

PARENTS DEMAND RECALL

San Jose, CA - Parents in Morgan Hill are demanding that school officials recall student ID cards issued at the Murphy Middle School because one of the 12 helpline phone numbers printed on the back of the cards is for a gay and lesbian community center. Principal Don Schaefer said he's received a petition with 400 parent signatures demanding the IDs be recalled and reissued without the phone numbers that include listings for Al-Anon and Planned Parenthood. Schaefer said it was the listing for the DeFrank Gay/Lesbian Community Center that parents complained about after the IDs were issued this fall.

DORMS FOR PARTNERS

Philadelphia - The University of Pennsylvania said it will open three dorms now reserved for married graduate students to unmarried couples, including gay and lesbian partners. A spokesperson said beginning next year students would be permitted "to define whom their household consists of" and "that graduate students come to us with different needs and lifestyles, and we want to be responsive to that."

LESBIANS GO SHOPPING!

Philadelphia - Members of the Lesbian Visibility Project make their political point by traveling to suburban shopping malls and just doing what any straight couple might do - and causing quite a stir in the process. "We just pair off and hold hands and shop. That's it," says Shelley Krause, founder of the group. "You don't need to do much more than that to get people's attention. It's really an amazingly radical event."

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

ORDINANCE PROVOKES DEBATE

by Annette Dragon

On January 6, 1993, five of the seven city councilors in Lewiston, ME voted to adopt a gay rights ordinance. The vote was preceded by five hours of testimony from almost 60 people.

Two things about the hearing impressed me. First was the courage of those who explained publicly why this bill was needed. For a few moments they transcended the day-to-day and become heroes to present and future queers.

The second impression was the rampant ignorance and undisguised hostility of many of those opposed. And oh, how they flaunted it.

Early in the evening, when Bates Director of Affirmative Action intimated in his testimony that many of the religious present were demanding the right to discriminate against gays and lesbians, a man in the audience screamed back at him, "Christ said to kill the faggots!" The hatred in his words chilled everyone. This sentiment in subsequent speakers, while still sanctioned by God, was usually less blatant. The pastor of Lewiston's Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church claimed, to wild applause, that homosexuality was as much a sin as murder, theft, or perjury. "They are all the

same in the eyes of God our Creator." And the pastor of Fellowship Church explained that homosexuals "changed the glory of an incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and to four-footed beasts and creeping things." Another pastor (in need of syntactical guid-

ance) said, "Being condemned for deviant behavior is not discrimination, but rather the exercise of sound, moral judgment."

So. We're creeping crawling sinners condemned to burn, but hey-their's is a merciful God.

Much of the thinking was convoluted. The pastor of the Whole Faith and Gospel Mission declared, "The Book of Books is the Holy Bible - God's Word. And whether you dispute its credibility and authenticity it matters not. Why? Because God said it, and that settles it!" [loud applause]. One of the city's ex-mayors announced, "Gay rights have absolutely nothing to do with human rights or discrimination." And a Lewiston pastor stated, "...the only discrimination that is truly the issue tonight is against God and his holy word - that is discrimination!"

The use of dubious statistics was a common tactic. "The average household



photo by Annette Dragon

Lewiston Family Listens to Testimony

The Collective

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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.

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LETTERS...

An open letter to Rita Kissen:

Dear Rita,

Since you begin and end your open letter to Bee Bell (*APEX*, vol. 1, no. 12) by affirming the value of dialogue, I assume you will welcome the entrance of another voice.

Several features of your letter disturb me. The first is your contention that when a queer goes to court to challenge an eviction or firing, "it won't matter how blatantly queer the plaintiff looks or acts...the court will have to decide on the basis of equal protection." This simply is not true, except, perhaps, in theory. We have massive, well-publicized documentation that just laws do not guarantee justice, and that verdicts often depend precisely on how the plaintiff looks and acts, and on the prejudices of judges and juries, not on the letter of the law. Rape is illegal, yet rapists often go unconvicted, even in the face of overwhelming evidence, if those empowered to judge believe that women mean yes when we say no, or are "asking for it" if we wear "provocative" clothes. So, too, with equal protection for queers: unless people believe that queers deserve respect, dignity, and justice *as queers*, the law only works, if it works at all, for people who can pass. For this reason, even if EPP's queer-invisibility strategy did contribute to getting the ordinance passed, it did not contribute to making the law work for us, which also requires combatting anti-queer ideology.

But it is not clear to me that this strategy was effective anyway. The fact that we won does not prove that the strategy worked, or that queer-positive politics would have failed (there is, as Bee pointed out in her

last column, ample evidence that out activism also works). Regardless, this strategy needs to be dumped, given its horrifying side-effects, which include not only the promotion of assimilation and closed closet doors, but also the disrespect and condescension shown to people with pro-out views. At the EPP meeting at which Al Caron and John Cleveland proposed this "anti-discrimination/avoid the queer issue" focus, those of us who opposed this approach were repeatedly told that we did not understand politics, that we were putting the desire to "express ourselves" over political necessity, and that when we "grew up" politically we would stop being so naive. This presentation of us as political children is inaccurate and offensive. It obscures the fact that many of us who espoused out activism were young neither in age nor in political-activist years, and based our assessments on our own extensive political experience - experience often acquired on campaigns much more relevant to the ordinance than the campaign to stop the turnpike widening (the one to which Caron most frequently referred as the source of his own political maturity). It also discounts in advance the possibility that political wisdom may come from people who actually are young, since youth is associated with political naivete - a mistake, I fear, that has caused you to misconstrue Bee's position. You tell Bee in your letter that "Elections are not, and have never been, revolutions," as if she actually needs to realize this, or, in fact, ever said that they were. As far as I know, she does not believe this (why would she bother doing ACTUP as well as EPP work if she thought that revolution was possible through electoral politics?). And this claim certainly does not appear in her article critiquing EPP. It is clear

apex ('ā-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.

