

PHOBIC PHOTOGRAPHER

Santa Ana, CA (AP) (Bay Windows) - A male couple who challenged a photographer's decision to exclude them from a high school reunion photo album have won the case on appeal, their lawyers said.

In 1987, David Engel attended the 10th reunion of his class from University High School in Irvine. As part of the event, the actor paid to have his picture taken with his partner, Eric Underwood, and included in a keepsake photo album. But Worthington and his company, Worthington Reunion Photographers, refused to include the men's photograph with those of class members and their guests.

In court papers, Worthington had argued that he would not use the reunion keepsake as "a forum for lifestyle."

"If I'm making a publication with my name on it, I want to represent my company and my opinion," Worthington said in a 1987 newspaper interview.

Engle and Underwood wear matching gold bands and consider their 14-year relationship a marriage.

The memory book was never published because Engel won an injunction barring publication without the couple's photograph. Many of his peers from the class of 1977 supported his action against the photographer.

Another lawyer for Engel, civil rights attorney Gloria Allred, said the case will set a precedent in California law.

"What this says is that all persons are entitled to equal access to business services and cannot be denied access on the basis of gender," Allred said. "It's a very exciting victory."

Engel issued a statement saying he and Underwood "always knew we had the right to be included in the book with the rest of my classmates."

Apex

A POINT OF DEPARTURE

VOL. 2, NO. 10

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DANCING IN THE STREETS

by Tom Ace (editor - *Diseased Pariah News*)

I remember seeing a filmstrip in public school ("Health" class) when I was about twelve. Where I went to school, health class was taught by rank amateurs. One teacher seemed to have only recently learned the material from books, as evidenced by his bizarre pronunciations of words like "hormones" and "atrophy" (the latter being pronounced like the two words "a trophy"). But I digress.

The filmstrip we saw that day was about birth defects. One frame showed a picture of a girl with a cleft palate, which struck me as funny looking at the time. Without thinking, I laughed out loud. Of course I got dirty looks from some of the decent kids, and the teacher emphatically told me that it was not funny.

The girl with the cleft palate obviously hadn't heard me laugh, so she wasn't offended. No one in the room had any nasty

congenital defect, so I hadn't directly insulted anyone by association. But people took offense, and I learned an important lesson - that people are likely to find my

sense of humor offensive. I'm not sure that's what the teacher wanted me to learn, but I don't know where he is now and I can't ask him.

These kinds of experiences mold our behavior and our feelings. Kids learn that they must be sad at funerals, they must be filled with the spirit at church, they must be happy at parties and on holidays. They must believe that our political system is the best; they must

be patriotic and love our country. Buttholes are not sexy. You must dress well if you want people to like you. Long-term monogamous relationships are the ideal to aspire to. Birth defects and diseases are not funny.



photo by Annette Dragon

More DANCING ➤ page 11

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- Volunteers for Portland-area bigot-busting at the polls. (Stop Cosby's signature gathering!) Call 879-1342 or 828-0566 today!
- EPL needs people in Lewiston. Call 777-3037.

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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. If your submission has appeared or will appear in any other publication, we must be notified. Submissions *must* be received by the 20th of each month. Thank you for your contributions.

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LETTERS ...

Dear APEX,

In September and October, there were meetings in Bangor and Portland on what to do about the Carolyn Cosby "Freedom to Oppress" petition against those she doesn't like. The MLGPA has not been its usual stellar self in pursuing the "Wing-nut," largely because of changeovers on its board and state-wide community involvement. Although there will be efforts against the "oppression" petition, there's no consensus to stop Concerned Maine (dysfunctional) Families.

We could be tremendously surprised. It's not generally apparent that signing the petition supports discrimination in Maine, so Cosby's dependence on deception and stealth will help her in the wilderness of the less informed. Even those who will be victims of the referendum are some of the signers.

Cosby's stealth workers seem to be a small number of people out gathering signatures. We've looked for them at September's fairs and didn't see them. The latest radar blips show activity in Portland, Lewiston, and at "christian" right baptismal fonts. They've enlisted several wacko and not-so-wacko ministers for a bogus "No Room for Hate" church campaign which pretends that a good christian can deny someone their human dignity without encouraging acts of hate (it wasn't a successful compromise for European churches facing the Nazi threat). CM(d)F has gone door to door, attempted to get into malls, and will have people at polling places. They have about 7,500 signatures at this point, but we should expect an avalanche of signatures as the January

deadline approaches.

It's also not surprising that the polarities of our own community have become visible once again. Those who bear scars of past campaigns, those who are used to being in key positions, and those who are tired of being faceless have been voicing their concerns. But the need is for people whose skin is tough enough to endure disagreements and personal affronts yet still work together. If anyone needs to be acknowledged for their contributions, then they should seek a loving partner, not a frantic public campaign. If feelings are hurt now, just wait for the thrills to come.

On 11/20, in Bangor, at the next Rage meeting, all of us will have to make some difficult decisions on what will function effectively as a state-wide animal. We have to work with those who disagree with us. A governing group of people has to be entrusted with power to act efficiently for all of us, our suspicions and histories notwithstanding. Those who are not there or don't input their thoughts will lose their right to complain.

Whether it is for fighting a referendum or passing a rights bill, we need to organize effectively, not just organize. The radical right will never sleep as long as there is money to be made on gay-bashing which leads to their emotional thrill of power and influence. No matter what issue we win on, every act of human equality will be under constant threat from now until the far right succeeds at lobotomizing the whole of society. But just remember that we are/have allies whose thinking may be different but whose hopes and intentions are the same as our own.

Michael Rossetti

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.

NO BUSINESS AS USUAL - A call for arguments

by Bee Bell

In a year and a half of writing for *APEX* and 14 months at the Maine Progressive, I have apparently written a lot of things that have pissed people off immensely.

