer- ers are instructed to prevent hate crimes, the perpetrators are still among us. Somewhere in the late 1980’s, the radical right pulled in its forces and created the hate crime of the ‘90’s. Today gay, lesbian and bisexual people face not only the deadly baseless hate and doubled-up fist, victimization has expanded into the political arena.

In an attempt to comply with "pol- itical correctness" and more appropri- ate social behavior, the radical right worked with much zeal to alter society’s perception of them as “witch hunters.” They recognized that “disgust” cam-paigns did not work with the American people. They had to find a new tactic which would achieve their ultimate goal, the total annihilation of our voice.

They portray themselves as mar- tyr’s doing the Lord’s work as they try to kill gay rights. They call it a campaign of “love.” Suddenly, they didn’t think of the homosexual as sick and inhuman, just confused and in need of help. And, of course, the best medicine was to strip the homosexual of any human dignity, including his or her rights. Hence, the emergence of the political victimization we know today as the ballot initiative.

Under the pretense of preventing “special rights,” the radical right preached the message of nonviolence. They did not hate us anymore, they just wanted the special right to legally dis-criminate against us. But, as is often is in the political arena, certain realities had

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Washington, D.C. votes in support of discrimination against homosexuals.

Senator William Cohen (R-Maine) votes for the death penalty.

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See SOUND, page 21

around the nation

Congressional Hearing Focuses on Harassment of Camp Sister Spirit in Ovett, Mississippi

Jackson, Miss — The Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the House Judiciary Committee went to Mississippi to hear testimony from interested parties including Brenda and Wanda Henson, the lesbian couple who founded the feminist retreat known as Camp Sister Spirit. Barney Frank (D­Mass.) openly gay member of the House of Representatives, led the often lively hearings in which many local officials testified. James Hendry leader of Miss­issippi for Family Values said that the Hensons created the campaign against them for publicity. Among the things that the Hensons supposedly did to themselves was the slaughtering of ani­mals and nailing the carcasses to their mailbox and fence. Mississippi for Family Values is an organization simi­lar to Concerned Maine Families.

Senator William Cohen (R­Maine) votes in support of discrimination against homosexuals.

Washington - On Monday, August 1, the Senate, led by Jesse Helms, R­N.C., and Bob Smith, R-N.H., voted to deny federal funds to school districts that teach acceptance of homosexuality. Maine’s Republican Senator, William Cohen, voted against this measure. George Mitchell (D­Maine), the Majority Leader, voted in opposition. The vote was 63­36.

The vote was on an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Educa­tion Act which provides $12.5 billion to the nation’s public schools. If President Clinton signs this bill, it would cut funds to districts that support homosexuality as a “positive lifestyle alternative.” That includes distribution of instruc­tional materials and counseling.

Congress defies Washington, D.C. voters.

Washington, D.C. is not a state. The U.S. Congress is, in effect, their legis­lature. The problem is that no one in D.C. gets to vote for any of their "repre­sentatives."

For the last two years Congress has blocked D.C. from implementing its domestic partnership law. Congress simply prohibits the spending of any money for domestic partners. Because D.C. issues do not affect their home constituencies, members of Congress of­ten use debates about D.C. to grandstand on gay issues for the press back home.
Health Care Reform—What’s In It For Lesbians - Part One

by Peaches Bass

During the brief breaks between reports on what O.J. Simpson ate for breakfast and updates on changes in Clinton’s policy on Haiti, you may have caught a passing reference to federal health care reform. Then again, maybe not.

Health care reform is a highly technical, detailed, and politically sensitive topic that defies easy coverage by the news media, and even though everyone wants it, most of us don’t know what it really is. We just want our health care to be high quality and low cost, and if health care reform makes that happen, great—just wake us when the governmental debate is over.

Every possible special interest group and lobby has taken a position on health care reform. Hospitals, physicians, insurance companies, retired people, feminists, the Catholic Church, and everyone, in essence, has been lobbying Washington to ensure that health care reform addresses their needs. Everyone, almost, except lesbians. At a lesbian health conference held this past April in Bangor, almost 100 lesbians expressed everything from ignorance to confusion to outrage over health care reform and the needs of lesbians.

Though lesbians express a range of concerns when it comes to their health care, the concerns generally fall into one of two categories—affordability and quality. Let’s take a look at these concerns in more detail, and then see how, and if, governmental efforts at health care reform will have any effect.

The driving force behind health care reform is economics. The cost of every aspect of health care is affected—the cost of exams and office visits is increasing, the cost of medications and treatments is increasing, the cost of “health insurance” is increasing, and the benefits are decreasing, or “capped.” When Congress or the White House talk about access to health care, they are probably referring to financial access, and when they talk about universal access, that means that everyone should have access regardless of their economic status or ability to pay.

What does the concept of affordability, or universal access, mean to lesbians? As it now stands, most lesbians express concerns about the expense of health care. As women, our incomes are lower than men’s. Unpartnered lesbians are in the same situation as single heterosexual women, in other words struggling. If they have children, their economic status, regardless of sexual orientation, is likely to be low income, perhaps poverty.

As lesbians, our family incomes are lower than heterosexual family incomes, despite the assertions of anti-gay rights propagandists. Most insurance policies don’t cover unmarried partners, or those partners’ children. This forces a lesbian couple to carry two separate policies. If they’re fortunate, they may be working for employers who provide health insurance. But if one of them isn’t working, or works a job that doesn’t offer insurance, then the lack of domestic partnership benefits means one of them isn’t insured, or they have to carry a second policy paid for out of pocket.

Even with insurance coverage, deductibles—the amount you must first shell out each year before insurance will pay for anything—can be prohibitive. On top of deductibles, most insurance requires you to co-pay. A co-pay means that even once your insurance begins to pay, it only pays a portion of the cost, around 80%. You pay the rest. The bottom line is that having insurance, even if paid for by an employer, still requires a considerable cash contribution, and that’s rough on lesbians.

Lesbians are also frustrated by the lack of coverage for expensive health care that has been referred to as “medical,” including eyeglasses, dental care, substance abuse treatment, or mental health counseling. Lesbians often favor alternative, non-allopathic, and holistic health care, which is usually not covered by insurance and is also expensive. We notice, too, that healthy foods, as opposed to highly processed and non-organic foods, are much more expensive. For lesbians with chronic, long-term, or catastrophic health conditions, the benefit limits, called “caps,” may result in the insurance running out, leaving the woman in need of government assistance to cover her health care costs.

Of course, before she can qualify for government assistance, she has to “spend down” her assets. In other words, she must impoverish herself to get government-supplied health care assistance.

All this boils down to the fact that lesbians experience decreased, or limited economic access to health care. When our access is limited, we delay health care or do without it, and that contributes to diminished personal and community health.

So how will health care reform affect our access to affordable care? Well, if the reform includes universal coverage, it should help. If that coverage is financed by eliminating the insurance paperwork bureaucracy through a single-payer system (one agency pays everybody’s bills) that would help. But if universal access is dependent on purchasing alliances with restrictive definitions of “family” coverage, some of us may not benefit.

If the financing relies on mandating individuals to buy their own policies, that won’t help at all, and it won’t be universal. If the reform focuses on requiring employers to contribute, that will help some, but where the rest of the money comes from will also matter.

If the reform reduces income taxes, like tobacco or alcohol taxes, will put the burden on those who use these products. Some argue that this is fair, since these products are statistically linked with a large percentage of our country’s health problems and medical costs. Others, especially the producers and consumers of these products, aren’t in favor of this method of financing universal coverage.

There are also proposals that replace paying an insurance premium with a health care tax as part of our income tax. As long as the tax is progressive (based on income and ability to pay) and is lower than what we’d pay for health care out of pocket, that would help.

Absolutely nothing has been completely settled. At the national level, Congress and the White House are still politicking around the details of finance.
Stratogen Health to care for 
HIV & AIDS patients

by Rich Austin

Stratogen Health, a primary care medical practice specializing in the treatment needs of HIV and AIDS patients, will begin seeing patients at 110 Auburn Street in the Northgate area of Portland, beginning in mid-August. The first of its kind in Maine, Stratogen Health in Portland joins a small, but national organization of Stratogen Health Care Centers numbering three in Florida and one in Rhode Island.

The name Stratogen means “strategies for healthy living.” The first part of the strategy at Stratogen is a unique coordinated health care program that the HIV or AIDS patient helps tailor to their needs. Components to a patient’s care can include primary and specialty medical care, nursing, laboratory services, nutritional counseling, health education, mental health counseling, confidential HIV testing with pre- and post-test counseling, pharmacy services, IV therapy and alternative therapies including massage therapy.

Stratogen is also involved nationally in clinical trials and investigative protocols, giving HIV and AIDS patients access to the most up-to-date counseling, pharmacy services, IV treatment needs of HIV and AIDS patients. Comments Titus, “There are specific and private needs of their patients. Comments Titus, "There are plenty of windows; it’s comfortable, very bright and beautiful.”

The second part of the strategy at Stratogen Health is people. Real people caring for real people. “We deal openly and take a lot of risks to be who we are," says Titus. "It’s hard enough being sick, but if you can be in a special place with special people, it makes it easier, I hope.”

For more information on Stratogen Health, call 878-0017 during business hours. ΔΔ

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Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance plans Annual Meeting

by Richard Steinman, MLGPA Contact

The Annual Meeting of the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance will take place on Saturday, September 17th, beginning promptly at noon, at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church, 69 Winthrop St., Augusta, Maine.

All members of our community are encouraged to attend the board elected on this occasion, as well as the committee formed, will be of vital importance in the year ahead.

The year 1995 will be a particularly crucial one for our community because of the anti-gay referendum, and because of the Civil Rights Bill to outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation. With a new governor, the chances for passing the bill are greatly enhanced. At the same time, up to 40% of the new legislature will consist of those elected for the first time. MLGPA and its allies will need to do extensive work with these newcomers, with the veteran legislators, with the legislative leadership, and with the Governor’s office.

Action on the Civil Rights Bill in 1995 will provide a stellar opportunity for all these elected officials to give a slap in the face to Concerned Maine Family’s referendum campaign to deprive our community of its civil rights.

Provided our community is active and committed, 1995 can really be the year of victory for the bill. Such a victory will provide a key boost in the battle against the anti-gay referendum. At the September 17th Annual Meeting we’re looking for folks with renewed energy to make the kind of commitment that will help win this crucial victory. Toward this end, we need people to work on fund-raising, legislation, media relations, increasing our paid membership, coordination of volunteers, grassroots organizing and education—of both the public-at-large and our own community.

We welcome hearing from you at 800-55-MLGPA.

Even before the September annual meeting, all members of our community are encouraged to attend our regular monthly meeting on August 20th (at the same time, same location listed above for the Annual Meeting). ΔΔ
From the Oracle...

Michael Riley, Manager of Portland's newest gay dance club, explains the changes in hours and format to Winnie Weir, Editor of CPR. The new video bar, will be open every night from 4:00 PM to 1:00 AM. Call KAOS for more information, 774-2242. Check it out!

**KAOS undergoes renovations**

**Suspect indicted in Sisters break-in**

According to a recent report in the Portland Press Herald, a Cumberland County grand jury has indicted a 28-year-old transient in connection with 13 break-ins at businesses in Portland's West End, Westbrook, Falmouth, Yarmouth and South Portland. The break-ins occurred in the spring of this year.

The report goes on to say that the crime spree happened during the late-night hours between March 21 and May 8. Charles E. Jones is accused of breaking into a cluster of businesses in the Danforth Street area, including Albert's Cafe, Suitsini clothing store, Mr. Scissors II, Woodfords Cafe, Rustique's Lounge, New England Imports and Sisters bar.

Sisters was broken into twice during this time, leaving the owners and the community shocked and angry. Support from the community has enabled Sisters to replace many of the stolen items. △

**Support group for lesbians offered in Bangor**

According to a recent press release, the Lesbian Health Project of the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center is now offering a support group for any woman who self-identifies as a lesbian. In this woman-only, lesbian-only space created by forming this group, women will be able to explore their issues and affirm themselves and one another as lesbians.

Confidentiality, open-mindedness and respect are requirements for the support group to thrive and meet the needs of participants.

This group will meet on the first and third Wednesdays of every month from 6:30 - 8:00 pm at the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center, 334 Harlow Street (In Town Plaza, Bangor). If you would like more information, you are encouraged to call 947-5337. △

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**Symposium XXI Update**

from Communiquer - newsletter of Northern Lambda Nord

The Maine Lesbian and Gay men's Symposium XXI, whose theme is "Coming of Age," will be held Friday through Monday, May 26-29, 1995 on the campus of the University of Maine at Presque Isle. A small, but dedicated planning committee has been meeting regularly to put together this event.

Committee members met with representatives of the University Conferences Office and reviewed our campus needs for the Symposium. Rather than use classroom spaces in Folsom-Pullen Hall, where workshops and films were held at the three previous Symposia at UMPI, the 1995 event will take advantage of the new Campus Center. Campus officials gave Symposium Committee members a tour of this new facility, which promises to offer spectacular new spaces for many of the workshops, films, Saturday evening banquet and dance.

Even Kelly Commons, the dining hall attached to the Campus Center, will have undergone renovations in time for Symposium. Emerson Hall, the dormitory, will be used again to house conference participants.

The planning committee has prepared a preliminary budget, is working on a grant application to help fund the conference, and is contacting several possible keynote speakers and entertainers. More details will be available when plans become finalized. △
EDITORIAL: Radical right hijacks Republican Party

The Republican Party was hijacked in the late 19th century. What started off as the political tool of the abolitionists in the 1850's and 60's, became the political tool of big business and the wealthy in the 1880's and 90's. And so it remained until very recently, when its swing to conservatism was again hijacked after the 1964 Goldwater campaign by the radical religious right.

The intellectual (if such it can be called) ancestry of the radical religious right is not found in the Republican Party at any time in U.S. history. If you're looking for the roots of what they call "traditional American values" you need look no further than the Know-Nothings of the 1850's and the presidential candidacy of Millard Fillmore. This group was the first to announce what became known as Nativist views. Among these were anti-immigration, anti-semitism, anti-Catholicism and racism. These "Christians" thought of themselves as the only "real" Americans and endowed themselves with the idea that they would be the gate-keepers of America and that God agreed with them, or better put, that they agreed with God. I wonder if God really thinks about U.S. immigration policy.

The Know-Nothings were a complete subversion of what the Founding Fathers intended for America. The radical religious right maintains, and it is the agenda of the radical right. Bennett has hit upon the fundamental contradiction facing Republicans and all alleged conservatives. To say that homosexuals are not intrusive government. "The conservative movement is founded on the simple tenet that people have the right to live as they please, as long as they don't hurt anyone else in the process. No one has ever shown me how being gay or lesbian harms anyone else."

What legislation is possibly more intrusive than that which tells people what to do with their bodies, when to bear children or with whom to have sex, and yet this is the agenda of the radical right. Bennett would have us believe it's just plain old conservatism — it is not. It is thinly disguised totalitarianism dressed up in religious garb.

Goldwater goes on to say, "I must protect gays on the job," (see page 13 for complete text) but in the article he points out that, "The conservative movement is founded on the simple tenet that people have the right to live as they please, as long as they don't hurt anyone else in the process. No one has ever shown me how being gay or lesbian harms anyone else."

It is disturbing, in the wake of Oliver North's victory in the Virginia Republican Senate primary, to see mainstream Republican leaders like Senator Bob Dole, former Defense Secretary Richard Cheney and former Secretary of Education, William Bennett declare their allegiance to this lunatic fringe.

In a recent editorial in the Portland Press Herald, Bennett claims to have led the way in this movement for over a decade. He charges that the crisis of the radical religious right is bigotry. The irony is bearable . . . but, it's an old trick — you accuse your opponent of what you yourself are guilty of. Who, anywhere on today's American political spectrum, is more guilty of bigotry than the radical religious right?

Bennett has the reckless bad taste, especially considering what Christian bigots say about PWAs (People with AIDS), to say that homosexuals are not even guilty of bigotry. Bennett has the reckless bad taste, especially considering what Christian bigots say about PWAs (People with AIDS), to say that homosexuals are not just plain old conservatism — it is not.

All the rest of the talk is bunk. If the radical right is denied political office in this country, then they will go the way of other fringe groups. If their message does not translate into electoral success, you'll see how fast Bennett, Dole and Cheney can't recall ever supporting the radical Christian agenda (to the best of their recollection). When someone wins political office in America, they must swear to uphold the Constitution — that is an oath the radical right cannot keep.
**MAINE AIDS ALLIANCE**

Member Organizations

**AIDS Coalition of Lincoln County:** P.O. Box 421, Damariscotta, ME 04543-0421. Call 563-8953.

**AIDS Lodging House:** P.O. Box 3820, Portland, ME 04101. Call 785-1000.

**Androscoggin Valley AIDS Coalition:** P.O. Box 5886, Rumford, ME 04276. Call 823-4170.

**Children's AIDS Network:** P.O. Box 793, Portland, ME 04104. Call 761-1782.

**Community AIDS Awareness Program:** P.O. Box 457 Rumford, ME 04276. Call 823-2899.

**Community Task Force on AIDS Educ.:** P.O. Box 941, Naples, ME 04055. Call 785-6608.

**Day program:** 32 Winthrop St., Augusta, ME 04330. Call 626-3432.

**Down East AIDS Network:** 114 State St., Ellsworth, ME 04605. Call 667-3506.

**Eastern Maine AIDS Network:** P.O. Box 2038, Bangor, ME 04401. Call 990-3626.

**Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services:** P.O. Box 57, Bruswick, ME 04011-0057. Call 725-4955.

**Names Project/Maine:** P.O. Box 4319, Portland, ME 04101. Call 774-2198.

**Oxford Hills Community AIDS Network:** P.O. Box 513, Paris, ME 04271-0113. Call 743-7451.

**People With AIDS Coalition of ME:** 696 Congress Street, Portland, ME 04101. Call 773-1000.

**St. John Valley AIDS Task Force:** c/o NMCC, 143 E. Main St., Fort Kent, ME 04743. Call 834-3355.

**The AIDS Project:** 22 Monument Sq., 5th fl., Portland, ME 04101. Call 774-4477.

**Waldo-Knox AIDS Coalition:** P.O. Box 956, Belfast, ME 04915. Call 338-1847.

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**CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS**

△ Blue collar queens! Working class and poor gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered and transsexual people! What is "Gay Community" and how do you fit in? An anthology is accepting submissions that explore the relationship between class background and queerness. Using life experience work, poetry, short stories, theoretical essays and cultural commentary, this anthology will challenge the sometimes narrow definition of gay and lesbian community by revealing voices whose experience of class combined with race, gender, age and ethnicity does not always mirror the expected image. Write for guidelines: Susan Raffo, Anthology, P.O. Box 8939, Minneapolis, MN 55408. Deadline is October 1st. **△**

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:**

△ Lesbian or bisexual women to do a short interview for a research paper. Anonymity guaranteed! Topic of paper is "Difficulties of women living in a male dominated society." Call Suzen, 799-1951. **△**

**FOR SALE**

△ Photos of Gay Games IV and Stonewall. Team Maine and collection of the physique show (men and women) held at Madison Square Garden available. Call CPR office, 879-1342. **△**

**FOR RENT**

△ PORTLAND: Large, sunny one bedroom apartment, 2nd floor, Victorian home. Pets negotiable. Heat, hot water and electricity included. $500/month + security deposit. Available immediately. Call Kim or Stacy at 773-0119. **△**


△ RICHMOND: Two lesbians looking for another to share spacious antique bedroom apartment, 2nd floor, Victorian home. Pets negotiable, sense of humor a must. $275/month + 1/3 utilities. Call 737-8153. **△**

**MASSAGE**


**HELP WANTED**

△ Good use for some old or discarded co-dependent behaviors-attachment and energy for a routine of fun and healthy walking, hiking, biking, bowling (?) - (yours ??) - camping (?), sailing. I don't like to do those alone all the time! Bring along your friend(s)? Additional requirement: Humor. Call 775-0015. **△**

**ADVERTISING MANAGER & REPORTERS:** Community Pride Reporter needs additional staff. Advertising manager needed to coordinate and implement advertising strategy. Compensation negotiable. Also looking for reporters, particularly in Bangor, Houlton, Lewiston, Auburn, Augusta and Farmington. Please submit letter of interest with writing sample and qualifications to: CPR, 142 High Street, Suite #634, Portland ME 04101. **△**

**DISC JOCKEY WANTED:** Northern Lamba Nord needs a DJ for an October 1st dance. Must have your own equipment and excellent dance music. Call or write with yourNorthern Lambda, PO Box 950, Caribou ME 04736-0990, 207498-2088 (voice/TDD). **△**

**TRAVEL/VACATION**

△ LESBIAN PARADISE!! 20 charming rooms, 100 mountain acres, pool, hot tub, hiking/rocking trails, courts, games, peace and privacy. We're your perfect vacation choice year round! Week-long and midweek discounts. HIGHLANDS INN, Box 1180P, Bethlehem, NH 03574, (603) 869-3978. **△**

**ROMANTIC getaway weekend for couples. Emphasis on intimacy and romance. Lovely Inn by the ocean on the Maine coast. November 4-6. FMI call Gloria, 207/442-7061. **△**

**BUSINESS ORGANIZATION**

△ Attention lesbian and bisexual business and professional women! If you are a business owner, serve in sales, or are directly involved as a professional within the business community, we should get together and explore the benefits of forming our own community organization. The objective of this organization would be to establish an information network to better serve our community and assist each other. (A lesbian/bisexual Chamber of Commerce?) If you are interested in exploring options around establishing our own business organization, call Carolyn Balbert at 879-5247, or Winnie Weir at 879-1342. **△**

**ALTERNATIVE PRACTITIONERS**

△ Looking for women practitioners and food vendors for the SPECTRUM OF HEALTH release FEAR FOR WOMEN, presented by Webwork (Gloria Krellman) with contributing sponsors: USM School of Nursing, Women's Studies, and The Odyssey. Sunday September 15th, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Campus Center, USM, Portland. Practitioners table $50. Vendors $100. Space limited. Reserve early. Call Gloria at 442-7061. **△**

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**SUPPORT GROUPS**


△ Ongoing Dream Group: This closed experiential group will explore members' dreams through many approaches: Jungian, Gestalt, and Scultping. Attention also paid to Lucid Dreaming, Dream Incubation, Active imagination, and Spirituality. Thursday evenings, 19 pm, 14 weeks with the option to continue in subsequent "dream cycles." Portland-based. Begins September 15th. $20-$40 per session. Call Rick Bouchard at 828-2031 for interview. **△**

**CLASSIFIED AD RATE:**

$8.00 for the first 40 words.

10¢ per word over 40. Mail your ad to CPR, 142 High St., Suite #634, Portland ME 04101.
Welcome again to the CPR Arts section!

by J. H. Morgan

Despite the summer heat, we've managed to rustle up a review or two of remarkable exhibits, movies, videos and books. As summer gradually begins to wind down, take note of a few events, coming up and continuing, to mark down on the calendar. There's still a lot going on of interest to the community, whether you call Maine home or Vacationland.

You may want to seek refuge from the late summer heat at the Portland Museum of Art and see the Rodin exhibit (see the article in this section) and perhaps check out the recently opened Museum Café.

Send a summer evening at the Oak Street Theatre's "Woman in a Suitcase" by Peak Island's own Julie Goell, running from August 11th to the 15th and 25th to 28th. This one-woman show combines mime, Commedia Dell'Arte and European clowning techniques to tell its story. Call 775-5103 for times and tickets.

If these last days of Maine's short summer make you want poetic, perhaps you'll want to consider the National Poetry Competition sponsored by the International Library of Famous Poets. But hurry; entries must be postmarked by midnight, August 15th. To enter, send one poem, 20 lines or less to: National Poetry Competition, 421 N. Rodeo Dr., Suite 455, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Grand prize is a cashier's check for $1000.

"Remember, these are our community's art pages. If you know of an event of interest, or have ideas for reviews, articles, or other things for these pages, please let us know. Call the Arts Editor, Joe, at 874-0419 or the CPR office at 879-1342."

Music on Review:

Disappear Fear:
Fixing our Lives
by Ainsel L. Ponti

There are several musicians on my list of "where's the new album?" Annie Lennox and Shawn Colvin (hers is out real soon) and certainly the Baltimore band whose first three releases were on their own "Disappear Fear." I received a post card announcing it George. Some people think he's a champion and I live inside you." says it all.

The song, "Fix My Life," is a reality check woven into a love song in a way that only Sonia Rutstein can do. . . that Ron ignored and George abandoned, I'm the queer and voiceless champion and I live inside you."

"My name is America but I pronounced it George. Some people think I'm rich but I am mostly poor, and I cover it up to get you to fight in my war" proclaims "Washington Work Song". . .

There's something about being sisters that makes their harmonies all the more pleasing and sincere. Sonia can also dazzle with her guitar and harmonica. Their live show captures her essence best. The music thrives off Sonia and she off it. Her vocals are crisp and clear and can be powerful yet gorgeous. Add Cindy's vocals on top of this and it's a sound to behold. "Disappear Fear." You could call them a lesbian band or a political band, but it seems to me that they just want to play their music. "How many of us can get the nowness of this tune just enough to enlighten all the skies." This line from "Play the Music" perhaps says it all.

This new album will have you dancing and may bring you to tears. I would recommend you listen. A line from the classic "Sink The Censorship" says, "Someone shot imagine up my veins." With this new album it is evident their supply remains ample. AA

See Rodin, page 23

Music on Review:

RODIN: The Ultimate Outsider

by Alexander Wallace

In a day when artistic expression has again become the target of political demagogues and religious fanatics united to deprive everyone - artist and citizen - of their free speech and free thought rights, it is more than appropriate that THE PORTLAND MUSEUM OF ART is presenting a major retrospective of the sculpture of AUGUSTE RODIN, the most provocative, sexually disturbing, subversive and revolutionary artist of his time.

In a pre-electric light age, when paintings and sculpture were the television and movies of the day, paintings and sculptures were the popular entertainment. Artists were the rock stars and sports heroes of The Rodin Age. Fans were as passionate about art then as fans are about soccer today. Galleries and museums were as crowded as St Mellon flocks. Fans waited on line as if it were Dylan at The State. The awarding of a major commission by a city or nation to this or that artist to create a monument to a great national hero or artist was passionately debated on the street, in town councils and in parliament. The placement of a major commission was as hotly debated as Health Care. The yearly Salons of art and sculpture were thronged the way auto shows used to be.

France dominated the art world in Victorian times, and Paris was the Mecca. Paris and France were, in turn, dominated by the Ministry of Fine Arts, a government agency, which doled out huge commissions; the Institute de France, . . . the official watch-dog of French culture . . . and the Academie and the Ecoles des Beaux Arts, which ran the "acceptable" schools and the annual Salons. Acceptance by these groups meant instant fame and fortune; rejection could mean disaster. They were conservative to the point of constipation, but "in charge," with the full support of the Establishment, the Church and the New Capitalists. France was still ardently Catholic; the Anglo-French Establishment, fanatically, hypocritically, religious and proper.

An acceptable pattern of behavior lay like a shroud over the Victorian world. Lift it, display the truth - the infinite variety of life - and suffer the fate of an Oscar Wilde. The Patriarchal Principle, supported by Church and State ruled: women were still property, sex was for men only; deviation from the "norm" was un-thinkable. "Immmoral" art was ruthlessly censored and homosexuals routinely imprisoned. But this smug, bourgeois establishment was rapidly being challenged by the likes of Monet, Emile Zola, Isadora Duncan, Anatole France, Andre Gide, Nijinski, Shaw, Cezanne, Duse, Landowska, Proust and countless others: new artists who had new things to say and new ways to say them, who would not be held back by polite convention, religious dicta or smug provincialism. In the visual arts, none had the impact of Auguste Rodin. He was the giant, the Prometheus, who (finally) towered over the age.

This new Rodin exhibition is as hotly debated as Health Care. The yearly Salons of art and sculpture were thronged the way auto shows used to be. France dominated the art world in Victorian times, and Paris was the Mecca. Paris and France were, in turn, dominated by the Ministry of Fine Arts, a government agency, which doled out huge commissions; the Institute de France, . . . the official watch-dog of French culture . . . and the Academie and the Ecoles des Beaux Arts, which ran the "acceptable" schools and the annual Salons. Acceptance by these groups meant instant fame and fortune; rejection could mean disaster. They were conservative to the point of constipation, but "in charge," with the full support of the Establishment, the Church and the New Capitalists. France was still ardently Catholic; the Anglo-French Establishment, fanatically, hypo-critically, religious and proper.

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Into this world of prim, religious Victorian propriety, where even Parisian women were buttoned to the chin, the...
People can look at my artwork and have a completely different idea of it than I do, and that's totally OK. - Sean Basey.

Artist Profile — Sean Hasey by Bruce Balboni

Sean Hasey is a 4 year resident of Portland who is originally from Bangor. He is currently a student at USM and has weathered the storm of his embattled professor, Chris Reed, from whom he has learned a lot about art. Hasey, a painter and musician, plans to add sculpture to his repertoire — well as a minor in Women's Studies during his last two years at school. After that he plans to check out warmer climes like Albuquerque or San Francisco. You can hear him perform at Raffles Cafe in Portland on August 26th.

Q: Is there any way in which there is a connection between your work and your sexuality?

A: I wasn't surprised that you asked to do this interview because I have been sort of dealing with the issue of my sexuality for the last . . . who knows how long . . . and I've finally come to terms with it in the last six months or so. I had two art history classes last year with Chris Reed that dealt with a lot of gay and lesbian issues and feminist issues. Gender identity in modern art was the subject of one of the courses. I guess I'm not sure where the connection is in my art work but I've learned a lot about where the connection is in other people's art work.

Q: How have you come to terms with your sexuality?

A: I guess the big question for me was — am I gay, am I bisexual, am I heterosexual . . . but I guess wouldn't. I don't know how to word it . . . it doesn't . . . Do you encounter this a lot, people going . . . umm . . . umm . . .

Q: Sure, not only when asking other people but even when discussing it myself. I have always felt a resistance to being defined, not wanting to accept a label. I've had relationships with women, some of which lasted up to the loss of Nikki as a support. But there is much more to Ellen's relationship with Kyle and, as it grows and deepens, the reader is pulled along on a wave of feeling that seems much too intense to be vicarious.

Eventually, the Army makes a decision about Major Dillingger's posting that catapults Ellen into yet another phase of her growth, which takes her back home to Maine, and brings her to friendship with another important woman in her life, Nina Pinero, her advisor and mentor at UMaine, Presque Isle. It is in this setting that Ellen begins a reconciliation with her family and, ultimately, the reclamation of her own intellectual, spiritual, and sexual power.

Thin Fire (the title comes from a line in a Sapphic poem) defies easy pigeon-holing: on the face of it, it's a romantic, lesbian, coming-out novel. It also contains powerful wisdom about the power of love and the way people can suppress our lives. Everything shown is still happening, though under the cloud of AIDS. People who are not gay men and who view this film should maintain an open mind and suspend judgment. Homosexuality presents deep personal and emotional conflicts, not only for the homosexual, but also for other men wherever they fall within the circle of sexual orientation.

"Sex is . . ." is one of the most down-to-earth and realistic representations of what it was, and is, to be a sexually active gay man. ΔΔ

See PROFILE, page 22

Thin Fire

Author: Nanci Little
Madwoman Press,
227 pp, $9.95
Reviewed by: D.G. Cook

... I think almost every woman, sometime in her life, has a physical attraction to another woman. Some of us act on it. Some don't. Some of us accept it. Some don't. Some of us embrace it. I did.

The cover blurb of Thin Fire says, "In this vivid, provocative and sexy book, you will meet many unforgettable women, and discover experiences you might otherwise never know." This is, if anything, an understatement. The first third of the novel takes place in the mid-70s within the confines — physical and spiritual — of the U.S. Army's "2nd Armored Division Replacement Center," at Fort Hood Texas. In this setting, the protagonist, Ellen McNally, meets two of the women who will change her life — permanently. The first, Nikki Cole, is a feisty lesbian who becomes Ellen's roommate. Nikki is attracted to Ellen from the moment she lays eyes on her and, although Ellen is straight, she is definitely not narrow, so the women quickly become friends.

The army has much of the stress you'd expect, but for women there is the additional ever-present pressure of being judged by a different standard — of intelligence, military competence, and sexual availability. One consequence is that the army is the perfect male assumption that women are in the army mainly to satisfy the carnal needs of the men. Ellen, who is trying to fill a void she's not even totally aware of, plays into this belief by spending off-hours battling her own confusion about her sexuality. The good ol' boy forcibly sodomizes her. This event sets in motion a series of irrevocable changes in Ellen's life and in the lives of the women close to her.

Ellen's relationship with Nikki is chaste, the emotional connection between them is powerful and deep. For example, when Ellen, who is beginning to understand the specialness of the friendship of another woman, says, "It's not like with the guys, is it ... It's way different from that." Nikki answers "Way different ... Loving women is as different from the guys as we are from the other women in this shitty place ..." Sadly, the weight of Nikki's unrequited love for Ellen and the social consequences of her attempts to exact revenge from the man who raped Ellen, lead Nikki to a decision which affects them both forever.

The second Woman of Great Importance in this book is the Disabled, the Executive Officer who has a deserved reputation for toughness and enforcement of army rules and discipline, but who also has a carefully hidden side that catalyzes the development of Ellen's self-awareness and sexuality. The Major's kindness, modulated and concealed under the guise and etiquette of army discipline, helps Ellen to heal both from her experience as a sexual object and from the loss of Nikki as a support. But there is much more to Ellen's relationship with Kyle and, as it grows and deepens, the reader is pulled along on a wave of feeling that seems much too intense to be vicarious.

Eventually, the Army makes a decision about Major Dillingger's posting that catapults Ellen into yet another phase of her growth, which takes her back home to Maine, and brings her to friendship with another important woman in her life, Nina Pinero, her advisor and mentor at UMaine, Presque Isle. It is in this setting that Ellen begins a reconciliation with her family and, ultimately, the reclamation of her own intellectual, spiritual, and sexual power.

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"Sex is . . ." is one of the most down-to-earth and realistic representations of what it was, and is, to be a sexually active gay man.

See THIN FIRE, page 23

Video on Review:

"Sex is . . ." directed by Mark Huestis

by Jason Salvatore, Guest Reviewer

"Sex is . . ." was the winner of Best Gay Film at the 1993 Berlin International Film Festival, it is directed by Mark Huestis. This documentary has broken box office records in San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles and Seattle, and with good reason . . . it is riveting. The film has its Maine premiere in Portland on August 21-23, at the Movies at 10 Exchange Street, and is also available on video at Videoport.

Huestis contacted Community Pride Reporter and provided us with a copy of the film. The first section of "Sex is . . ." deals with the morals of finding oneself in a time when homosexuality was hush, hush. The gay men who are interviewed describe their first sexual experiences, good or bad, and their comments are pretty wild though not uncommon. These discussions are interspersed with graphic sexual footage which some people will undoubtedly wish were of longer duration. Ah, the exquisite pleasure of yearning.

"Sex is . . ." is one of the most down-to-earth and realistic representations of what it was, and is, to be a sexually active gay man.

See PROFEILE, page 22
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OUT! OF TOWN
Can you believe it? Summer is almost over. It won't be too much longer before we start to see the reds, the yellows, and the oranges of fall foliage. The fact is actually a great time to travel. Fall is the "off-season" to a lot of destinations. No crowds. No kids. Just peace and quite - and reasonably good weather. My favorite for Florida is mid-October. The weather is still quite warm - but not blistering hot - and the humidity is not as bad. Because it is the off-season, there are usually bargains everywhere. Hotels in the Orlando area frequently advertise rooms for $25 per night. There aren't any crowds at the major attractions like Disney World, Sea World, Universal Studios, or Busch Gardens. It's the one time of year when you won't have to stand in line for your favorite ride. Even restaurants will offer off-season specials. And because it is one of the slowest seasons for the airlines, there have been numerous fall fare-wars.

Likewise, another good destination is Europe. Like Florida, it is the off-season. No crowds and pleasant weather. You don't normally see tremendous savings in airfare in the fall, but there have been international fare-wars. The Province of Quebec legalized gambling by several native Indian tribes. They have established several casinos - one in Montreal, one in Quebec City and several smaller ones outside of Quebec City. The one in Montreal is located in the former French Pavilion for the Province of Quebec legalized gambling by several native Indian tribes. They have established several casinos - one in Montreal, one in Quebec City and several smaller ones outside of Quebec City. The one in Montreal is located in the former French Pavilion for the Mont-
Gays and Lesbians invade beaches to promote visibility

PORTLAND: More than 650 gay men and lesbians occupied an area of the Ogunquit oceanfront this past Sunday to show support for the Maine Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance (MLGPA) and to increase the visibility of homosexuals in Maine. Ogunquit, a well-known vacation destination for gays and lesbians, was selected as a rallying site for Maine's own homosexual community to encourage community education and political involvement.

Sunday's fine weather attracted thousands of gay men and lesbians to Ogunquit from many Canadian provinces and northeastern states. A large group from New Hampshire was among the several hundred that joined with MLGPA at a huge rainbow banner where they exchanged insights and strategies regarding state-wide equal rights protections for all sexual minorities.

Karen Geraghty, President of MLGPA, stated that she was overwhelmed with the response to the invitations that were sent to MLGPA members for this event. "When more gay men and lesbians find the courage to come out of their closets to relate their experiences of isolation and discrimination, every citizen will enthusiastically support equal rights legislation. We fear the unfamiliar. When ordinary neighbors, friends and co-workers decide to "come out" (confirm their sexual orientation), false stereotypes and fears are replaced with the truth — that homosexuals share a range of life-styles just like heterosexuals." Kaufman added, "the most fundamental difference is that the homosexual life-styles all include the constant fear of discrimination, violence and harassment."

Kaufman referred to a New York Times poll in which it was shown that "visibility campaigns like these are effective." He said, "The survey, conducted nationally, showed that individuals who know at least one lesbian or gay man are twice as likely to agree that excluding amendments to Maine's human rights laws under a more enlightened governor."

Brian Kaufman, an organizational psychologist and MLGPA member, explained that "visibility increases understanding...individuals who know of least one lesbian or gay man are twice as likely to support anti-discrimination laws for gay people.

Masculine Food

Chew On This

Last month, I began a discussion of Candida Albicans, especially as it affects the intestinal tract. I also listed some of the symptoms of this yeast infection when it is present in the intestines. This month, I would like to discuss one of the strategies involved in the treatment of an intestinal yeast infection, namely, diet.

If you studied this disorder, and prescribed diet for its treatment, I have been dismayed to find that, in some areas at least, some of the guidelines are conflicting. However, there are many things about which all the books agree. It might be easier to begin this discussion by listing the foods one can eat on the Candida diet. Fresh vegetables head the list. Root vegetables and leafy greens are especially favored, and garlic is encouraged because it is a highly effective antifungal agent. If you can afford to purchase organic produce, this would be best. No use adding chemicals and insecticides to your already compromised system. However, reading this far suggests that all produce be soaked in a solution of one tablespoon of Clorox bleach to two gallons of cool water. Soak produce for fifteen minutes, then rinse thoroughly in plain cold water.

The one problem I've discovered thus far is that soaking the produce all at once and then storing it in the refrigerator won't do the job. The purpose of the soaking is not only to get rid of the chemicals and insecticides, but also to get rid of the mold which naturally grows on fruits and vegetables. It is just as important to get rid of the mold on a Candida diet as it is to eliminate as many of the chemicals and insecticides as possible. Therefore, it is necessary to bathe the produce in the Clorox solution just before consumption. If you are a meat eater, meats are also allowed in the yeast free diet. But the suggestion is that they be consumed in moderation. Moreover, as is the case with vegetables, try to find meats and fish which are less apt to be contaminated with toxic chemicals, antibiotics and/or hormones. This means organic! There's no way around this one with the Clorox bottle! Most health food stores sell a limited variety of meats, and there are also a few organic farmers in Maine. It would be well worth your while to scout your local area to find a good supply of organically grown meat. As for fish, well there's not much you can do about water pollution. According to the literature, it's best to eat a variety of fish to lower the chances of your ingesting too much of any one toxin found in our waters. (Fish live at various depths and therefore pick up different toxins.)

Whole grains are also allowed on the yeast free diet. But again, try to vary the kinds you eat so that you don't build up an intolerance to any one of them by overconsumption. Amaranth, Quinoa and Buckwheat flours are a good alternative to white flour. I've also discovered tapioca flour, which is excellent in making waffles!

Water is the beverage of choice for the yeast free diet. But again, tap water usually contains chemicals which may disagree with you and play a part in causing your symptoms. So the recommendation is filtered, distilled or bottled water. All the books warn that if you get bottled water, be sure it is stored in glass containers because chemicals leach into water in plastic bottles.

Now you know what you can eat, let's look at what's off limits. Milk, cheese, yogurt and other dairy products are to be avoided, as are eggs or egg-containing foods. So are foods containing wheat or rye, white flour products, all sugar, even natural sugars like honey, molasses or maple syrup, chocolate and cola, yeast-containing foods, coffee and alcohol, soy products, peanuts, coloring and additives. Fruit is also off limits, especially during the first few weeks. Wow... that's a long list. However, there is some mercy here.

Although the books say to stay away from sugars, fruit and fat, my own doctor, knowing my limits as she does, and also knowing that this diet needs to be doable, especially since it is going to take one to two years to clear the intestinal candida problems, has given me some leeway. First, she has allowed me a maximum of two fruits a day. Fruit should be eaten alone, and at least one hour before consuming other foods, and two to three hours after other foods have been consumed. Also, she has allowed

See CHEW, page 21

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In These Times: Living with Homophobia
by David Smith

Homophobia always hurts. We maneuver through life hoping to minimize its impact on our lives. Some days we are successful, some days we aren't. When homophobia is expressed by those we love and cherish, the pain can be devastating. Such denial of who we are by those we trust and expect to be there for us can even lead to death. For some of us, our families of origin inflict that pain on us. This month I want to examine the many situations within the families of origin of lesbians and gay men that can unleash a particularly hurtful and cruel form of homophobia.

For sure, some gay men and lesbians have wonderful families of origin made up of mothers and fathers, siblings and cousins who actively support them as they come out and live openly in the world. The family depicted in the movie "Philadelphia" is one such family. Yet, the most often heard criticism from gay people of that movie was that no gay person has that kind of family! While I disagree because I have known families like that, this comment was made too often for there not to be truth in it. And what is a gay person's reality like if he or she believes that no supportive family can or does exist? Most families probably exist somewhere on a continuum that goes from rejection—to loving support. Where does your family of origin fall? Write and tell us of your experiences.

There are many ways that families express their homophobia. One man wrote and told of not having a relationship with his sons for many years because his ex-wife poisoned them against him—just because he's gay. He regrets his decision to be forthcoming and honest with her. Many times children have been taken away from lesbians or gay parents due to cultural homophobia. But more importantly, many gay people are denied the right to have children just because we live in a heterosexist society that makes children chattel of parents. Kabili Gibran writes, "Your children are not your children, they come through you but are not of you." Only in a patriarchal society, where children are owned by men (heterosexual) and women does society lose its children. In many cultures children are seen as being a part of the entire culture, not belonging to anyone, and they are parented by everyone, regardless of sexual orientation. We are denied children in many ways. And so many of us have parents who have abandoned us just because we are gay.

That problem is seen so clearly with homeless youth—many of whom were thrown out because they are gay. The streets of urban centers are crowded with too many gay children who have been discarded by families of origin. The suicide rate also shows us the effect of this homophobia. Over 35% of all completed suicides among teens are gay and lesbian youth.

In the book Coming Out Within, O’Neal and Ritter point out a significant loss experienced by gay men and lesbians in our society. This is the loss of inter-generational bonding. Along with a life vision, a sense of belonging to the world, we need to be connected to the generation that came before us and the one that comes after us. For heterosexuals this is accomplished by the current system. But for us, it’s different. Our parents often tolerate our homosexuality, but give more value and support to our siblings who marry heterosexually and produce children. Some of us lose that connection entirely as we see in the case of discarded gay youth, some maintain and work at a less than ideal relationship with our parents, (and its often very hard work - work that is mostly left to us) and too few of us have loving, caring and supportive parents. Homophobia in our families of origin is sometimes the hardest to deal with.

That is why so many gay and lesbian people just choose never to come out formally. It is never discussed. I know two lesbians who go home to their respective families of origin for the holidays. They never go as a couple. They have been living together for years. Their parents rarely visit and when they do, these women sleep in separate beds. Birthdays of lovers, partners and significant others of gay men and lesbians are often ignored by families of origin. The coming out process so often gets snagged when we try to think of ways to tell our parents we are gay.

What do you know of the ways to come out to families? What is the gentlest way a gay person can do this? I would be very interested in hearing about this from you. I would also like to hear about any aspect of homophobia in your lives. We can try to make this column a dialogue. Let's hear from you. Write to David Smith, c/o Community Pride Reporter, 142 High Street, Suite #634, Portland, Maine 04101. ΔΔ

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CHEW, from page 19
me one tablespoon of sweetener a day, provided it is natural, like honey, molasses, rice syrup, or maple syrup. I'm on a low fat diet, which means she allows me between 30 and 40 grams of fat each day. After hearing all the "no's" and "can't eats", I felt like I was being given the moon with these few reprieves.

While this diet may seem very rigid, and that's because it is, the payoff is well worth it. I continue to encourage you to explore your health issues.

We often settle for less than optimum health, usually because our symptoms don't seem to be interrelated, and we give up trying to figure out what's really happening.

Next month, I will discuss some of the finer points of the yeast free diet. In the meantime, be good to your body! ΔΔ

OUT! from page 18
treat Expo '67 and houses over 1500 slot machines and over 90 gaming tables. In addition to these casino activities, there is a large casino called Foxwood in western Connecticut - this one run by one of the states Indian tribes. There are several tour operators running gambling tours to these destinations at reasonable prices.

In future columns, I would like to answer questions and concerns that you may have. Please feel free to write to me with your questions. Please send any correspondence to me in care of this newspaper. ΔΔ

From around the world
• Continuing along the mall lined five people deep, she (Margaret Thatcher) stopped periodically to shake hands, or stooped to kill and embrace small children. (Western News, Vancouver)

• The new British library - sitting comfortably on large piles (New Scientist, England)

• Tracey, age 21, pictured above waking up at Crest Hotel, Cardiff, today won the votes of the judges with her stunning blonde hair, blue eyes and 34-34-34 figure. (South Wales Echo)

• While the steel band from William Penn Comprehensive School entertained, the Bishop (of Southwark) walked among the crowds eating their picnic lunches. (Southwark News, England) ΔΔ
to two years so I guess that makes me bisexual, but I know that the primary turn-on for me is male, so where do I fit? And then I think, well, fuck it all, I'm attracted to whomever I'm attracted to. Look at that.

A: I guess that would define it pretty well for me, that I'm attracted to who I'm attracted to and that I can envision myself having sexual relationships with guys, but I never have. I've had sexual relations with women.

Q: So, getting back to your art work, did the questions about your sexuality find an expression in your work or was it an obstacle to your work?

A: I don't know that my sexuality has been integrated with my art work.

Q: Would you say it's irrelevant?

A: I don't know if I'd say it's irrelevant... It's pretty non-existent in my art work for it.

Q: From what little I know about post-modernism even the selection of the image (in your collages) would be related to your sexual identity. A psychologist, or if there is such a thing as an art psychologist, would be able to look at some of your collages and draw conclusions about why you picked this image or that image and that it is in fact inescapably related to your sexuality. Isn't that one of the thrusts of post-modernism, the inescapable connection between the artist's sexuality and his or her selection of images?

A: I feel like a lot of times when I'm doing my art work that on some level I'm conscious of what I'm doing. The self-portraits that I showed you (photo collages) really sort of did themselves. I took the photographs, but all the other images around them... I gave myself a certain group of images to choose from which happened to be photographs of myself, my family and different people. I've been in relationships with... just happened, and they're inappplicable, and if a psychologist wants to look at it and analyze it... Q: So maybe "irrelevant" is not the right word... "unconscious" is better. In other words, it's not that there's no connection, it's just that you're unaware of the connection, it's so ingrained.

A: I haven't had a psychologist look at my art work to figure out where the sexual overtones are...

Before I took Chris's class, I felt like art was a totally subjective experience in that when I looked at a piece of art work it was how I felt about it and that was all, and I still feel that way to some degree... and I guess part of what Chris helped me to understand was that it's also a cultural experience in that the person who created the piece is working out of his cultural experience, and that you can look at a piece of art work and also understand what's going on around that person. But I still feel to some degree that it is a completely subjective experience in that when I look at a piece of art work I can take away my meaning and that might have nothing to do with what that artist is thinking or feeling, or what's going on around them... and that people can do that with my art work as well... People can look at my art work and have a completely different understanding of it than I do and that's totally OK.

Q: So the motive behind your work mainly unknown to the viewer?

A: Yes, but they can see something else. There's something to be said for the artist's intentions, but there's also something to be said for the intentions a viewer gives a piece.

Q: Right. I've had artist friends whose work you would look at and verbalize your reaction and the artist would say, "huh, I didn't see that." So would you say there's not so much message in your work?

A: No, I think there's message in my work. It's just that my message might not be the one you see, or it might be. In the essays we read (in Reed's classes), people were coming up with all kinds of messages. You could come up with 80 different messages for one piece of art work. I mean, it's endless.

Q: The daily grind is difficult for everyone, but for an artist it can be worse. What obstacles have you overcome in order to pursue your dream?

A: What is my dream?

Q: What are some of your influences, artistically?

A: When I was in high school, I liked the Italian Renaissance, Michelangelo, Albrecht Durer - but that was a little too heavy to aspire to. Since then my influences come from a much wider spectrum, including music and poetry.

Q: What media have you progressed through?

A: I painted a lot between the ages of 16 and 21, I also wrote a lot during my late teens, and in the last two years I've concentrated on music. I've been writing songs since I was 16 but recently I got together enough to have a band. What kind of band is it?

A: Usually when people ask me what kind of music we play I say rock 'n roll.

Q: What do you do in the band?

A: I sing, play guitar and write.

Q: Does it have a name?

A: It's called "Ganashe."

Q: What does that mean?

A: It's the elephant-headed man in the Hindu religion, Shiva's son, the remover of obstacles.

Q: Have you been a victim of homophobia?

A: I've been called a fag a hundred thousand million times, but it hasn't happened as much as it used to. Do you have anything to add? Is there something you expected I'd ask but didn't?

A: I didn't really have any expectations. I kind of hoped it would turn out this way. I'm honored.

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SHOPPING from page 11

ter has become a marketing strategy, and this is ominous. In the '70s, the feminist movement became packaged and marketed. (Remember the Virginia Slims ads?) It marked the beginning of the backlash against the women's movement in the 1980s. (Now a shocking number of women no longer identify themselves as "feminist"). Will the Stonewall commemoration be a catalyst for activism or a new idea for a T-shirt? Will "Unity 94" and the Gay Games be remembered as a time of coming together, or another opportunity for Naya Water, Miller Brewing, and AT&T to reach an untapped market? Lesbians and Gay men and women continue to live under siege in our nation, yet sometimes the best we can do is open another bar or invent another logo.

I define "Gay Pride" as a rejection of those persons, institutions and products which are sick and harmful, or which marginalize and demean me. If every homosexually person in this country withheld their taxes until national equal protection legislation was passed, we would bring the government to its knees. If all of us refused to buy products or give money to institutions which did not offer benefits to same-sex partners, the issue would be solved tomorrow.

If every queer constituent made one phone call to their legislator, Congress would be overwhelmingly pro-gay. And to think that any one of those political actions would require less time and effort than putting on an international sporting event...

But alas, I dream! The term "Gay Community" continues to be an oxymoron. We can't even surround the "isms" within our own ranks. We play GAMES!
wrist and the ankles, burnt Auguste Rodin, with his blatantly naked “St. John the Baptist Preaching” and his “Age of Bronze”, which was accused of having been cast from life. Curiously, in Victorian times, nude, but chaste statues of women were okay, but naked, bally men were a scandal. (At the PMA show, it’s a good idea to first visit the Sculpture Court, with its Victorian era marbles by Franklin B. Simmons: chaste, mythological figures, rendered as smoothly as icing on a wedding cake; polished, finished, prim-and-proper, highly acceptable cemetery sculpture: typical of Establishment taste, pre-RODIN.)

Rodin unleashed into Victorian Society whole baccanals of naked, contorted, writhing, dancing, smelly, mewing, exulting and exulted raunchy nudes! His output was Olympian—literally. Thousands of Rodin sculptures, drawings, paintings, and predominantly nudes, exist. That they were called “Ungolino,” “Eve,” “Minotaur,” “Paolo and Francesca,” or “Adam,” should fool no one. These were your next-door neighbors coupling, the fantasy construction worker no one talks about at the office the next day, perhaps, even, “god” rejecting woman” Rodin, with great guile, once said, that “The Age of Bronze” was just a simple piece of sculpture without reference to subject.” He knew the bourgeois needed a name, a title, preferably Biblical, a safe reference point. Rodin intended that the finished works transcended the nominal subject. He succeeded. He sucked ‘em in.

Frankly erotic, (“The Ascendancy” depicts the sex act; “The Eternal Idol”, “The Kiss” and “Eternal Spring” come very close) Rodin’s nudes are starkly sensual, sensuous, very sexy, hardly Victorian. Sexier still was Rodin’s depiction of the most naked of man’s acts: “Thought.” To model shadows is to bring out the thought”, Rodin said. But the last thing the Church, the State and the Establishment wanted its artists and citizens to do was THINK!

THIN FIRE, from page 17

(now, Rodin was not a “nice man.” Lover and abuser of women, Rodin treated his common-law wife Rose, who posed for many of his masterpieces, as a slave. He abandoned his mentally challenged son. He all but destroyed Camille Claudel, his great love and a brilliant sculptress in her own right, and he was abusive to a whole slew of mistresses. All fell, or were pushed, under the wheels of art. Rodin was totally absorbed in his art; nothing else mattered. His art was himself. He was totally absorbed. “I don’t give a damn for anybody. I am interested only in myself.”

Exhibition of 1900 at the age of 60. But his absorption in his art denigrated, by his sheer power and genius, the correctness, conformity, polish, finish, blandness—the plastic acceptability of the Establishment art. Rodin openly challenged the intellectual vacuity and hypocrisy of the Establishment. His statues not only expressed his revolution’s thoughts, but their own. Rodin’s revolution was quite pagan.

Rodin may have been born a French Catholic; he spent six months as a monk mourning his sister, and he spoke often of “spirituality,” but it had nothing to do with Judeo-Christianity. “Rodin did have his religion: it was the human body.” From the “St. John the Baptist Preaching,” to “The Age of Bronze,” to the naked “Balzac” and “Burghers of Calais,” to the spread-eagled “Iris” to the legions of naked Kentaurs, Bacchantes, Eves, Fauneses and Nymphs, this is pre-Eden Man, pre-Fall Woman a total rejection of Christian dogmatics: a pagan rebirth. It honors Michelangelo, but its roots are in pagan, multi-sexual, tolerant Greece and Rome—the seeds are prehistoric.

Rodin, gay, or multi-sexual? NO! Should Lesbians and Gays make a pilgrimage to THE PORTLAND MUSEUM OF ART and to Rodin? Yes! Rodin expresses the human condition at its most multi-faceted, complex and natural. The “argument against nature,” utterly dissolves in Rodin. Additionally, Rodin was the classic outsider who was rejected, but who created so powerful and singular a universe of his own—sticking to his vision of self, never wandering— that the world was obliged to swallow its boorish, prejudiced, ignorant pride and recognize genius. Unaudented by the abuse of critics, the elite, the moralists, the demagogues, the Church and the public, Rodin forced, by sheer obstinacy and genius, his powerful, subversive, pagan, perfect opinion on the world. It can be done. It won’t be done by a Prince or an Elton John; not even by a Warhol or a Mapplethorpe. But it can be done.

RODIN: SCULPTURE FROM THE IRIS AND B. GERALD CANTOR COLLECTION through October 9, 1994, at THE PORTLAND MUSEUM OF ART. Call: 775-6148, for times, prices and FREE HOURS! For a personal, or group, guided tour, please feel free to call me at: 771-5726. AA

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