from context that her comment "Revolution? Not." should not be taken to mean "Revolution - it should have been." Her main point, I believe, is not that revolution should have been accomplished through election activism, but that election activism should be conducted without perpetuating anti-queerness, class privilege, and ageism, and with democratic broad-based representation among leadership. This is hardly a call for revolution, or for a structure or process that only youthful idealists can still dream of effecting in their lifetimes. It is merely a call for fair practices well within the reach of EPP, and for attention to the noxious long-term effects of promoting queer invisibility.

I thus respectfully propose to you that the (false) dichotomies set up in EPP discourse between radicals and realists, kids and grown-ups, need rethinking, and that Bee's article needs rereading. I kept putting out for EPP, even though I left almost every EPP activity in which I participated feeling as sick, as unsafe, as disappeared, as disrespected, and as angry as I feel when someone says to me, "Wow, you don't seem Jewish," and means it as a compliment. Elections, as you say, are not revolutions, but election activism can be pursued without hiding

the margin under the center (and then hiding the hierarchy under the misnomer "coalition"), and without generating representations of queers that will circulate to our detriment long after the votes are counted. Bee makes these points eloquently.

Erica Rand

I am addressing this letter to the lesbian readers of *APEX* and am asking non-lesbian readers to respect my right to dialogue only with other lesbians and not read any further. If non-lesbians won't respect my right to decide who I address, then I ask that you don't respond, because I'm not addressing you.

So, I find myself suffering from dyke deprivation in my local community. I need to communicate with other dykes my ideas, my visions, my fears, my longings and my passions. I need to know what other dykes are thinking and feeling and doing and experiencing. I have been able to meet some of these needs locally, but mostly I rely on long distance phone calls, visits to and from lesbians in other communities, books, lesbian and wombyn's journals and newspapers. This isn't enough for me. I need and want to participate in a lesbian community close to home. This

letter is part of that.

My dream is to live in a community where lesbians have space to get together to talk and dance and learn and teach and eat and plan and implement the revolution together. In my vision this is a large comfortable space, accessible to all lesbians. It is a space where lesbians can go and relax and struggle and celebrate and grow together as lesbians. It is a space where lesbian diversity is recognized and respected. A space where lesbians are nurtured and validated.

It is my most fervent desire to participate in this community in Portland. I love Portland and many lesbians who live in and around here. So I thought maybe I could begin by writing to the lesbian readers of *APEX* and perhaps lesbians could have a column in *APEX* or at least letters that would be for lesbians. We can hope that non-lesbians would respect lesbians' right to sometimes dialogue and organize with lesbians only and non-lesbians would not read or respond to our letters or columns. Perhaps this column could be an organizing tool in creating a strong visible lesbian community here.

A friend read and critiqued this letter. Because it seems that some, if not

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

by Stan Clough

Editors' Note: The third installment of Stan's three-part series on the Holocaust will appear next month

An Editorial

Historian Richard Hofstadter once remarked that Americans found their utopias in their past. This observation could equally apply to some gays seeking relief from societal or church-based homophobic oppression. Classical Greece is one historical culture that makes many wax nostalgically.

Though past cultural standards should judge the past, we can still judge the applicability of past solutions to present day problems. Fifth and Fourth century B.C. Athenian culture is not an acceptable model for lesbian and gay liberation in the 1990s.

By Fifth century B.C. standards, as evidenced in the writings of Euripides and Aristophanes, the Athenian Greeks were pathological misogynists. The Greeks feared and despised women. Their gynophobia prompted Athenian males to lock their wives and daughters up in the family compounds. Women, except during the Dionysian festivals, were generally not allowed access to the public domain.

Even rival Sparta, who allowed women out in public, had less than egalitarian motives for doing so. Xenophon noted Sparta insisted on women having equal opportunity to exercise with males, so that they would bear strong male children for the state. Like Nazi Germany, Sparta used female wombs to breed armies.

But of course, the Hellenists argue, the Greeks had female deities. Athena, after all, was the patron goddess of Athens. But let's consider her for a moment. She mediated the dispute between the Furies, who insisted on punishing Orestes for killing his mother Clytemnestra; and Apollo, who prompted Clytemnestra's death on the grounds she murdered her husband Agamemnon. Agamemnon had sacrificed their daughter Iphigenia before setting sail for Troy.

This myth points to the shift from the Earth Goddess-centered concept of justice to that of the invading Sky God. Athena instructs the Furies to be content with her ruling, for a new day has dawned in Greece: justice will be meted out by the will of the Sky Gods ruling from Olympus.

Athena symbolizes the Earth Goddess co-opted and tamed by the male Sky God. Like Hera, who had been raped by Zeus, Athena is subdued to the will of the alien male deities. She now mouths the party line of the male dominated, patriarchal religion. Like his Hebrew counterpart Yahweh, Zeus rules by fear. Hellenists who talk about the "power of the goddess" in patriarchal Athens or Rome might as well recommend decaffeinated coffee for long road trips.

With masculine deities ruling, men had the upper hand in Hellenistic society. Goddesses, like their female mortal counterparts, served the male masters. Athenian women were considered perpetual adolescents. Like teenage boys, they were the sexual rewards for men who held political power in Athens. Eva Keuls describes this as the "reign of the phallus." As in Rome, Athenian males had the right to execute their wives and daughters for "sexual indiscretions." Their religion reflects this: Zeus threatened Hera with annihilation in the *Iliad*.

It is true that Athenians institutionalized same-sex love. But they, like all other patriarchal societies, also institutionalized misogyny. Male teenagers and women, as Keuls has pointed out, were rewards for men in this culture. That was the Greek solution to social challenges, in the language of cultural anthropology. I don't believe the majority of lesbians or gays find these solutions to be acceptable for Queer America in the '90s.

I would no more live in Classical Rome or Greece than I would in the torture chambers of the Catholic Inquisition. That is the choice the Hellenists offer: patriarchal Christianity or patriarchal Hellenism. Thank you but no. I prefer finding solutions in 20th century feminist philosophy. It does not offer cures for homophobia that are worse than the ills it seeks to ameliorate. ▼

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many, area lesbians perceive me as being intolerant of lesbians who, by choice or necessity, are still in non-sexual relationships with men, she thought I should somehow clarify that my vision is a community of all lesbians, even those of us who still relate to men. After all, I earn a living by providing direct care to 8 non-lesbians, four are men. So my dream is of a community of all lesbians including separatists.

I would love for other lesbians to share their ideas about doing this either through *APEX* or with me directly.

Dykely,
Ana R Kissed

Dear *APEX*:

I would like to applaud your December '92 issue. I loved the hard-hitting, no holds barred style and content. As a hetero male activist who loves and tries to support his lesbian, bi, and gay sisters and brothers, I feel saddened by the intolerance both within and outside the gay community. James Melanson's thoughtful letter voiced these issues eloquently.

Most of all I love Bee Bell and her talent to cut through bullshit, be humorous, and invent new words all at the same time. She is why *APEX*, to me, far exceeds the accomplishments of *Our Paper*.

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NO BUSINESS AS USUAL - this month in local activism

by Bee Bell

For regal Vincent

NO MONEY FOR FAGS. NO MONEY FOR FAGS. NO MONEY FOR FAGS.

If you are a man who will have sex with men in Maine in 1993, go ahead and die: this is what the federal government is saying to you.

Our state Bureau of Health got its HIV prevention budget from the Feds at the Centers for Disease Control 7 weeks ago. They wanted to kill the AIDS Hotline & they wanted to kill the drug user HIV prevention plan. But they only ended up killing one contractual item on Maine's budget: Men Who Have Sex with Men.

Maine asked for \$40,000. Just \$40 thou, in an already meager \$564,000 budget, for the people who make up 75% of the AIDS cases in this state. The Feds said Zero. Said AIDS Project director Marjorie Love, "This past year was the first time we had a subsidy for gay and bisexual men - now we don't. This keeps me up at night."

No shit. Lesbosenator Dale McCormick reacted with due ferocity: "This just shows that the federal government still wants to put its money into counseling and testing, not HIV prevention. That was unacceptable eight years ago and it's still unacceptable. Put that in the minutes."

In other words, the government is willing to spend money on your body - but only after you may already be sick. Sure, they'll decorate your stretcher with a pretty flower on the way to your fucking grave.

Our only queer senator was in that room. McCormick demanded that the state do everything in its power to shift some money into the gay/bi men's outreach program, and it will probably happen. If she hadn't been there, there might be no money for AIDS prevention for our own people this year. All over the state, there are other rooms where decisions are being made about our deaths and no one is sitting in those rooms who gives a damn. Time to become an activist, time to sit in that room and speak up.

Meanwhile, back in Lewiston, those silly phobes are at it again. Three dudes - two lawyers, one capitalist - tried to get the attorney general's office to investigate Lewiston's Mayor Howaniec for violating their right to free speech. How so? Howaniec forbade "attacks" on councilors and everybody else at the public hearing, and this allegedly intimidated people who would otherwise have testified against gay rights. It wasn't clear whether the mayor was

referring to verbal attacks, in which case his warning would be somewhat iffy. But the AG refused to make a special investigation, and Jasper Wyman Hissself came down against the phobes as unreasonable on this one.

So the three dudes' next move was to acquire a couple more white men and proclaim themselves a coalition. The Maine Coalition Opposed to Special Treatment of Homosexuality, or MCOSTH (listhp when you say that), consists of four dudes and their few friends: Protect the Children (scary pediatricians led by a Dr. David Walter); the Concerned Christian (Rev. Donald Miller, who at least admits there's only one of him); Project ACT (Paul Madore); and, yes, John Guffre again with Businesspeople Opposed to Special Rights for Homosexuals, aka Capitalists for Queer Bashing. Heading up the "coalition" is coordinator Bill Clarke, who doesn't even live in Lewiston. Tsk.

Unfortunately, MCOSTH talked 2,500 people into signing its nasty anti-civil rights petition: Lewiston's new ordinance will go to public referendum vote. The good news is that in a recent poll Androscoggin County came out 64% in favor of gay rights for Maine, 21% opposed. The Androscogginese were more advanced than the state in general, which came out pro-gay only 61 to 33. Read that and weep, MCOSTH. And get your own color scheme next time. ▼



photo by Annette Dragon

Pink, green and yellow signs? Protect Our Pastels!



photo by Annette Dragon

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY 2/3

Lesbian Discussion Group meets at Concord Feminist Health Ctr., 38 S. Main St. (225-2739) to talk about Lesbian Music. 7pm.

FRI.-SUN. 2/5-7

Annie Sprinkle, performance artist, lovingly guides you through her life history in her 1-woman show from NY - "Post Post Porn Modernist". 8pm, Northampton Ctr. for the Arts, Northampton, MA. Tickets \$10.50. FMI ☎ (413) 586-8251. "Let there be pleasure on earth and let it begin with me."

SATURDAY 2/6

Out and About Two-Step Dance 1st United Methodist Church, Miller Ave., Portsmouth, NH. 7-11pm, \$6.

Lakes/Mountain Connection goes cross country skiing or skating, followed by potluck supper. FMI ☎ (603) 286-8664 (Lindley).

SUNDAY 2/7

Cross Country Skiing, Jackson, NH with *Time Out!*. Location may be changed depending on weather conditions. FMI ☎ (603) 427-0684 or (207) 871-9940.

A Day in the Orient with Northern Lambda Nord - ice fishing, hot tub, potluck, Orient, ME, 11am. FMI ☎ (207) 498-2088

MONDAY 2/8

Homosexuality in the Military. Stan Clough speaks at Seacoast Gay Men, Unitarian Church, Portsmouth, NH. 7:00pm, FMI ☎ (603) 898-1115 (Al).

THURSDAY 2/11

John Preston speaks on his new book *Flesh and the Word*, arguing that there's no differ-

ence between pornography and erotica. Matlovich Society, Rines Aud., Portland Public Lib., 5 Monument Sq., 7:30-9pm. Wheel chair accessible.

SATURDAY 2/13

Lucy Blue Tremblay Performs at Saunders Theater, Cambridge, MA 8pm. \$15/\$17.

Northern Lambda Nord Valentine's Day party. 8pm, Caribou. FMI ☎ (207) 498-2088.

TUESDAY 2/16

Howard Solomon talks on Gay/Lesbian History with Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Concerns Discussion & Supper Group. 6:30-9pm, mtg. house of 1st Parish U/U, 425A Congress St., Portland, ME. All welcome.

FRI.-SUN. 2/19-21

North East Gay and Lesbian Folk & Country Dance Society (NEGAL) Winter Dance Camp will be held Fri.-Sun., 2/19-2/21 at Beckett/Chimney Corners YMCA Camp, Beckett, MA. FMI ☎ Bev (413) 863-3757/NEGAL 1-800-484-7113, Code 1112.

SATURDAY 2/20

Annual Valentine Ball, Alpine Grove, Hollis, NH. 8pm to 1am. Adv. tickets - send \$15 & SASE to NH Pride, POB 396, Danville, NH 03819. \$18 at door.

Northern Lambda Nord - Snow Fun Day Two. Noon in Maine. FMI ☎ (207) 498-2088.

Time Out Men's Gathering, Portland, ME. Potluck & men's sport and outdoor recreation planning. Open to everyone. FMI ☎ (603) 427-0684 or (207) 871-9940.

Freedom, Glorious Freedom: Achieving Freedom as a Mature Lesbian/Gay Person. John McNeil, former Jesuit priest & author speaks at 1st Parish

Church, Congress St., Portland, ME. 7:30pm. FMI ☎ (207) 422-3140.

Texas Two-Step Dance, West Village Meeting House, Brattleboro, VT, 8pm to midnight. Benefit for the Brattleboro Women's Crisis Ctr. in Judith Hart Fournier's name.

SUNDAY 2/21

Rent Raising Party at the Limelight for ACTUP/Portland. 7pm-?, 3 Spring St., Portland, ME.

Snow Tubing at Amesbury Sports Park, Amesbury, MA with *Out and About*. Snow tubes provided. \$6 per person FMI ☎ (603) 778-3921 (Beth).

Portland Pride '93 discusses Pride Celebration 6/5. FMI ☎ (207) 871-0432.

THURSDAY 2/25

What does scientific research on the origins of homosexuality tell us? Dr. Diana Long, Director of Women's Studies at USM, speaks on *Haven't We Seen This Before? An Historian Looks at Scientific 'Explanations' for Homosexuality*. Matlovich Society, Rines Aud., Portland Public Lib., 5 Monument Sq., 7:30-9pm. Wheel chair accessible.

FRIDAY 2/26

Out and About game night at Ruth and Becky's, Cape Neddick, ME. 7pm (207) 361-2207.

WEDNESDAY 2/24

Time Out Goes Bowling in Portland, ME at Yankee Lanes, \$8 covers everything. RSVP by 2/23 so lane reservations can be made. FMI ☎ (603) 427-0684 or (207) 871-9940.

SATURDAY 2/27

MLGPA Annual Awards Dinner at the Atrium Inn, Brunswick, ME. Cocktails at 5pm, dinner

at 6pm, dancing at 10pm. Seating limited, RSVP prior to 2/24. FMI ☎ (207) 626-9309.

MEDIA

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

KGAY is on the air! This gay-owned radio station is now broadcasting via satellite. Pick them up on Galaxy 5, transponder 6, at 6.3 & 6.46 mhz, or on Spacenet 3, transponder 22, at 6.2 & 7.4 mhz. FMI ☎ KGAY studio -1-800-733-5429; office - 1-800-758-6642.

NOTICES

March on Washington - 4/25/93 Bus trip to Washington from Keene, NH leaving 4/24 at 9pm and returning to Keene 4/25 (arriving by 9am on 4/26. This is not an overnight stay). \$75 roundtrip, \$40 non-refundable deposit must be made by 2/15. FMI and/or sign up now, send check or money order made payable to Frank Kellom, Monadnock AIDS Project, POB 348, Keene, NH 03431 or ☎ (603) 357-0979 (wknds/eve.).

Are you going to the March on Washington 4/23-25? The Maine delegation wants to know & help. Two buses (\$55-\$70 per person), car pools & a train from Boston are planned. FMI ☎ (207) 871-0432. National travel information: 1-800-800-9009. Accommodations: 1-800-554-2220.



More DEBATE from page 1

income of homosexuals is twice the national average, four times that of blacks." 17% of homosexuals "are involved in 'scat'. Scat is eating and rolling in feces." "The average homosexual male has 20 to 106 sexual partners in a year."

The most distressing accusation - that we want their children - was made again and again. Many in the audience sported "Protect Our Children" pins and signs. One member of All Catholics for Truth said, "Now why do you suppose they want your children? The answer is simple. By influencing your children into the homosexual lifestyle - that would serve to swell the ranks of confirmed sexual deviants." A mother of nine, understandably worn, said, "In an age where AIDS is spreading everywhere, why would any mother want to have her child exposed to this for the sake of tolerance of sexually deviant behavior. Don't let this happen to our children!" Another guy took it a step further when he said "What [homosexuals] have done is prioritized their position above the safety of children, above the value of family, and above the security of

this country!"

But not to worry. In spite of our "lack-of-self-esteem-due-to-unfulfilling-short-term-relationships-and-multiple-sex-partners," in spite of what Councilor Grenier called "our vulgar disgusting behavior," and in spite of our predilection for eating shit and consorting with children, many speakers at the hearing voiced concern for us. They said no to the ordinance, but "the best way to protect gays is to pray for them, to love them, and to encourage them to get serious therapeutic help."

* * *

On the positive side - kudos to the two Catholic priests who testified for the ordinance. Other pro-rights speakers included the Lewiston Chief of Police, a representative from the Department of the Attorney General, the Executive Director of the Holocaust Center for Human Rights, a minister from the Unitarian Universalist Church, child psychologists, a board member of the Maine Civil Liberties Union, members of PFLAG, teachers, and lots of just plain citizens.

The most stirring testimony came from individuals whose

lives and peace had been shattered by incidences of discrimination. One woman, knuckles white around the microphone, fought for composure as she introduced herself. "I'm a taxpayer, I go to work, I go home, I go to bed, I eat - I'm a real person. I'm a lesbian." She described the ordeal of losing custody of her children. Later when she was dean of students at a Maine college, a student asked her if she was gay. "I feared for my job. I found that in court it did not work to tell the truth. I lied. I did not feel comfortable doing that. I want to work and be a parent and not be discriminated against." Referring to the air of hostility in the room, she said, "Anonymously, I feel safer in New York than I do here in Lewiston where people yell 'Kill the fags.' Where you can tell faggot jokes and it's ok, what's the next thing that happens? Rocks? Tomatoes? Throwing one over the bridge and killing him? That happened in Maine because it's ok."

The owner of Lewiston's gay bar, The Sportsman's

Athletic Club, described numerous attacks upon himself and patrons of his establishment. He was eloquent in his simplicity. "Here I am standing before you, Roland Blais. I have worked hard all my life; I have served my country with honor. I've never done anything to hurt anyone; but I have no protection against discrimination. Mr. Mayor and members of the city council, I am appealing to your hearts, your souls, and your consciences: All people in Lewiston need equal protection under the law."

In a voice shaking with emotion, another Lewiston citizen introduced himself. "I'm not a wealthy man - far from it. And I don't stand before you with a lot of political power. But I have been discriminated against and I feel compelled to confess to you tonight that I am, I have always been, and I always will be one of those so-called faggots that the gentleman earlier tonight wanted to kill, and yes, Mr. Mayor and members of the council, I need your protec-

More DEBATE page 9

GULF OF MAINE BOOKS

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ASK THIGHMASTER

Dear Thighmaster:

I'm a dyke with a terrible secret. For the past six months I've been sleeping with a man. And, worse, I actually love the guy. If this lover were a woman I'd be blaring the news all over Boston, but I'm afraid to tell anyone. I'm sure I'll lose all of my friends, not to mention my political credibility as a dyke activist. Now my boyfriend is threatening to leave me: he doesn't want to be in the closet anymore and I don't blame him. How can I keep my guy and my identity?

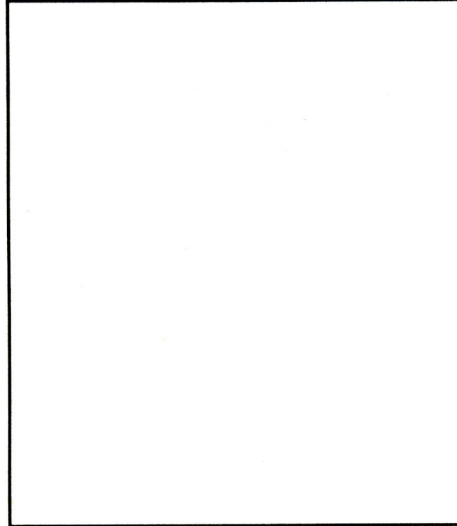
MESSY CLOSET CASE

Dear Messy,

It's times like these when Thighmaster wants to get over this consent thing, because Thighmaster is tempted to advocate the following form of nonconsensual violence: go to each of those dykes whose reaction you fear, and force them to show you what's in their closets before you disclose the mess in yours. What would you find? You'd find vegetarians who've hidden red meat in freezers sworn to be preserving only the film they use to record touching moments with their cat named Sappho. You'd find high-culture queens with videotapes labelled "Lesbian Modernist Poets" that actually contain every episode of *90210* - and not just the ones featuring that totally hot bad girl "from San Francisco" who lured the Mattel crowd to underground clubs and later set fire to a homecoming float (which for some reason totally unclear to Thighmaster was supposed to be a sign of mental illness). And, in many dyke closets, you'd find men, men, men: men they've fantasized about, men they've fooled around with, and, in some cases, men with whom they've done major sex and/or the heavy emotion thing.

Dykedom would be better off if more dykes would come out about this, for several reasons. First, dyke AIDS activists have been pointing out for years that dyke silence about doing men is one reason that lesbians underestimate their risk of HIV infec-

tion. (See, for instance, Risa Denenberg's "A Decade of Denial: Lesbians and HIV," in the July/August 1992 issue of *On Our Backs* - worth acquiring anyway for the cover story "Elvis is a Lesbian.") Also, Thighmaster thinks that queer time spent



blank by Naomi Falcone

on purity tests and self-righteousness would be better spent on figuring out how to deal. Who benefits when queer activists reject the resources and energy of self-naming queers who are outed or who out themselves on cross-gender doing or desiring? Only anti-queers. Getting over this purity stuff is not easy - even Thighmaster, crusader against purity, must confess to have fallen on this issue. (And while in confession-and-repentance mode, Thighmaster wants to apologize for labelling someone a treacherous scum a few columns back; even if the action in question showed rather dubious judgment, an instance of dubious judgment does not merit an indelible label or perpetual TV torture.) But chucking the purity test is crucial for queer survival: we can't afford to turn away allies - and, besides, the purity mindset can be hell on the erotic imagination.

If you love this guy, out yourself as a dyke with a boyfriend. It's not unreasonable for your friends and allies to be suspicious at first. You have to face the fact that when you have an opposite-gender partner you get the very heterosexual privilege that queer

activists are fighting. You're safer on the streets, you're less likely to be evicted if you forget to lower the shades in a moment of passion, and most maddeningly, perhaps, you'll be the safe choice for employers with a "queer" slot (as a friend of Thighmaster's once commented, when parents call up the dean to complain about their precious "child" being assigned *Coming to Power*, it's much easier to calm them down when the dean can casually toss Professor Dyketheorist's boyfriend into the conversation). You need to give your friends time to see that switching from plastic to flesh in the dildo department has not fried your queer brain in some "This is heterosexuality. This your brain on heterosexuality" way. Once they see that you are not going to couple-crash women-only events, demand that he play on your rugby team, or get on the "gay rights are special rights" heterobandwagon, they should welcome your desire to put out for the cause. If they don't come around, Thighmaster suggests that you watch a lot of *Bewitched* episodes and try to figure out how Samantha does that nose maneuver (if you do, please tell Thighmaster); twinkling yourself into their closets should give you plenty of comfort and, more importantly, some major ammunition. ▽

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

ANOTHER VIEWPOINT

by Naomi Falcone

As Thighmaster's illustrator, the only images that came into my head for the drawing involved the obliteration of lesbianism. I feel strongly that Thighmaster's perspective is greatly in error and have decided to scrap this month's drawing in order to write about how I feel.

All of our lives we have been expected to have sex with men. From the earliest sexual aggression in our families, to the het indoctrination from schools and churches, everything in this culture has conspired to make us het. Lesbianism has been the only place where we weren't coerced to be het.

When the lines between lesbian and bisexual are blurred, then the whole meaning of lesbianism is lost. We are constantly being assaulted by heterosexuality. We don't need it from women who use the term lesbian.

There is a word for people who sleep with both sexes - bisexual. It is not lesbian and it is certainly not dyke. If anyone who wants to use the word can, then there is no validity to lesbianism and those of us who relate exclusively to women sexually, don't exist. It perpetuates the lie that all women, no matter what, sleep with men.

Be bisexual if you must, but don't lie about it. I want the option to make my own choices around how I deal with non-lesbians and not have even that stolen from me.

It is particularly offensive to hear the phrase "dyke with a boyfriend". How dare anyone use that mind-fucking, lesbian hating phrase! Is heterosexuality something that we dabble in? After all, no woman could really choose not to be sexual with men. We're all just waiting for the right rapist to come along. ▼

More DEBATE from page 7

tion under the law.

There are those who say that homosexuals choose to be who they are. I ask you, who would ever choose a life of persecution and discrimination and the hell that gay and lesbian people are subject to? No, people are not homosexual because they choose to be, but because they are the beautiful people that God made them."

A home health nurse, after defining her family as "my son Ashley, my life partner Claire, and her daughter Emma," spoke of discrimination in the workplace. "I'd like to speak of my partner as easily as my coworkers speak of their husbands and wives. I'd like to talk about spending Thanksgiving at my partner's mother's house and Christmas at her sister's and feel free to use the feminine pronoun. These are topics that most people talk about as they gather around the coffee pot each morning. If I knew my job was protected, I would find it easier and safer to speak honestly and directly about my life."

There you have it - the ugly, the bad, and the good. ▼

More LETTERS from page 4

For young people to not allow themselves to be silenced by older "wiser" activists is important. Her style of "from the gut" activism should inspire all activists, young and old to think for themselves and not give in to the temptation of assimilation or "kinder, gentler" (read: ineffective and wimped-out) political action. Bee's attitude and style of doing and writing will by far have the most profound effect on society. If you can afford it, by all means, give her a raise!

In solidarity,
Jeff Weinberger

Editors' Note: We doubled her salary. It's still nothing.

Dear APEX,

I'm writing to express my concerns with Thighmaster's column on menopause and vaginal lubrication, which appeared in the January '93 issue. Though Thighmaster is witty and turns a cute phrase, the response to the reader sounded less like health advice and more like a diatribe on

lubricants, pornography, and "Youthocentrism" (is that actually a word?). If it was meant to be helpful, the information was incomplete and somewhat biased.

Vaginal lubrication resulting from sexual arousal is not a youth-oriented ageist myth; it's a normal physiological part of the human sexual response cycle. While not all women get soaking wet, or even a little damp, when they're turned on, most get somewhat lubricated, and age has nothing to do with it.

For women who don't get naturally lubed enough to enjoy vaginal stimulation (read: fucking), commercially available lubricants are a good idea, but buyer beware! Some are scented or contain irritating or allergy-inducing ingredients. Some don't taste very nice. Some degrade latex and render condoms, dental dams, and latex gloves useless for safer sex. Some lubricants are rather expensive. For example, Astroglide, my personal favorite, costs between five and seven dollars for a 2.35 ounce bottle.

More LETTERS ➡ page 11

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DIAL KIDS, 774-TALK - for lesbian, gay, bisexual & questioning youth under 19 yrs of age.

GAY-LESBIAN PHONELINE, Caribou area: (207)498-2088.

GAY INFO LINE, Concord, NH (603) 224-1686.

INGRAHAM VOLUNTEERS (207) 774-HELP.

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OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS
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Burlington, VT 05402

R.A.G.
Box 3293
N. Conway, NH 03860
Quarterly newsletter for women living or vacationing in western ME and Mt. Washington Valley of NH.

SOCIAL GROUPS

AM CHOFSHI - Maine Lesbian/Gay Jewish group, meets monthly. FMI ☐ (207) 874-2970 (Rheatha).

MOUNTAIN VALLEY MEN - Box 36, Center Conway, NH 03813. Social group for gay men from west. ME & east. NH. Potlucks & activities. FMI ☐ (207) 925-1034 (Paul).

OUT AND ABOUT - lesbian social & support group. Meets Mon, 7pm, Portsmouth, NH. For sample newsletter and FMI write OAA, POB 332, Portsmouth, NH 03802-0332 or ☐ (603) 659-2139.

SEACOAST GAY MEN meets Mon. 7pm, Unitarian-Universalist Church, 292 State St., Portsmouth, NH PO Box 1394, Portsmouth, NH 03802. FMI ☐ (603) 898-1115.

TIME OUT - Outdoor recreation and environmental club for lesbians, gay men & friends. Free newsletter lists outdoor sports, instructional and environmentally related events for the NH and ME area. FMI ☐ (603) 749-1449 or SASE to Time Out, c/o 17 First St., Suite 6, Dover, NH 03820.

SUPPORT GROUPS

ACOA - Lesbian and gay mtg. Thurs. 6-7:30 pm, Mon. 7-8:30 pm. YWCA, Portland, ME.

THE AIDS PROJECT - 22 Monument Square, 5th Fl., Portland, ME 04101 FMI ☐ (207)774-6877

about various support groups in Portland, Auburn/Lewiston & Brunswick, ME areas.

ANDROSCOGGIN VALLEY AIDS COALITION (AVAC) - 70 Court St., 2nd Fl., Auburn, ME. Support grp for people with HIV & their loved ones. Thurs. 7pm. FMI ☐ (207) 786-4697.

GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL PARENTS GROUP OF MAINE - FMI ☐ (207) 772-4741 (Frank).

L-ACOA/AL-ANON - Lesbian mtg. Tues. 7-8:30 pm, 7 Middle St., Brunswick, ME (behind U.U. Church on Pleasant St. in dntwn Brunswick, opp. public library) FMI ☐ Gail (207) 833-6004.

MAINEBIBSEXUALPEOPLE'SNET-WORK, POB 10818, Portland, ME 04104. Our purpose is to affirm in ourselves and others the positive nature of bisexuality and to work toward greater acceptance in the bisexual, gay, lesbian, and straight communities. Support and referral services available.

MIDCOAST MAINE PARENTS AND FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS (PFLAG) - 18 Douglas St., Brunswick, ME 04011. Info. & HELPLINE (207) 729-0519 (Sally & Gene). Lit. for & about parents, coming out materials, speakers, contacts with over 300 PFLAG chapters.

MONADNOCK AREA WOMYN (MAW)
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POB 990, Caribou, ME 04736; (207) 498-2088. NLN (founded 1980) serves Aroostook Co. & New Brunswick towns; sponsors social activities, discussion grps and speakers bureau; publishes monthly newsletter & activities calendar.

OUTRIGHT/PORTLAND - Weekly meeting for support, information, fun & special events for gay, lesbian, bisexual and questioning youth under 22 yrs of age, 72 Pine St., Portland, ME, Fri. 7:30-9:30pm. FMI: Outright, Portland Alliance of Gay & Lesbian Youth, POB 5028, Station A, Portland, ME 04101.

OUTRIGHT/CENTRAL MAINE - Group for lesbian and gay youth 22 & under, meets Fri. 7:30 pm, 1st Unitarian Church, Pleasant St., Auburn, ME. PO Box 802, Auburn, ME 04212 ☐ 1-800-339-4042.

PWA COALITION OF MAINE
377 Cumberland Avenue
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RUMFORD/MEXICO AREA AIDS SUPPORT GROUP - Mon. at Mexico Congregational Church (the "Green Church") 7-8:30pm. Main St., Mexico, ME. FMI☐ (207)369-0259.

LIFESTYLES ALLIANCE - meets Fri. Noon at the UNE campus. U. of New England, 11 Hills Beach Rd., Biddeford, ME 04005 FMI ☐ (207) 283-0171 x372.

MERRYMEETING AIDS SUPPORT SERVICES - P.O. Box 57, Brunswick, ME 04011-0057. Provides support group services regarding AIDS & HIV. FMI ☐ (207)725-4955.

OUT FOR GOOD - Lesbian discussion/support grp. Thurs. 7-9pm, 1st Parish Church, 15 Beach St., Saco, ME. Issues relevant to lesbian lifestyle. Free/\$1 donation requested for room rental. Conf., non-smoking meeting. FMI ☐ Bobbi after 5:30pm (207) 247-3461.

WOMEN'S INCEST AND SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS' GROUP
Open support/discussion for women only. At Women's Forum on USM campus (86 Winslow St.) Weds. 12:30-2:00pm. FMI ☐ (207) 874-6593.

POLITICAL

PORTLAND MLGPA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE at law offices, 5th floor, 100 Middle St., Portland, ME FMI ☐ (207) 871-0432.

APOLLO SOCIETY - For New England's gay/lesbian atheists, free-thinkers, ethical humanists & Hellenists. Free speech & civil rights advocacy, freedom-from-religion support and guilt free fun! FMI ☐ (207) 773-5626 or SASE to POB 5301, Portland, ME 04101.

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Maine College of Art

AIDS COALITION TO UNLEASH POWER (ACT UP/Portland)

142 High St., #222, Portland, ME 04101; (207) 828-0566; FAX: (207) 828-0566 3*. Meets Sun. 7pm at YWCA (87 Spring St., Portland, ME).

FAR (FEMINISTS AGAINST RAPE)

Activist group seeking to stop sexism in the media, courts and streets. One in three women is sexually assaulted in America. These are hate crime times. Meets weekly. FMI ☎ (207) 772-5941 or (207) 772-0935.

GREATER PORTLAND NOW c/o

YWCA, 87 Spring St., Ptd, ME 04101, (207) 879-0877 (Catherine) or (207) 871-0618 (Jennifer). POB 4012, Portland, ME 04101. Action-oriented group. Goals are: (1) foster Equal Rights for women; (2) insure unrestricted choice around reproductive rights; (3) support Lesbian/Gay rights. Speakers/events for the public 4th Tues. of every month.

SPIRITUAL

SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAINS - gay/straight, justice-seeking community meets for worship 2nd & 4th Sundays 5pm, 1st Congregational Church, N. Main St. & Washington St., Concord, NH. Potluck after service. FMI ☎ Jim Bretz (603) 536-4011.

DIGNITY/MAINE - Masses at 1st Parish Church, 425 Congress St., Portland. Entrance in rear of church. Sundays 5:30pm.

INTEGRITY - St. Matthew's Church, 18 Union St., Hallowell, ME. 1st Fri. of the month, 7pm. FMI ☎ (207) 622-6631.

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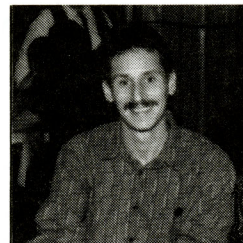
Vincent Boulanger, a Maine artist, died of complications from AIDS January 5, 1993 at his home in Gray, ME.

Vincent worked with the Maine Dept. of Education on AIDS awareness and prevention and spoke at local schools. Throughout his 7-yr. illness, he lobbied in Augusta and Washington for equal treatment of people with AIDS.

On World AIDS Day, 12/1, he participated in "A Day Without Art." That day, numerous works at the Portland Museum of Art were draped in black

cloth as silent testament to the creative talents lost to AIDS.

Paul Rodrigue, an artist and longtime friend, said, "Vincent had tremendous strength and never would let the disease win. He would always come forward, past it, because he had a lot to do."



A sculptural work of Rodrigue's titled "Vincent's Journey"

has been on display since last September in the Portland Museum of Art.

Vincent was a thoughtful, gentle man who will be missed by many.

More LETTERS from page 9

It really isn't ok to suggest that post-menopausal women just get used to having a dry vagina; it can be painful and irritating. Regular sexual stimulation during and after menopause keeps vaginal tissue moist. It is recommended that women masturbate or have sex with a partner on a regular basis to keep the vagina from drying out. The sex need not involve vaginal penetration or orgasm.

As a rule, lesbians do not have ready access to complete, accurate non-judgmental information on health and sexuality. If Thighmaster and APEX are going to tackle these issues, bear in mind that we need information that extends past your personal interests and offers resources beyond a couple of books and a tube of Foreplay.

In Maine, some family planning clinics and private health care providers can be helpful, even for lesbians. I recommend lesbians get in touch with the Lesbian Health Project at the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center, which can offer advice, counseling, education, reading material, workshops, training, and routine gynecological exams. Call (207) 947-5337 during regular business hours, or write to MWWHC, PO Box 20, Bangor, ME 04402.

Sincerely,
Peaches Bass

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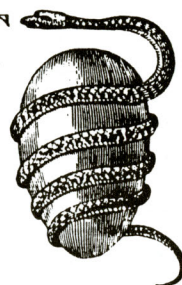


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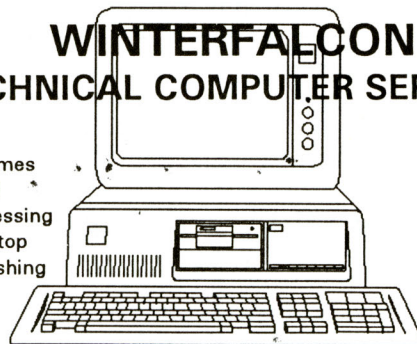
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