You wouldn't know it from the mail the papers get nowadays, or from phone calls I receive, or from the number of people who tell me to my face. I can think of maybe five people who have ever told me in personal letters or conversation that they've had a problem with what I wrote (thanks Bob, Tony, Suzanne, Rita, and Ana. And Barbara. Six.) Another few in letters to *APEX*. But people who I counted my good friends stopped speaking to me a year ago, I assume because of things I wrote then.

Got a problem? Tell me; I'll listen. Call me c/o ACT UP/Portland, 828-0566. We can even go drink a cranberry juice at Woodfords and hash it out. Don't want to talk? Write to *APEX*, or me at *APEX*, or request a guest column. The paper, letters to the editors and the rest, is here for your use as a forum for public issues.

When you do investigative reporting for and about a community which is awesome enough to deserve it, torn enough to need it, and strong enough to take it, people get furious at you all the time. I don't like it but I'm pretty used to it: I'm in ACT UP.

But if you think I'm wrong about something, and that whatever's more right-on isn't getting fairly weighed in, DISCUSS it, publicly or with me. I'm willing to consider any argument you make. Why mention it now?

Co-activists and I have attended a couple of public les/bi/gay/queer meetings lately in which two alarming prospects have come up: one, suggestions that the local queer press (i.e. *APEX* and *CPR*) be barred from otherwise public meetings on our issues, and, two, implications that an entirely separate group will operate apart from the group meeting openly since August to work on the state lesbian/gay civil

rights battle - because some "heavy-hitters" are said to be upset about queer press on Equal Protection Maine. (The next meeting is 11/20, noon to 4pm at the Rage, 123 Franklin St., Bangor. Smoke-free and chem-free.)

If these people have a big problem and only talk about it privately, that's uncool. But if they go start (or re-start) a "Separate but Equal" Protection Maine without more broad and open discussion of the press issue, that's unacceptable.

Enough said. See you at Woodfords.

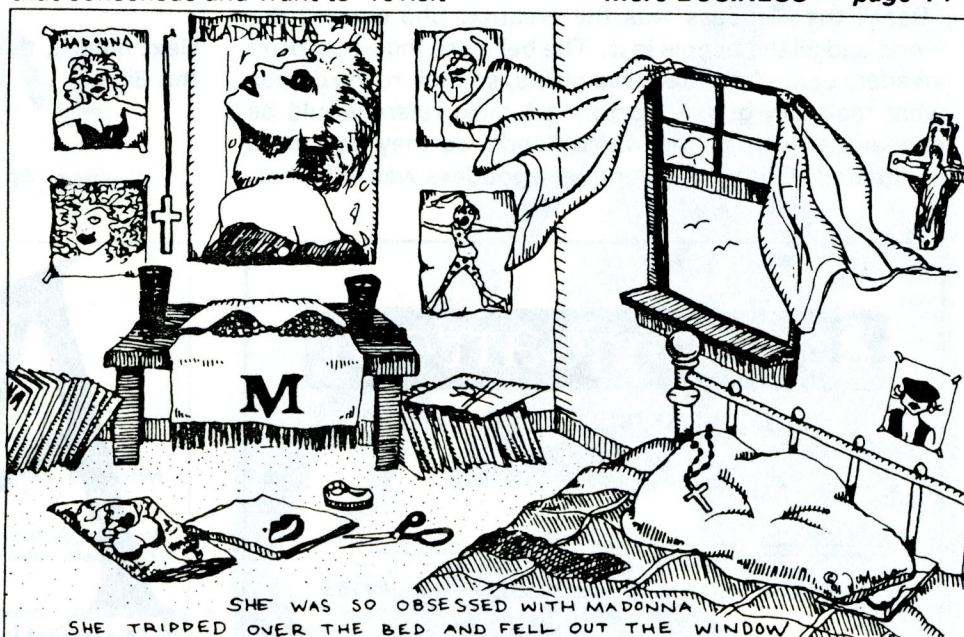
Fifteen or so people came to the open meeting in Bangor on 10/2 to work further on the structure of an Equal Protection Maine-type state organization to combat Concerned Maine Families. The group opened up a committee-made consensus plan a great deal, for instance by agreeing to give the large general group more power in the campaign. Yet MLGPA (Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance) board members, many of whom had worked on the previous consensus in the structure-making committee (got all that?), are now dissatisfied with that consensus and want to "revisit"

the issue. Several structure committee members disagreed strongly with MLGPA's thinking, and asked for solid explanations of what it is in the consensus plan that won't work, and why. Stay tuned.

As I see it, a lot of these EPM conflicts come down to two things. (1) Some people believe you can change the world by changing the laws. A lot of these people become lawyers and politicians. But laws merely reflect change, they don't accomplish it. On PBS's "I'll Fly Away" series this week, a white guy was being tried (in the early civil-rights era South) for involuntary manslaughter of 3 black people who'd died in a bus crash he caused. He should have been convicted, but the (white) prosecutor knew the jury would let him go free. So this liberal lawyer starts thinking he'll accept the guy's plea to a lesser charge. Get him on something, at least.

But a black minister visits the lawyer on the eve of the verdict, and encourages him not to settle for a plea. Then the white bus driver gets off. But by the end of the week, 500 black people

More BUSINESS ⇐ page 14



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

by Stan Clough

The Goddess: Part III

Around 4000 B.C., barbarians from the central Asian steppes invaded the Mediterranean World. Scholars refer to these people as the Indo-Europeans: not because they were of the same race, but because their languages derived from a single language called, naturally enough, Indo-European. These invaders were the precursors of the Germanic, Celtic, Latin, Greek, Persian, Slavic, Baltic and Indian linguistic-culture groups. At about the same time, nomadic peoples from the Arabian Peninsula invaded Mesopotamia from the south. These nomads were the Semitic people: again, not because of their race, but because of their common linguistic heritage. Today's principal Semitic languages are Hebrew and Arabic. Because Indo-European languages are ultimately related, and Semitic languages borrowed from the Indo-European groups, we can trace the mythological development of patriarchal, sky-god worshipping religions that swept into the realm of the Goddess after 4000 B.C.

Myth is a wonderful tool for reconstructing ancient cultures and their ideologies. Myths do not faithfully report actual events: it would be a mistake to see Homer's *Iliad* as what actually happened to Troy c.1250 B.C. There are many types of truth, and mythical truth is one. The stories where the Goddess is raped and killed connotes the conquest of one culture by another. For example, how did the Spanish or English invaders conquer the minds of the New World's Native peoples? They made their gods and goddesses demons, and then proceeded to have their Judeo-Christian deity crush these demons. And so it was after 4000 B.C. in the Mediterranean World.

Recall the Goddess was the creatrix: She created the world and all the people in it. The bellicose Indo-European invaders came from tree-less plains, so their ruling deities were male sky-gods. Nurturing female rulers would be dangerous rivals to the warrior gods, so they had to be conquered. One way to conquer a goddess was to kill her.

An example of this is found in the Sumerian *Enuma Elish*, the Mesopotamian Genesis. In it, the ruling Goddess Tiamat is angered because Her consort is murdered, so She threatens to punish the perpetrators, the male gods, by pulling their palace down upon their heads. The craven gods call upon Marduk to champion their cause. As Tiamat transforms Herself into an enormous Serpent, the universal sacred consort of the Goddess, Marduk sallies forth to fight Her. He kills Her, and creates the world from Her carcass and the human race, to serve as slaves to the gods, from Tiamat's spilt blood. Marduk thus co-opts the creative power of the feminine by becoming a male creator. A similar story comes from Greece: the son of the sky-god Zeus, Apollo, conquers Delphi, the *omphalos* (navel) of the Earth Goddess Gaia, by killing the serpent that protects the sacred site. The serpent here was the umbilical cord of Gaia that nourished the world. Apollo conquers Gaia by cutting this link.

Another way to conquer the Goddess was to rape Her. In the *Iliad*, Zeus warns his wife Hera that if she doesn't stop interfering in the Trojan War, he will murder her. In Mycenaean Culture, as well in the later Greek Culture that it spawned, the husband had the right to kill the women in his household. He also had the right to sexual relations with his wife, even if she was reluctant. Zeus, the divine mirror of his creators, raped Hera and made her his wife: the very same Hera who at one time was ruler of Crete. Murder and rape are two ways to conquer a people: murdering and raping their deities conquers them culturally.

Next month, the Goddess enslaved: Astarte, Ishtar and the Bible. ▼

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A CULTURAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by Suzanne Hunt

I was born during an October snowstorm, an early "northeaster." My mother, conscious of the small French Catholic parish she had recently joined, gave me a French name, Suzanne Marie. I was the third child, the first after my parents' two year separation. My mother had lived with her parents in Boston, my father had returned to Maine.

My birthplace and the site of my first eighteen years is a small town in southern Aroostook County. Island Falls is a shabby and economically depressed farming community. My mother hated Island Falls and never wanted to live there, my father never wanted to live anywhere else. Dad was the third generation of Hunts to live in Katahdin Valley. The Hunts have lived in Maine since the Revolutionary War. Mom was second generation Boston Irish. The contrast and conflicts between these two strong people and their cultures was the theme of our family life.

I think I remember my father telling my mother that Eisenhower had won the election. Politics was what we talked about. Politics and history were all we talked about. Our family values and personal emotions were expressed through political metaphor. My mother liked to recount when she was one of six registered Democrats in Island Falls. My father was among that six, and Ted Pettengill,

an unusual town patriarch, was one. The story was that Ted Pettengill, like all his family before him, had always been a staunch Republican. Ted had become a Democrat with a capital D the day old Seth Campbell refused to register a Frenchman to vote. My parents admired Ted Pettengill, so I did too.

Island Falls was at one time the site of the second largest tannery in the world. There was the company store and the company houses. Technology advanced and the tannery closed but some things about the town were set. The poorest of the people still lived in the company houses. The descendants of the tannery founders still were seen as running the town. The few old families lived in the houses with the nice porches and stained glass windows. The majority of the houses were small, undecorated two story buildings with attached wood sheds.

My mother's unhappiness grew, and she expressed this with a damning political analysis of Island Falls and everyone who lived there. She shared her analysis of town life with me freely and without restraint. Very early on I was to hear that no Catholics were hired by the local utility companies, the French were grossly mistreated, and the

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THIS DYKE'S PERSPECTIVE - a few critical thoughts and questions

by Ana R Kissed

It is with regret that I am giving up this column. There are several reasons why I made this decision. One of them being that I had hoped to participate/create dialogue with other dykes and that wasn't happening. Another reason is that often men would tell me they were enjoying reading it. Having been so specific about my intention that this column was for Lesbians, it pisses me off that men would be so arrogant as to blithely tell me that they were enjoying it. This experience of writing a column for Lesbians only in a gay/queer paper hasn't worked for me.▼



photo by Annette Dragon



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Republican party represented big business and greed.

One of my most significant memories of early childhood was the day I proudly announced I was in the first reading group, I was a cardinal. My mother asked me what the other groups were and I told her the second group was the blue jays and the third was the robins. I don't remember the words my mother used but I remember that she went off on a tirade exclaiming that groups set up differences and separated people unfairly. She explained to me that the expectation would be that people in like groups would associate only with each other. I felt great guilt and shame for my cardinal stature. I resolved that I would hang out with the robins. That resolution has shaped my life.

At the age of seven I had become political. I had a social and political obligation to "the people in the third group." A piece of me carried an anger and a sadness that was well beyond my years. I do not regret this, it is a deep and meaningful part of my person. I had become a revolutionist.

My home was "the back of the restaurant." Dad had built a restaurant on Route 2 adjoining his father's shoe shop. When Mom agreed to move to

Island Falls Dad built three small rooms off the back of the restaurant. There was no kitchen, we ate in the restaurant. Dad's values told him that this was a convenient and economical way to live. Mom was ashamed and humiliated not to have a regular home.

Dad worked from 5 a.m. when he stoked the furnace till 11 p.m. when he mopped the floor. Mom waited on tables, peeled vegetables and tried to make a family life for her children. The restaurant was rough in some ways. I remember the woodsmen coming in, leaving their huge chain saws by the door. I noticed all the missing fingers and arms. I listened to stories of bloody and fatal accidents.

As the saying goes, my parents worked like dogs. We all worked. At age four, I brought the potatoes up from the cellar each morning. When I was a little older my sister Bebe and I would spend Sunday afternoons washing the dishes from Saturday night. I loved to work with my father, he would let me do anything. It was great fun. I learned the joy of work from my parents.


Mom was Catholic, Dad was agnostic. Mom sent us kids to church but often did not go herself. I was taken by the Mass. It was mysterious,

there was incense, Latin, strange robes, candles, and statues. I imagined what it all meant. During holy communion I watched the altar boy hold the sharp shiny sacred instrument up to the communicant's neck. I assumed their job was to cut the person's head off if they refused the sacred ritual. I secretly wondered if my classmate Roddy Brooks would have the guts to do it. Religion was powerful. Mysticism existed, I learned there was much more to life than met the eye.

On some kind of regular basis we kids would go to Boston to visit my mother's family. They lived in Somerville, their apartment and life seemed grand to me. They had a kitchen and a dining room. My cousin had a room of his own with a phone in it. The saint's statue whose job it was to see that you were never broke had a ten dollar bill under it, its counterpart at our house sat on a dime. We rode the subway, went to the science museum, ate jelly donuts and saw movies.

My father's family were working class craftsmen; carpenters, cooks and watchmakers. They aspired to be free of any man's command. My mother's

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REPRESENTATIONS OF VIDEO - Race, Gender, and Sexuality

by Sol Ray Sender

The video camera is certainly a powerful tool. Unfortunately it has been used to reinforce the status quo, and not to negotiate its own critical presence. Although it has had a profound effect on our understanding of history, truth, and justice, it has not been used to question the nature of representation, or the assumed objectivity of its images. That is why it fits compactly into the American way. It is a tool of the closet and a closeted tool, a silent voyeur which is able to conceal its effect through the wonder of its technology. But, paradoxically, the video camera is also used to out the truth and present the evidence. It is the most concealable and the most accessible recorder of the "actual" that we have ever seen.

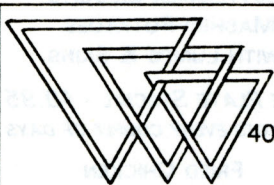
It should hardly surprise us that this unique and paradoxical power of the video camera has been put to work manipulating our ideas of race, gender, and sexuality. Power is inextricably linked to race, gender, and sexuality in our culture. In the media and justice systems, like most everywhere else, power is either white, male and heterosexual or made in its image. In order to break down the fearful walls of oppression, we must identify the assumptions, and begin to unpack and discuss the issues. What does it mean when truth and history are constructed through film, television, and/or video? Whose truth and history is it? How does it get interpreted and/or appropriated? Does it ever actually get interpreted? Do these mediums lend themselves to interpretation or an internal critical dialogue?

A critical dialogue may offer no solution to the Rodney King or Reginald Denny case, but neither will our legal system. The reality of race relations inhabits a particularly isolated (if not segregated) position in our understanding of history and truth. But we cannot talk about race without talking about gender and sexuality, nor can we talk about gender or sexuality without talking about race. When a video of a group of white police officers kicking the shit out of a black man is appropriated for news, and

then trial, it becomes an event shielded from a certain kind of interpretation. These questions do not get asked: why do men kick the shit out of each other? Why do white men kick the shit out of black men? Why can't men love each other? What does it mean to nationally broadcast this image as news, and then place it at the foundation of a trial, with no such interpretive or analytical frame surrounding it? What do the L.A. riots mean and what are we going to do about it? Race and video seem to have developed a relationship. There is a particular kind of history that is being represented in that relationship. It has its own reality, a reality that is constructed through the media and through the judicial institutions. These institutions do not ask questions of their own practices of representation. Ultimately the message is "do not ask questions of these images, judge them." That is terrifying.

Also frightening is the recent appropriation of video technology in film. Traditionally, cinema is where sexuality is represented, and where heterosexuality is constructed. Essential to this construction is the male gaze and its violent sexualization of women. In "Sliver" and "Rising Sun," video technology is used as a thinly veiled device of the male gaze. The video camera is the character which records the voyeuristic and violent film within the film. It frames the rape and murder of women, cleverly dislocating it from the "reality" of the movie. Once again video becomes the evidence and the record of the objective truth, around which, in this case, the action-mystery-sex-thriller revolves. We are meant to forget the real issue as we get caught up in the suspense. This is how the rape and murder of women continues to get placed at the root of our collective unconsciousness. Why are there films being made about the rape and murder of women? Why aren't critics or films themselves ever asking what it means to make women victims of the male gaze? It is a voyeurism which links audience to film through an inherently violent act.

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DYKE IN THE THIRD ROW

by Sue Enos

"Maine Lights," held the night of 10/17, started off as a fundraiser for Equal Protection Lewiston, but ended up as a support raiser. A lot of people just paid what they could and got to see the show anyway. Press were invited, and EPL wanted to pack the house. It was held at the grand auditorium of Lewiston Junior High School. Congressman Tom Andrews, former Gov. Joe Brennan, the Attorney General and other stars were there. Ed Muskie and Sen. George Mitchell sent letters of support.

The best part of the night was when State Sen. Handy got up there with his three children - they were named after presidents and such and he pointed that out. He also told us how "I'm one who prefers ballet to baseball," and so obviously all through growing up everyone called him little fagboy and stuff. So he gets up there with his daughter and son - probably about 5 and 3 - and his wife brings up their little baby. (He's holding the baby while the 2 older ones are looking out in awe at being up on stage.) His son takes the microphone stand and keeps swinging it so his dad has to chase the mic down to talk into it. So finally he takes the mic out of the stand, and stands there mic in one hand and baby in the other - so his son starts grabbing the baby's legs and pulling on them. So James Handy has got the baby hanging by his neck in one arm, mic in the other hand, and he's talking to his son. Everyone's laughing. His daughter decides to lift up her skirt and tap-dance for the cameras. His 2-min speech lasted about 15. It was great.

My other favorite part was when Chanelle Matthews got up to speak. Chanelle was one of several NYC Lesbian Avengers who spent October in Lewiston to help out EPL. She spoke about how, although she was an outsider to the Lewiston/Maine communities she was very much an insider to the lesbian/gay community. She talked about how being an African-American, she knew discrimination every day, two-fold. She also talked about how there are a lot of very different people in the lesbian/gay community, and that we should all value each other for what and who

we are: each person has a tremendous amount to contribute. People should reach out to the real leaders within the community, like "All the Jan Welchs of the world, all the Ray and Kevin Gagnons, all the Ray Robicheaus..." As she spoke, it made me think of how other people running a lot of this campaign weren't the real community leaders, or even queer people. But that there were people who have these capabilities, and the knowledge, and the heart and compassion to do this work, but these people are not being utilized to their fullest. She said a lot more, but her strongest words were "I am Chanelle Matthews of the New York Lesbian Avengers."

There were a bunch of speakers - two lesbian moms with their daughters. All the kids in the whole show were hilarious. One curtsied between her two dyke mothers - no one could figure out where she'd learned how. The daughter already plays soccer. Hmmm. Then this mother gets up with her lesbian daughter, who's in high school - and obviously in excruciating pain - as her mother tells all this personal stuff about her. She talked about her daughter moving out, and all these other major emotional moments, and Jenny's standing there, tongue in her cheek, eyes rolling, and hands SHOVED way down in the bottom of her pockets.

I'd almost forgotten. Wish I did. This priest from a Catholic diocese and this woman did a conversational parable between Jesus (her) and a follower (him). (She forgot to dress in drag for the occasion.) Truly gross. They compared us to Samaritans, which is cool if you're thinking of the good Samaritan. But what they had each other saying was, "Aren't Samaritans those pagan, marrying, loose-moraled thieves and crooks?" "But I love them just the way they are," said 'Jesus'. "But homosexuals - don't you proclaim them to be sinners?" Jesus: "Yes, but I love everyone, just the way they are, as everyone should..." "Aren't they in the same category as lepers and prostitutes, he questioned?" "Yes, but we should love them anyway,"

More DYKES ➤ page 14

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CALENDAR . . .

MONDAY 11/1

Annual Harvest Supper Potluck party with Seacoast Gay Men, Unitarian Church, Portsmouth, NH, 7pm. FMI ☎ AI (603) 898-1115.

TUESDAY 11/2

Election Day! In Portsmouth, NH, vote "YES" on Question #3. In Lewiston, ME, vote "NO" to end discrimination!!

FRIDAY 11/5

Amelia's Singles meet. FMI ☎ (603) 763-4112. An Amelia's event.

FRI.-SAT. 11/5-6

New England Regional Conference on Lesbian & Gay Issues, Northeastern School of Law, Boston, MA. FMI ☎ GLAAD at (617) 426-1350.

SATURDAY 11/6

Margie Adam in concert, 8pm, Alumni Recital Hall, Keene State College, Keene, NH. \$14. FMI and tickets ☎ (603) 358-2168.

Amelia's potluck at Mert's. 6pm. FMI ☎ (603) 763-4112. An Amelia's event.

FRI.-SUN. 11/5-7

The Wise Ones: exploring women's power at midlife and beyond. A conference at Keene State College, NH. Margie Adam concert Sat. eve. FMI ☎ (802) 254-9469 (Diana Wahle).

Single's Weekend '93 Provincetown for men. FMI ☎ (508) 487-1800 or (800) 371-5507 (in MA only).

SUNDAY 11/7

Women of the Woods potluck in Plainfield, VT. Newcomers welcome. 10:30am. FMI ☎ (802) 229-0109.

The beaches and woods of the Pemiquid peninsula are great for scavenging. We're having a potluck on an available beach

and some hiking and exploration. Sponsored by *Time Out*. FMI ☎ (207) 871-9940.

Photo exhibit *Looking at me and my Kind* by Ana R. Kissed. Reception (for lesbians and other wombyn only) 3-5pm at Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St., Jamaica Plain, Boston, MA. Exhibit will be on display throughout November. FMI ☎ (617) 983-9530.

MONDAY 11/8

Coalition to End Discrimination in New Hampshire will launch their campaign in Portsmouth at Seacoast Gay Men, Unitarian Church, Portsmouth, NH, 7pm. FMI ☎ (603) 898-1115.

TUESDAY 11/9

NOW Take Back the Night March in Keene, NH. 6-7:30pm, Central Sq. FMI ☎ (603) 358-6161. To march with the MAW contingent ☎ Antara (603) 363-4739.

Time Out newsletter stuffing party. FMI ☎ (207) 871-9940.

WEDNESDAY 11/10

Kick off rally to enact a NH anti-discrimination law. Manchester, NH. FMI ☎ (603) 536-4011.

THURSDAY 11/11

A Dance Party Benefit for the Matlovich Society at the Underground, 3 Spring St., Portland, ME. 7:30pm-1am, \$3/members, \$4/non-members.

FRI.-SUN 11/12-14

6th Annual National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Creating Change Conference, Durham, NC. FMI ☎ (202) 332-6483, (202) 332-6219 (TTD) or write NGLTF, 1734 14th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009.

FRIDAY 11/12

Diane Eiker and Sapphire discuss their book "Keep Simple Ceremonies" about feminist rituals. Lunaria Books, Northampton, MA, 7pm.

SATURDAY 11/13

Workshop on Lesbian Economics: Taking Care of Ourselves as a Community, presented by Triangle Interests of Philadelphia, PA, a lesbian group that sponsors a credit union, a business directory and group insurance. Unitarian Society, 212 Main St., Northampton, MA. Suggested donation \$25.

Margie Adam performs at First Parish Church, 425 Congress St., Portland, ME, 8pm. Reserved seating: \$17, available only from Wild Iris Productions, POB 17, West Buxton, ME 04093; Gen. adm. \$12.50/adv., \$14/day of show.

MONDAY 11/15

Women of the Woods shows slides of Norway. Montpelier, VT. FMI ☎ (802) 229-0109.

Gay'n Gray Partners in Travel, new travel club for men over 40, will present their illustrated slide show at Seacoast Gay Men, Unitarian Church, Portsmouth, NH, 7pm. FMI ☎ (603) 898-1115.

WEDNESDAY 11/17

Clay Hill Farms sponsors Warm Winter Wednesday series. Dinner and women-only socializing. FMI ☎ (207) 361-2272.

SATURDAY 11/20

Lambda Women's Dance at Pat's Peak, Henniker, NH. 8pm. FMI ☎ (603) 224-1686.

Women of the Woods First Lady Dressup Fest. Montpelier, VT. Hat, gloves and pearls required. Bring food to share. 6:30pm. FMI ☎ Jeannie (802) 223-6078.

MONDAY 11/22

Barry Lockard performs and demonstrates the harpsichord in history and entertainment from classics to rock. Seacoast Gay Men, Unitarian Church,

Portsmouth, NH at 7pm. FMI ☎ AI (603) 898-1115.

THURSDAY 11/25

Women of the Woods Thanksgiving in Chelsea, VT. Bring instruments. 9am on, dinner at 1pm. FMI ☎ (802) 229-0109.

Seacoast Gay Men Annual Thanksgiving Open House in Salem, NH. All welcome! FMI ☎ (603) 898-1115.

FRI.-FRI. 11/26 - 12/3

Blue Ridge Mtns, North Carolina RV Camping includes Gatlinburg, Gettysburg, DC, Timberfell Lodge. Departs Portland, includes meals, equipment, linens, on board travel and camping comforts, stops in major tourist and gay areas of interest. Men's tour. RSVP by 11/15. \$475/single; \$750/double. FMI ☎ (207) 871-9940.

MONDAY 11/29

NH P-FLAG will discuss their Gay Books Project for high school students at Seacoast Gay Men, Unitarian Church, Portsmouth, NH, 7pm. FMI ☎ (603) 898-1115.

NOTICES

Women's Holiday Dance will be held Sat., 12/11, 8pm to 12 at Temple Beth El, 400 Deering Ave., Portland, ME. Chem free, DJ, refreshments, \$5/Adv and \$6/at the door.

The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display 12/1-4 to commemorate World AIDS Day. Free, YWCA, 87 Spring St., Portland, ME. FMI ☎ (207) 774-2198 (The NAMES Project/Maine).

MEDIA

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

More DANCING from page 1

The second most frequently asked question we *Diseased Pariah News* staffers get is whether or not we get much flak for our demoted sense of humor. (The first most common question is "Are those your real names?") In fact, scarcely anyone gives us any shit. The junior high school Health teachers of the world (and other people who think it's wrong to laugh at photos of birth defects) evidently make an exception for those of us who have contracted the particular disease we're laughing about. Like American Express cardmembership, infection has its privileges.

I've had so much fun throwing away ingrained ideas about what I should or shouldn't do that I wonder why everyone else doesn't feel the same way. It took me until I was twenty to accept my own sexuality, but when it happened it happened abruptly and felt fucking great. Years later, coming to terms with HIV infection also required throwing away preconceived notions, although the experience wasn't particularly abrupt or exhilarating. Adjusting to life with HIV meant giving up the idea that life was going to be totally unacceptable from that point on. Maybe you didn't feel that way when you found out you were positive, but your Humpy Editor did. Somewhere along the line, I'd gotten the idea in my head that infection with an insidious virus meant that enjoyable times as I'd known them had come to an end. Slowly, I discovered that people would still like me

(some of them anyway), death wasn't immediately around the corner, and yes, the situation has an element of humor.

To be homosexual in America is to have learned to resist one particularly powerful form of societal conditioning. Some of us take that lesson much further, questioning all manner of conditioned behavior; others stop right there and are content to conform to any number of societal norms. Just how much to conform and how much to rebel is a personal choice; it makes no sense to force someone to be a nonconformist.

Unfortunately, being gay or HIV + guarantees nothing about one's readiness to shed conditioned thoughts. Consider how many gay men continue to whine about the display of flesh at pride celebrations. Their letters of complaint appear in gay papers and in mainstream media. Why must we show our dark side to the world, they ask. Maybe these people miss the point because it's so simple: some of us have no respect for societal taboos about nudity and sexual expression. We feel that a society that cannot accept a naked human walking down the street is rotten to the core.

Consider these words, from a recent letter to the *New York Times*: "Bosoms, genitals, and gyrating pelvises were the order of the day: Christopher Street and gay bars thrust out for the masses to choke on." (signed Jonathan F. Alex, New York, June 28, 1993). Gotta love those words: "thrust out" and "choke on",

indeed. There's more:

"Our community has been torn apart by AIDS, so why are we dancing in the streets? Let's dance in the clubs or in our apartments, but when we are on Fifth Avenue together, let's show our serious and angry face to America."

I look forward to next year's parade. Hopefully, Mr. Alex will have formed his own marching contingent, with the banner "serious, angry, and proud!" Jonathan Alex and his ilk can enjoy the deep satisfaction of having not smiled, danced, or laughed on the whole parade route, having never shown any excessive flesh. They will sleep well at night knowing that they've set a fine example. No right-wing zealots will use video footage of them to incite hatred of gay people.

Why are we dancing in the streets? It kills me that someone would ask such a question. The parades are for us, not for the rest of the world. We dance in the streets because we like being in control of our own lives. Some of us have tasted the satisfaction of choosing our feelings and behavior according to our wills; we refuse to react in expected, sanctioned, and

conditioned ways. Returning to the question of why we're dancing when there's a fucking epidemic going on: we celebrate because we want to. Why shouldn't the burden of explanation be on those who assert that we ought to be morose during epidemics? And what is it about an epidemic that's so special anyway? Is Mr. Alex suggesting that - even with the existence of fagbashers, the Republican party, and the like - if it weren't for AIDS, things would be peachy-keen enough to justify dancing on Fifth Avenue? Please understand, I don't like seeing my friends get sick and die, and I don't much like the thought of it happening to myself, either. But I refuse to look to the Jonathan Alexes of the world for guidance on whether or not to dance in the streets.

It's the same old question - do you behave as if the world were already the way you'd like it to be, or do you compromise. One is fun and satisfying; the other feels like you're six years old, striving for Mommy's approval. Now, which do you prefer?

Reprinted from *Diseased Pariah News*. Subs: \$10/4 issues, FOG Press, c/o Men's Support Center, POB 30564, Oakland, CA 94604

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ASK THIGHMASTER - advice with holes

Dear Thighmaster,

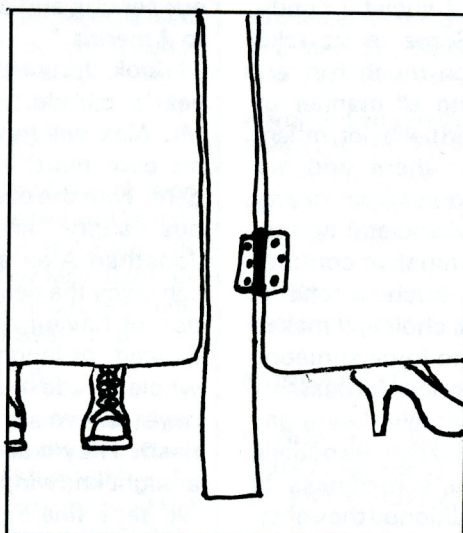
I write to you in search of words for the genderless. When in the local Shop 'n Save recently, I was actually refused purchase of beer even after producing an I.D. that looks just like me, i.e. very dyky. Why? Because, apparently, they thought I was a teenaged boy pulling the dumb trick of using an I.D. with a woman's name on it. This crap gets trying after a while. I'm sick of women leaving public restrooms when I enter. And I'm beginning to wonder, does this mean I really am a boy. Should I buy myself a surgery and start frequenting het bars like Three Dollar Deweys? Are they seeing something I'm missing?

A Mixed Case

Dear Case,

Thighmaster will give you credit for one thing: at least you took your problem to Thighmaster instead of calling up the spirit of the dead and deadly Dr. Freud. If you'd done that, you'd be on the way to the surgeon for no good reason. Why? Well, Freud spent all this time trying to figure out what bunch of things you had to see to figure out your gender and acquire your sexual turn ons. How do boys know they're different from girls? According to Freud, they see that mom doesn't have a penis - which, by the way, makes them panic so much that not only do they spend their whole lives worrying about having their own cut off, they also might con themselves into hallucinating that one of mom's high-heeled shoes is, in fact, her penis. How do some people come to want to put penises in their mouths? Because, Freud speculates, they see and suck mom's breast, then they see a cow's udder, which looks sort of like a breast but also makes them think of a penis, and then they get this idea to put their mouths where their minds have gone - this is what Freud thought

happened to Leonardo da Vinci. Given Freud's propensity for the preposterous identity-formation tale, he'd probably jump at this "I discovered my gender and sexual orientation at Shop 'n Save" theory of yours - although he'd



drawing by Naomi Falcone

probably add some detail about the trauma of cruising by bananas so as to avoid giving a woman credit for figuring out anything herself. Then you'd be doing het bars, and worse, you'd be indirectly responsible for the torture of countless queer youth who'd be forced to spend the time that they should be devoting to making out and making 'zines being dragged repeatedly through check-out lines by their anti-queer parents.

No, no, no. You should not be buying a surgery. Thighmaster is not being adamant about this out of some anti-transgender sentiment. Thighmaster thinks that if you really want to live as a different gender than the one suggested by your given biological parts, and you want to bring your body in line with your gender identity, you should go for it. But this doesn't seem to be your case; if you're happy being a dyke, you shouldn't go for it because people you don't know in bathrooms wish you were a straight boy instead. No, Thighmaster is being adamant for another reason: bucks. Queer movement needs money. Not for the

purposes some would advocate: like paying het political consultants to tell us that if we really want civil rights we should look as straight as possible, be very very quiet, and learn to repeat over and over the phrase "as the anti-discrimination campaign progresses, decisions will be have to be made on the spot so we need to abandon (while pretending to embrace) coalition politics, invest decision-making power in a few straight(-acting) individuals, and authorize them to send the queer-looking people to affix mailing labels in storefronts where the windows have been blocked off (YES, this actually happened in Lewiston, Maine) so that we can hide them from the press even if we can't kick them out of our organization because for some strange reason we're having trouble getting enough people to do our shitwork." (Could it be the cumulative effects of disrespecting, disempowering, and disenfranchising all but six people?) Thighmaster does not think you should be dumping money into this pit. But your surgery money can go a long way in fighting against the anti-queerness and gender rigidity that is making it hard for you to piss and buy beer. It's you, not your unsolicited bathroom companions, who can't recognize you as what you are: a dyke. They, not you, need help. They, not you, need to leave the bathroom well mindfucked. And you, yes you, need to fight back. For less than the cost of a pre-op consultation, you can organize and publicize a massive girl-girl strip-and-fuck action in your town square, providing transportation, child care, and time-off-without-pay compensation for all who want to participate. Think what passers-by will learn when they see what's under some boy-type clothes and what you can do with it. Or you can even more cheaply wheatpaste (or, if you're uninclined to court felony charges, since wheatpasting is a felony in parts of Maine, simply hand out) thousands of

PASSAGES

stereotype-busting graphics. How about pictures of butch dykes with captions like "Cunt without ruffles. Deal with it." Or print this message on "business cards" that you can hand out in those bathrooms. In fact, Thighmaster thinks you should be going into bathrooms to educate the unenlightened even if you don't have to go. After all, someday you're bound to run into some hot chyk who knows exactly who you are and wants to do something very hot about it.

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

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On 11/24, Ray Gagnon and Kevin (Dumas) Gagnon were joined in a union ceremony at the Lewiston, ME Unitarian Universalist Church. Officiating was the Rev. Johanna Nichols. About 100 guests attended the ceremony and reception. The afternoon was one of those few times when everything and everyone was in harmony.

As one guest commented, "At a time when many political 'experts' think we can best get our rights and the support

of straight voters by remaining largely in the closet, this event shows what can happen if you stand up with dignity and demand to be treated with dignity as gay by your family and friends. It was both moving and empowering to see straight and queer, family and friends, join together to celebrate love between men."

The reception was held at Marco's Restaurant. On each table was a card with a message from Kevin and Ray:

We would like to thank our families and friends for sharing this special day with us! In a world full of bigotry and hate towards people who march to a different drum, we are truly blessed to have our lives filled with such special people. Both our private and shared journeys through life have not always been easy, yet with the love and acceptance of our families and friends our journey through the rough times has been softened by your presence in our lives. We thank you for sharing in our happiness and wish for you the same love and peace that we have found with each other!

Raymond and Kevin Gagnon
October 24, 1993



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More DYKE from pg 9

or some such thing, said Jesus.

[Only five speakers said "lesbian." Many people (e.g. Joe Brennan) called us "gay women." Tom Andrews actually said "lesbians" and "bisexuals," which was cool. I don't think anybody said "dyke" once.]

Oh, I didn't tell you about the tuba-playing Rabbi. Rabbi Douglas Weber gets up there with a banjo, a chair and a mic, with his yarmulke on. He keeps making an awful noise "tuning" his banjo. Finally, he admitted he didn't play banjo. He and his big lips had been recruited for other purposes at a young age. So he goes and gets his tuba and starts playing "Stand

By Me," telling everyone to sing "JUST VOTENO" during the chorus. It was chaotic, and very funny.

And then, at the very end, after the miscellaneous laughs and annoyances from bonehead people, some singers from Mad Horse Theatre began a round of "God Bless America." I'm trying to get everyone in my row to leave. I jump up. I start making my way down the aisle but they all pin me. Nobody will let me move. But the painful part is that the singers keep singing more choruses of GBA. And I can't move - those Lesbian Avengers have tight grips.

After the second verse, everyone appears from behind a curtain and all the

performers - some even hand in hand - are singing GBA. And right smack dab in the middle is Jenny the dyke. All I could do was look at her, because everyone else was so damn happy singing this song that it makes me nauseous. Whereas Jenny was mouthing maybe one word out of fifteen and looking around hoping nobody could see her. Then she stopped singing altogether and drove her hands back down into her pockets. If it wasn't for that I would have lost my sanity.

And then they let us go. I felt completely grossed out at how, on the same stage, there were some people who totally got it - like this one guy who read a great semi-graphic fag poem which made a lot of people squirm - and people like the Catholic guy who just did not get anything. It was definitely a frustrated feeling, and the first thing I did when I walked outside was light up a cigarette. But it was nice to know that there were people who were willing to get up on stage and be openly queer and openly supportive of a lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender lifestyle. Because if I had heard one more group of people say this EPL ordinance did "not promote a gay lifestyle," I was gonna vomit. Queerly yours, Sue. ▼

More BUSINESS from pg 3

have mobilized to sit in on the courthouse steps. They've lost one relatively meaningless prisoner, and won a movement.

Changing laws without tearing down the closet is settling for a lesser plea. You lose both the principle of the thing and the deeper, more massive movement that you could have. This starts to happen when people in the l/g/queer movement want to "win" by holding closed meetings to streamline their process of tinkering with laws and politics. This might change a few laws. It will never make for real social change.

(2) MLGPA and some other people bought a state campaign plan from Al Caron, straight consultant. The plan calls for big-time hierarchy, mostly straight people making decisions, and more. The plan's been thoroughly rejected twice now, at open state meetings. But MLGPA board members seem to feel that they paid good money for the plan, so they should get something out of it.

That's where I disagree. If you buy a slime-flavored ice cream cone for \$5 and it tastes like hell, don't eat it just because you paid so much for it. