

SODOMY LAW OVERTURNED

FRANKFORT, KY - In upholding a 1990 criminal court case, the Kentucky Supreme Court has struck down the state's anti-sodomy law, ruling that the law violated the privacy rights of homosexual citizens as guaranteed under the state constitution.

The court majority opinion overturning the state law said the state "need not sympathize, agree with, or even understand the sexual preference of homosexuals" in order to recognize the rights of gays to equal treatment under the law.

CAMBRIDGE, MA - The City Council voted last week in favor of a domestic partnership law that will allow Gays to register as domestic partners and provide benefits to partners of city employees.

The ordinance permits any city residents who are at least 18, unmarried, living together, and in a relationship of mutual support, caring, and commitment to register for a domestic partnership, said City Clerk Margaret Drury.

Registered partners will be given a certificate and rights to visit their partners at city-operated hospitals and jails. Both partners also will have the right to review school records of their children.

Benefits to partners include health insurance, sick leave and bereavement leave.

The measure is being studied by a committee for possible expansion to include other non-traditional families - such as elderly siblings living together. The law will go into effect 60 days from the passage date.

This month's **NEWS** comes from *Washington Blade* and *IN*.

NGLTF DIRECTOR STEPS DOWN

by Dennis Lyons

After seven and one-half years with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), director Urvashi Vaid will step down at the end of November to be with her lover, Kate Clinton, in Provincetown. The following is an interview with Urvashi Vaid.

DL: During your time at NGLTF, what are your proudest accomplishments?

UV: I would have to say that being part of a team which transformed the organization from the NY based NGTF into a vital national gay and lesbian organization now based in Washington, DC means the most to me. In the process, we eliminated a \$100,000 debt and played a major role in fomenting grassroots organizing around the country by becoming a national resource for organizers. I am also proud to have put into place an effective fund-raising program which has enabled us to proceed with a strong gay/lesbian agenda.

DL: Besides NGLTF, what other organizations do you consider yourself to be a part of?

UV: LIPS is a group I helped form in the 1980s with a group of DC lesbians. We performed lesbian-oriented street theater for the purpose of visibility. I believe in direct action and have attended many ACT UP demos. I am looking forward to organizing again.

DL: Recently, anti-gay campaigns have been popping up around the country. What are your suggestions on mobilizing our community to combat the right wing?

UV: The first thing we have to accomplish is to take away the "it's not happening here" or "someone else will deal with it" mentality which prevails in the gay/lesbian community. I think this can only be accomplished on a state by state

basis. We must create or improve upon state organizations that will carry on NGLTF's work, i.e., skills building, media organizing and a better

philosophy about working together. Currently, there are only about a dozen functioning state organizations around the country. Here are three ways our community can work together to achieve these goals: (a) embrace and participate in local and national lobbying efforts, (b) community mobilizing through good organizing, (c) direct action - without direct action, A and B are missing part of their landscape. I would like to see organizations eventually hook-up through a national computer system, so that we will be better equipped to help each other no matter where we're located.

DL: Divisiveness has been an ongoing problem in the gay/lesbian community.

How do you think it plays to the mainstream electorate and what can we do to bring the community together?

UV: We have been very good in not letting our squabbles enter the mainstream media. Things were definitely a lot worse in the 1970s when we had an enormous division between women

More NGLTF on page 7

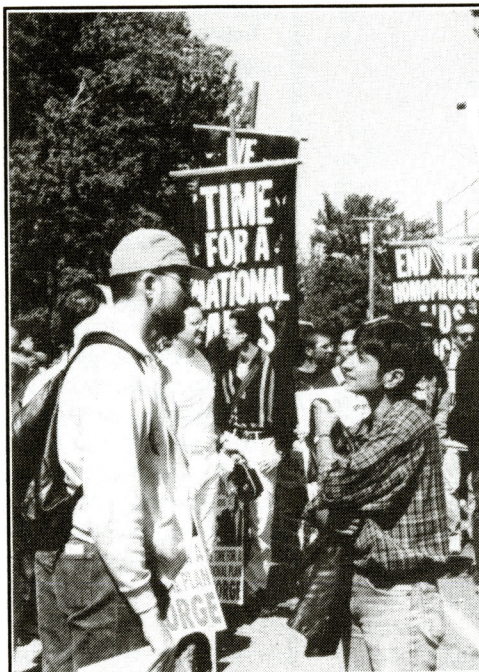


photo by Annette Dragon

Urvashi Vaid in Kennebunkport, Maine

VOTE

NOVEMBER 3

The Collective

Annette Dragon
Naomi Falcone
Diane Matthews
Madeleine Winter

Contributors

Erica Rand Stan Clough
Bee Bell Alexander Wallace
Thighmaster Ahmad Azadi
Dennis Lyons

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Winterfalcon Technical
Computer Services*

Logo Design by Grapheteria

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Phoenix Press is a collectively run organization whose purpose is to build and empower our community by providing positive lesbian/gay images. We will be a forum for the exchange of ideas through debate and discussion. The collective will work to reflect the political and social diversity of our community.

SUBMISSIONS

All submissions should be typed and double-spaced if at all possible. Please include your name and phone number in case we have any questions. Your name will be withheld at your request, but any material received without a contact name or number will not be published. Submissions *must* be received by the 20th of each month. Thank you for your contributions.

P.O. Box 4743
Portland, ME 04112
(207) 282-8091

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Dear Portland Community:

The Portland human rights ordinance referendum has not been about gay people being gay. It has been about straight people debating whether or not to allow us to play in their ball game and our effort to convince them that they should.

This means it implicitly has danced around the straight community's issues of good gays vs bad gays and our acceptability on hetero terms. We have had a slight case of amnesia because of it. Where have many of the gay community leaders that predate Matlovich been hiding? Why has the articulate, sharp witted, truth telling, determined, young woman, with nearly shaved head and purple hair of Queer Nation retired? Why has Act Up been barely visible? Why has the MLGPA tiptoed around the Portland effort. I firmly believe that it is they who, with courage and confidence of character, brought us to where we were last May 11 and even before Councilor O'Donnell's wonderful initiative.

I'm quite aware of the heat I will take for my comments, but I fear that the gay and lesbian community has relinquished any real voice to a select committee of EPP. The home base meetings became increasingly sessions of people talking down to "volunteers" whom they didn't seem to quite trust as competent. Volunteers who were good enough to make lawn signs, but not speak without prior approval. EPP clearly practiced its own forms of discrimination. I don't mean to bash dedicated, bright people who have gotten little thanks enough since May, but it's nevertheless true that the steering committee of EPP has been largely closed to participation to those not in their ranks. This makes no villains of committee members, it makes an imperfect mechanism which ought to be viewed as an experiment in need of renovations if EPP hopes to continue in any way.

We must let the diversity of our community represent us, for the sake of gay people to gain our identity and confi-

dence, not for the sake of straight people to become tolerant enough to invite gay men and lesbians to coffee. If we do not see our diversity as our greatest strength, then we are so many reluctant reservation dwellers who have lost our culture and spirit. The Portland ordinance will change little of how most of us live our lives. And as proof, let me point out that despite a Portland ordinance, despite all the marvelous, spectacular feats of organizing and publicity, or even a state-wide law, the very individual whose beating initiated Councilor O'Donnell's ordinance, will still not be in a secure enough position to dare prosecute his attackers. I know, he's a friend of mine and he is not on the steering committee.

Many thanks,
Michael Rossetti

Dear APEX:

I was on vacation from Philadelphia when I read *Violence on the Rise...Again* (APEX, vol. 1, no. 8). I was horrified. You told a story of escalating violence against people in an environment that lacked a response from their own community as well as the police. Unfortunately, as crime increases, police resources and priorities change and groups of people in a community often disagree. To overly rely on others to shelter and protect you can be a real mistake.

With this in mind may I suggest that these women explore their Second Amendment right: the right to bear firearms. The typical knee-jerk liberal reaction against this type of emergency equipment should not preclude more serious consideration of the only tool that will stop a serious attack against your person. Like any tool, proper training is required. Training that addresses concerns such as "it will only be used against you" and the legal implications of defending your life with lethal force, as well as the proper use of a firearm in that situation is critically important.

The thought of encountering a legally armed and trained person will give the tormentors pause. Excellent training is

apex \ˈā-peks/ *n.* 1 **a:** the uppermost point: VERTEX (the ~ of a mountain) **b:** the narrowed or pointed end: TIP (the ~ of the tongue) 2: the highest or culminating point (the ~ of her career) **syn** see SUMMIT.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the collective.

available from LFI ((800) 624-9049). Courses are offered in various locations throughout the country. For information concerning how to obtain a permit to carry a concealed weapon, you should contact either the Attorney General's Office of your state or the State Police. If you need to produce a reason for your request to defend yourself, a death threat should do nicely.

Sincerely,
David F. Levy

Editorial Note:

The women in Oregon were armed and were serious about defending themselves, but were no match for groups of terrorists with paramilitary training. The events reported in our story happened over a period of only two weeks - just enough time to buy guns but not enough time for proper training.

Dear Editor:

I can't help it. I have to respond to the sophomoric letter appearing in the last issue of *APEX*, penned by Jim and Roger, owners of Drop Me A Line. Can we ditch the dramatics, please? The lesbian and gay community has enough real problems without stooping to ever lower incestuous depths within our community.

I could comprehend Jim and Roger's decision to pull their advertising from *APEX* if they felt the newspaper was anti-gay men (which to my knowledge it isn't since there is at least one gay man - Hello Stan - on the collective), but to pull out because of second-hand gossip is a case of premature ejaculation if I've ever heard of one. Now, Jim and Roger have the right to

spend their advertising dollar wherever they choose, but maybe they could make their spending decisions with a little more foresight.

I gladly go through the hassle of looking for a parking place in the vicinity of Drop Me A Line to buy presents for friends, or cards, or great books by and about gays and lesbians. Part of the reason I do so is because whenever I can I like to spend my hard earned buck in establishments that support my community.

But this doesn't mean that there aren't things in Roger and Jim's store that I find anti-feminist or weighted on the gay male side of the pleasure spectrum.

I may not understand why drag queens want to celebrate and glorify particular pieces of women's history that was (and is) oppressive - i.e., the sporting of high heels and make-up and the fashion of prostitution - but that's okay, 'cause who am I to be the moral Hitler of the gay lesbian world? Maybe there is something I will learn about why gay men are drawn to this form of expression that makes me, as a woman and lesbian, shudder. In any case, even though I find some things offensive in Drop Me A Line, *I still spend my money there* (my italics).

Jim and Roger may not understand or condone lesbian separatism, if that was what inspired those two women to leave the party in question, and that's okay. After all, it's not about them. But please, get over this tantrum and put your advertising where it belongs, in the pages of this newspaper for one and I will be happy to continue to support your store - that is, if you still let me in the door.

Sincerely,
Mishe Pietkiewicz

Dear *APEX*:

I'd like to address this letter to Jim and Roger of "Drop Me A Line..." and to everyone else out there who shares the opinion that the staff of *APEX* secretly espouses an alleged "man-hate philosophy."

Jim, Roger: You may not know me, but I know you from the year before last when I was writing regularly for *Our Paper*. For the record, I'm male, white, middle-class, moderately well-educated, 28 years old, conservative in habit and taste, and very concerned with the reasons you gave for deciding to pull your advertisement from *APEX*.

Your commitment to equality and social harmony and universal love and so on is honorable, and I share your dislike of bigotry and intolerance by anyone against anyone else. But I feel you both are being just a little bit too paranoid about the assumed secret intentions of the staff of *APEX*. What happened at that party is regrettable, but let the individuals involved deal with the negative consequences. Feminists making a statement, separatists upholding a cause, bitches being bitches - whatever the circumstances, it did NOT occur within the pages of this publication. So why, in your understandable indignation, do you wish to punish the entire publication? Sorry, but it seems rather abrupt, somewhat irrational. If I don't like one or both of you, should I boycott your store? Pleeeeeze.

In your letter you cited the increased "public scrutiny" being placed on the Community at a time when the Equal Protection Portland ordinance is being challenged. "Unfortunately, for all of us your actions reflect badly on the entire

More LETTERS ➤ page 7



BOOKS ETC

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WHERE WE'VE BEEN - an exploration of lesbian and gay history

by Stan Clough

An Editorial

Columbus Day is now, for many people, Indigenous Peoples Day. This is in recognition of the fact that two cultures came into collision on October 12, 1492. One was technologically superior and expansionist; the other was a subsistence-based culture of what was called San Salvador. In this meeting of Europe and the New World, the indigenous peoples would suffer the former's imperial agenda of "gold, glory and God" in the persons of Spain's crusaders.

Slavery and disease were legacies the Genoese explorer brought to the peoples of the West Indies. The natives were forced to mine for gold to fill Spain's depleted coffers. This New World gold would help the Hapsburg dynasty to create a great Catholic monolith in 16th century Europe.

Hernán Cortés toppled the Aztec empire in Mexico in 1521, while Francisco Pizarro occupied the Incan capital of Cuzco in 1533. Both *Conquistadores* were looking for gold, while priests who accompanied them sought to convert the "sub-humans" to humanity through Christianity. Vasco Núñez de Balboa, on an expedition in Panama, happened across "native sodomites" who were dressed as women. He fed them to his dogs. The conquerors of the Aztecs of Mexico and the Incas of Peru did similar things to the sexual heretics of these lands.

It is this legacy of the European assault on the indigenous peoples' sexualities that should concern gays and lesbians during this quincentennial of Columbus' voyage to the New World. The Columbus voyage, coupled with Amerigo Vespucci's reports of the mainland of South America, helped to attract soldiers like Cortés and Pizarro and missionaries like Bartolomé de las Casas. The soldiers would beat the fear of God into them. Sodomy was one crime that Catholic pain punished with bloodthirsty zeal.

People like the Mayans accommodated same-sex behavior into their culture. In fact, most indigenous people of both

North and South America found room for same-sex love in their cultural realities. This is not to say that the New World was a paradise for homoeroticism: both the Incas and Aztecs punished the peasants who dared to indulge in same-sex activities (they reserved that privilege for the nobility). But it was the homophobic European invaders, after destroying the Aztecs and the Incas, who would conquer the native peoples in their colonies in part by telling them that sodomites would roast in a Dantean Hell.

The English and French, who competed with Spain for colonies and resources in the New World, also found same-sex love abhorrent. The Black Robes of the French taught the peoples of Canada that God punished the inhabitants of Sodom with brimstone. The English Puritans saw the Devil operating through the "savages" of New England. These un-Godly heathen were undermining the Puritan utopia of Massachusetts Bay with their "filthy practices." Puritan ministers saw sodomy as being endemic of the "Indians."

1992 is the 500th anniversary of the introduction of that particular strain of European homophobia to the New World. Columbus paved the way for Europeans to bring their hatred of homoeroticism to the Western Hemisphere: this is what Columbus' voyage means to lesbians and gays.

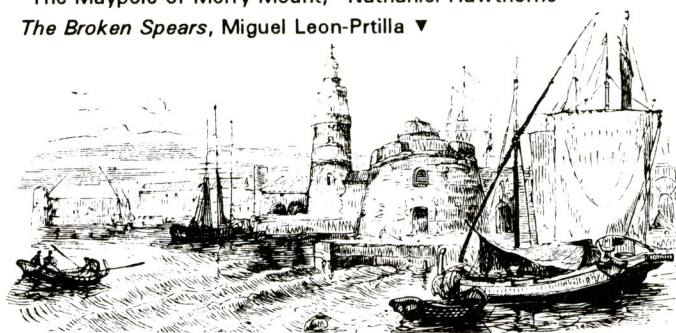
Books to read:

The Spirit and the Flesh, Walter Williams

Facing West, Richard Drinnon

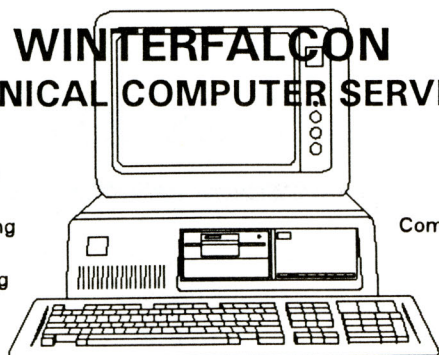
"The Maypole of Merry Mount," Nathaniel Hawthorne

The Broken Spears, Miguel Leon-Prilla ▼



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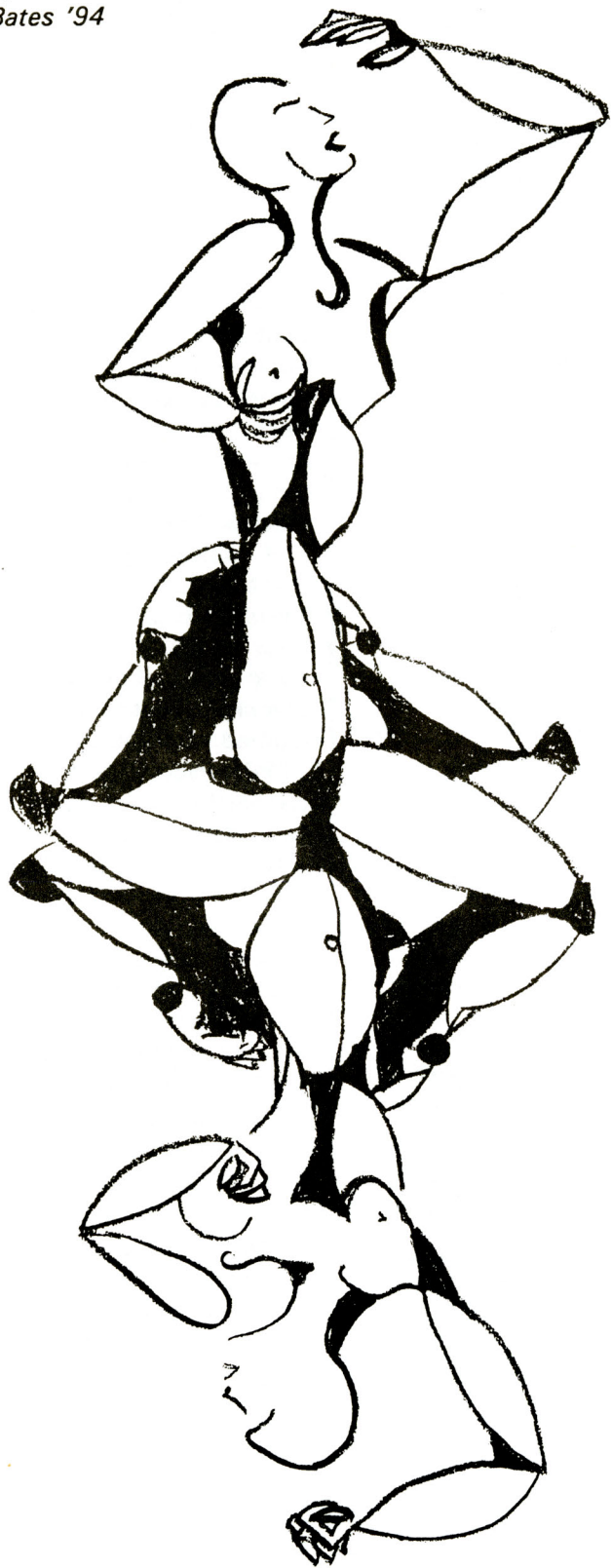
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Portland, ME 04101

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QUEER ON THE QUADS

edited by Erica Rand

by Ahmad Azadi
Bates '94



NO BUSINESS AS USUAL

- this month in local activism

by Bee Bell

Who knew His Hetness would wind up putting radical Mainers on the map in the second prez debate? Yes, Breederboy George actually mentioned to millions of TV viewers a protest first reported here in the pages of *APEX*: the Easter weekend march on Bush's Maine mansion. The action, called by Kennebunk's TASL teens and ACT UP/Portland, involved huge banners enumerating the published recommendations of Bush's AIDS Commission. Demonstrators, demanding that Bush implement the Commission's advice, apparently irked Mr. AIDS-is-your-own-fault-so-die-quietly, who in this month's debate again revealed his sophisticated just-say-fag strategy on AIDS: "And can you believe they told me to change *my* behavior?" whined George.



photo by Annette Dragon

Yeah; we can believe it. EVEN IF YOU ARE A GODDAMNED REPUBLICAN, anything but universal health care is dumb, dumb, dumb when you're in only the second decade of the most miserable, hellish epidemic ever to assault the face of the earth. Remember, as of the end of 1988, conservative gov't statistics put the number of HIV + Americans at 1 to 1.5 million (no official updates have come out over the last four years of carnage). The word in the New York AIDS community now is that at least 6 million people have HIV in the U.S. This is more than one in fifty. So don't dick around and don't vote Bush.

Meanwhile, the sneakier Democrat contenders in this Pepsi-vs-Coke battle have decorated queer chests everywhere with their eyecatching "Gays and Lesbians for Clinton" T-shirts. How did this slogan get OK'd by the powers-that-be and the powers-that-be-queer? "Obviously, a deal was cut somewhere along the way," said one local organizer for the most expensive queerPAC promises can buy, the Human Rights Campaign Fund. The deal is that the Pepsicrat Party wants us to swallow something more than Ms. or Mr. Thang this month: i.e., the Arkansas sodomy law. While many a queer will be voting for Blowdry Clinton in return for his sweet promises, those who do should keep in mind the fact that Bill lifted not one finger publicly to aid legislator Vic Snyder's repeal effort in 1991.

More BUSINESS ➡ page 6

CALENDAR

SUNDAY 11/1

Art Auction - give generously to save the ordinance. One City Ctr., Portland, ME. Preview 4-6pm, Auction 6-8pm. FMI ☎ (207) 761-8480.

MAW hikes around Goose Pond. Meet at Marty and Sue's in Keene, NH, 11:30am. FMI ☎ (603) 357-5757.

MONDAY 11/2

Equal Protection/Portland One City Ctr, Portland, ME, 7pm at old "Impressions" store above the food cts. Fight the referendum! Info line (207) 761-8480.

TUESDAY 11/3

**ELECTION DAY!
DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!**

Feminists Against Rape (FAR) meets every Tues. 7pm, Portland, ME for discussion and planning. If you are a feminist determined to help make Portland a city free of sexual violence, ☎ (207) 772-0935 or (207) 772-5941 for location.

FRI.-SUN 11/6-8

Third Annual Penobscot Bay Gay Men's Weekend. This event was started to help build community among rural gay men. \$15. FMI write to Alan, RR2, Box 319A, Belfast, ME 04915.

SUNDAY 11/8

Feminist Backlash: What it is and what to do about it. A statewide conference sponsored by Portland NOW. Workshops and speakers. 9:30am-4:30pm, YWCA, 87 Spring St., Portland, ME. \$10-25/NOW members; \$12-30/non members. FMI or to register ☎ Kathryn at (207) 879-0877.

TUESDAY 11/10

FAR meeting (see 11/3).

THURSDAY 11/12

French-Canadian, Catholic and Gay. Steven Riel reads from his newly published collection of poems, *How to Dream*. Matlovich Society, Rines Aud., Portland Library, 5 Monument Sq., 7:30-9pm. FMI ☎ (207) 657-2850.

FRIDAY 11/13

MAW meeting at Sue and Marty's in Keene, NH, 7:30pm. FMI ☎ (603) 357-5757.

SUNDAY 11/15

Self-Defense Workshop sponsored by the Rape Crisis Center. 1-5pm at Portland Police Station Aud., 109 Middle St., Portland, ME. Pre-registration \$25; \$35 at the door. Scholarships available. FMI or to register ☎ (207) 879-1821.

Amelia's Potluck at Mert's, 3pm. FMI ☎ (603) 763-4112.

TUESDAY 11/17

FAR meeting (see 11/3).

THURSDAY 11/20

Homosexuality, Theology, and the Church. John McNeill, former Jesuit priest and author of *Taking a Chance on God: Liberating Theology for Gays, Lesbians and Their Lovers, Families and Friends* and *The Church and the Homosexual*. Matlovich Society, Rines Aud., Portland Library, 5 Monument Sq., 7:30-9pm. FMI ☎ (207) 675-2850.

SATURDAY 11/21

Lambda Women Only Dance at Pat's Peak, Henniker, NH. FMI ☎ (603) 746-3339.

Thanksgiving Dinner with the women of the Lakes-Mountain Connection, Tilton, NH, 5pm. FMI ☎ (603) 726-3667.

SUNDAY 11/22

Sweet Honey in the Rock, Symphony Hall, Boston, MA, 7pm. Tickets \$15, \$19, \$22. FMI ☎ (617) 266-1200.

TUESDAY 11/24

FAR meeting (see 11/3).

THURSDAY 11/26

Time Out Thanksgiving dinner in Portland, ME. Mid-day hike at Crescent Beach State Park, early evening turkey dinner (potluck encouraged) and after dinner hike in the Back Cove area. FMI ☎ Michael at (207) 871-9940.

MEDIA

WMPG'S Women's Music Fest on 90.9 FM 3-5pm Sundays.

More BUSINESS from page 5

Would-be southern Maine Rep. Linda Bean suffered the campy wrath of Portland's ACT UP and Queer Nation this month, in a Half-Baked Bean Protest Supper outside Bean's office. After canceling a scheduled meeting with ACT UP, Bean campaign workers were treated to the inept performances of the Musical Fruits - who, unlike the kid in Bean's TV ad, never got to go to music camp. Several Veterans for Peace, angered by Bean's ads about helping disabled vets, also joined in as activists "got frank with Bean" and chanted "Linda Bean gives us gas: she's just for the upper class." The rush-hour demo ended with a Fairy story about an ex-shining knight become bigoted, capitalist monster.

EPP rallied 250 to 300 people for queer rights at City Hall on October 24, afterwards sending volunteers out to blanket the entire city with VOTE NO tabloids. The driven, grass-roots efforts of EPPeople have given most of this city a chance to see our queer presence. Bless you, dudes - let's keep organizing. ♥

The ACT UP Portland's Pissed Off Dyke Cell (PODC) and Portland Womyn's Health Action Crew (WHAC) have put together a survey about lesbian sex. Copies of the survey are available from:

PODC/WHAC
P.O. Box 11235
Portland, ME 04104

WOODFORDS Cafe
129 Spring Street
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*Serving the
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*

GERVAIS & SUN
133 Spring Street
Portland, Maine
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& Deli*

More NGLTF from page 1

and men. In the 1980s we all were bound together by AIDS. I still believe our community has not peaked in terms of strength and unity. We have a very high expectation of gay/lesbian groups in part I think because society oppresses us. We want everybody to agree with us and we demand complete acceptance.

We need to give ourselves an enormous amount of credit. We are a funky bunch of people in a handful of groups which have come together to effectively combat the hate campaigns of the right wing. We are fighting not only for our rights but an end to hate, violence, for substantial AIDS policies, for repeal of criminal laws against us and for an open, free society. We've got a long way to go and it's time we all agree on the big picture.

DL: Where do you see yourself and the movement in 10 years?

UV: In the short term, I plan to take a one-year sabbatical for reading, writing a book of essays about political theory and take lots of time for thinking. I also look forward to working for social change

and becoming a full-time community organizer. Where we are in 10 years depends on who is president in two weeks. I predict a greater opening up of society to lesbians and gay men; what we have accomplished so far is irrevocable. We must continue to organize and fight complacency. I would also like to see 1994 as the "the year we take Stonewall home," with marches on capitals in all 50 states. Last but not least, a cure for AIDS.

DL: Do you believe this election year is a turning point for our community? If so, why?

UV: Definitely a turning point. We are now regarded by straight society as deserving of equal rights. This year's democratic convention helped by putting gay politics more into the mainstream. Politicians have also begun to realize that we are a powerful and organized voting block. The visibility actions by ACT UP during this year's political season have made a remarkable difference. I am very excited about having a new administration that is accessible to us!

DL: Finally, who are you

voting for on November 3?

UV: Bill Clinton, of course.

DL: Thanks, Urv, and good luck.

UV: Thanks, honey. ▽

Editors' Note: We welcome Dennis Lyons as our newest contributor. Watch for more "Tea Talk" in future issues of APEX.

More LETTERS from pg. 3

Lesbian and Gay Community." WHOSE "actions"? WHAT "actions"? The "actions" of the two women who walked out of that party? Really? Where was the party held? City Hall? Surely you are not referring to the "actions" of APEX itself, the content and format. I have read every article in every issue since it first came out and only once did I come across some separatist "man-hating" rhetoric which struck me as bigoted. I didn't like it, but I didn't see it as the crack of doom. And I did not blame the entire staff of the

paper for publishing it. Besides, not only is the purpose of APEX to serve as an expression of diverse opinions within the Community, it is also a lesbian-founded, lesbian-run publication. I therefore expect a little hardcore feminism at times.

Question: Has APEX ever rejected a submission on the grounds that it was written by a man? Has APEX refused to accept volunteers who are of the male gender? Other than the sarcastic [sic]s, did APEX censor your letter? If you can positively answer yes to one or all of these questions, then, be my guest, pull your ad. If not, relaaaaaaax!

When I was working at *Our Paper*, there was one fellow volunteer whose dedication and energy impressed me. That was Diane Matthews, who is now one of the APEX Collective. We worked together many times, and not once did she give me any reason to believe that she was prejudiced against men. I am friends with another member of the collective who has repeatedly invited me to write for APEX as a foreign correspondent (I am currently residing outside of the United States) - invitations I have repeatedly turned down, having nothing to say. Last August, when I was in Portland, I stayed overnight at the apartment of an APEX columnist whose roommate is one of my close friends. She did not shriek at my MALE presence in her LESBIAN-FEMINIST space.

More LETTERS ▀ page 9

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WEDDINGS ▀ UNIONS ▀ PARTIES

ASK THIGHMASTER

Dear Thighmaster,

Two weeks ago, when I was sitting in my kitchen with my friend and my lover, my friend trashed my view that coupled, marital-type relations are heteropatriarchal in origin; she wanted to settle down with one partner, and accused me of being judgmental and unsisterly in criticizing that Hallmark thing. Well, guess what? Five days later, she tries to seduce my lover, and then tries to justify it - after using the old "it just happened" line - by throwing my views on monogamy at me. She says I shouldn't be mad. I say she betrayed me. (Previous events suggested to me that she's been trying to sabotage my relationship and steal my girlfriend for months.) So which is it? Is she a treacherous scum, or what?

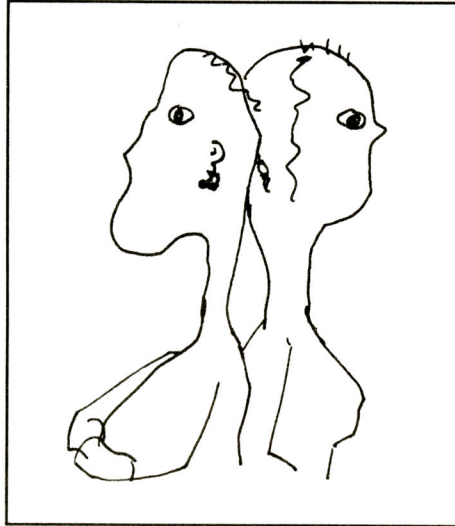
Sincerely,
ENRAGED

Dear Enraged:

First, most importantly, and delivered without Thighmaster's characteristic sardonic tone; if you try to induce something to "just happen," you are being treacherous to yourself, your lovers, and your lovers' lovers. Unplanned sex accounts for innumerable cases of HIV transmission: Don't Do It. It is no longer acceptable, moral, or legitimate to stage some innocent backrub in which the hands will "magically" start to wander as if of their own accord: between the back and the fluids, you must stop, discuss any HIV exposure you might have had

due to unsafe sexual activities or IV drug use, and act accordingly. This may be more awkward than playing out some tacitly-agreed-upon fiction of spontaneity, but get over this high-school habit: it can kill you.

On to the less deadly treachery issues



drawing by Naomi Falcone

that concern you. Thighmaster is grateful for this timely inquiry. After suggesting last month that questioning monogamy might cure everything from post-earthquake stress disorder to the heartbreak of family values, Thighmaster has been feeling a bit guilty for failing to append the requisite tag: "Warning: nonmonogamy may cause ulcers, insanity, and mirth defects." Monogamy, it is true, may have one of the scummiest ideological pedigrees known to contemporary social arrangements (do we really want to endorse either the idea that someone gets to

own your body, or the mechanism by which property-owning men tried to ensure that the male children who got their little kingdoms came from their own spermal goo?) But as many people now addicted to Maalox can tell you, nonmonogamy, deployed injudiciously, can be a bigger weapon of torture than a Lionel Richie soundtrack. When you're lying in bed alone as your lover uses your highminded agreement to do some hot number in the next room, chanting some anti-heteropatriarchal litany is not going to drown out her moans, or stop your guts from spinning out of control with jealousy and insecurity. Nonmonogamy needs rules and agreements as much as monogamy does. Thighmaster is partial to the "you can do anyone you want but I don't want to hear about it" routine; this way, no one gets stuck with a vivid picture to obsess over, and no one gets stuck obsessing over someone they can't have. But courtesy rules must be designed for each case. And, certainly, you seem to have reasonable limits. It is not unreasonable to ask your best friend not to go after your girlfriend, or to make a distinction between someone who wants to do your lover and someone who wants to break you and your lover up. Yes, your friend is indeed a treacherous scum: either she believes her monogamy line, in which case we can assume that she wanted to lure your lover into a monogamous relationship with her;

More THIGHMASTER ■ page 11

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More LETTERS from page 7

If these three APEX members are virulent man-haters, then they have fooled me. And if any of these three women left a party because a man showed up, well, it's too bad, but it's none of my business.

To those of us who are away from the wild lurid twisted gossip grapevine of the Portland Community, your letter comes across as an attempt to bully (possibly censor) a new, not yet fully developed publication on the grounds of personal grudge, rumor, and speculation. As an individual committed to the freedom of opinion, I urge you to (1) continue to advertise in APEX and (2) put your writing talents to good use by submitting articles to it, as well as to *Our Paper*. You have demonstrated that you can write and that you take the time to write and that you have something to say, so why not make a real impact rather than merely symbolic statements?

Kevin Cassell

Dear APEX:

"We fear that once you gain financial security..." Smooth move, Jim and Roger. In that statement, you have managed to let us all know what your agenda is. *Our Paper* would like nothing more than to be the only kid on the block again. This would be accomplished if APEX died. Your clumsy attempt to use the personal lives of two APEX collective members

in an attack on that paper is obvious: you are flunkies for *Our Paper*.

Your reference to diversity would be laughable, if it were not contemptible. The *Our Paper* partisans have been hoping for APEX's demise since its appearance in February. That really sounds like diversity to me.

The mental midgets who whine and complain that our community needs to stick together sound like the "family values" crowd who would have wives stay with husbands who beat them and children stay with parents who incest them. The abusive members of the gay-lesbian community are those Uncle Tom faggots who foist their misogynistic agenda on lesbians who are exercising their sovereign RIGHT to free association. These two women, whom you have verbally raped in your insensitive and stupid letter, exercised the very right that we all want for ourselves: free association. Your type, along with the "politically correct" crowd that churn out *Our Paper*, do NOT celebrate diversity nor do you respect free association. Saying that you do is about as believable as when George Bush claims he is a feminist.

Garrett Stevens

Dear APEX:

This is an open letter to the owners of Drop Me A Line. I think you over-reacted to the whole thing. Not every-

one has to agree with you and your plans to withdraw your ads from APEX. I'm a Gay man and think you are narrowminded. I will not do business with you in the future. I think that we should all try to work together and not be so petty because two women did not want to be with you. They have their rights too. You might take a moment to think things over before you make any decisions on withdrawing your ads from APEX. It is an excellent paper with an excellent staff of people who care about the quality of the paper and the news that they print.

Sincerely,
Clarence "Joe" Cote

Norma Kraus Eule,
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BOOK REVIEW

by Alexander Wallace

LIVE, FROM GOLGOTHA! The Gospel According to Gore Vidal
Random House, NY

Picture this: in the not-too-distant future, a TV genius perfects a way to take a live TV crew back in time to film actual events as they happened. They pick the Crucifixion of Jesus. They want St. Timothy to anchor the special, "Live From Golgotha!" and go back to Makedonia in 96 A.D., where Timothy is episkopus of Thessalonika, to recruit him.

A competing team has a different agenda: a Cyberpunk Hacker is systematically erasing the "Master Tapes" of the New Testament, altering and destroying all extant copies of the Christian byblos, slowly eradicating Christianity. This second team, unable to stop The Hacker, wants Tim to hide his Gospel, which has never been found, someplace where they can find it, so that after the old New Testament has been erased by The Hacker, the second team can "find" Tim's Gospel and rewrite the Bible...again. Oh, and also, kill the first team's Neilson Ratings.

Tim's game - he always has been: he's St. Paul's gay lover and has gone about as far as a pretty Greek blonde hustler can go, even for one with "...the largest dick in...Asia Minor." Never having met Jesus, Timothy sees value in a first-hand look, as Paul's description of Jesus (from that

famous vision he had of The Lord on the "eastbound Jerusalem-Damascus freeway") just doesn't seem quite right: "...wide as he was tall, Jesus waddled towards me...that face...those luminous eyes hidden somewhere in all that golden fat...his voice so high, so shrill that only the odd canine ever got the whole message..." Jesus, it seems/seemed has/had...an eating disorder. And Random House is one brave publisher!

Can you stand more? Well, there's a wonderful cocktail party at Petronius' place in Rome, at which St. Peter, "The Rock," is his usual boring self, Nero shtupps poor little Tim up the bum and then the whole place goes up in smoke. Some of the Smart Set wonder if they'll have "user-friendly nails" on The Big Day. Mary Baker Eddy, Shirley MacLaine, Oral Roberts and the Japanese who own the TV networks all show up at the Crucifixion and Jesus is alive and well, working for GE and planning the Zionist overthrow of The Known World.

Yes, Gore Vidal, who has stated many times that "the greatest disaster ever to befall the West was Christianity," is at it again, in a slim volume of only 225 pages; well, 226 if you count The Gospel of St. Timothy, in Japanese! *Live, From Golgotha* may well cause the Catholic Church to reinstitute book censor-

ship. It will drive the Religious Right right over the brink and will render Gore *persona non grata* at a lotta dull parties! And, *Live, From Golgotha* will prove, once and for all, that of all the writers in the world on whose wrong side you don't want to be, Gore Vidal is King of Kings!

Live, From Golgotha, The Gospel According to Gore Vidal, is breathtaking in its audacity, eons ahead of what's considered "cutting edge" fiction; it's outrageous, pornographic, sacrilegious, blasphemous, dirty, evil, immoral, funnier than Hell and the people who still believe in it. *Live* is better than *Myra Breckenridge* because although Hollywood's almost as deadly as Christianity, Hollywood isn't really out to get us. For those of us who long ago saw Christianity as the thinly veiled fascistic threat and fraud that it's always been, *Live*,

From Golgotha comes as nothing new, but a clean, sweet breeze of reason and reality.

For those of you who have never had "Atheism 101," this is the basic course. You'll want to go on to *The Life of Jesus*, by Ernest Renan, translated from the French and available in a Modern Library edition; *King Jesus*, a novel by Robert Graves (of *I, Claudius* fame), published in paperback by Noonday and *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, by Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln, published by Delacorte Press. Vidal's thesis that Jesus wasn't crucified and certainly never rose from the dead is argued forcefully by many eminent scholars and is proved by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

And yes, Vidal is DEADLY serious: each scandalous, improbable, hilarious, incredible comic event and turn of plot in *Live, From Golgotha* metaphorically

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CLASSIFIED

parallels some revision, retranslation, alteration, reinterpretation, falsification or forgery that changed Jehoshuah from a simple, if deluded, itinerant street rabbi into the pagan, deified Christ and "His Story" from some hill-folk's fables into THE GREATEST LIE EVER TOLD. ▼

More THIGHMASTER from pg. 8

or she staged the whole argument to justify her attempted seduction, which would mean she knew beforehand that she was going to hurt you. So relax into your revenge fantasies without feeling hypocritical; she does deserve to be chained in front of a TV that's perpetually tuned to a "Happy Days" marathon.

Thighmaster eagerly awaits your submissions. No problem is too complicated or twisted! Thighmaster, c/o Phoenix Press, PO Box 4743, Portland, ME 04112. ▼

HEY KIDS!! WANNA BE FAMOUS?

We (that's *APEX*) are looking for some readers *with not much time on their hands*. Courageous, vanguard-type people who have something to say but might be constrained by cruel limits of time and energy. That's right, we're looking for special MICRO-CORRESPONDENTS to write about *anything* their hearts desire (a vague relation to things queer would be appreciated by the MICRO editor, who intends to keep a discrete distance).

Here are the rules: articles cannot exceed two average paragraphs (or about 4-6 inches of valuable *APEX* column). We like real names but don't want you to lose your job over this, either. Please include a phone number with your first submission (we may want to call to see how busy you *really* are). Typed or legibly written, please. And you can drop out when you'd like. So when you have a moment send your column (with a title, perhaps) to:

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PASSAGES



On September 19 Chris Cole and Connie Pelkey of North Sebago, Maine were united in a commitment celebration at Portland's Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist Church. The minister was Tom Yondorf. Connie and Chris, who met at SMTc, have been together for three years. They created their own ceremony, incorporating aspects of their spiritual backgrounds in an innovative and unique service. The brides honeymooned in P-Town.

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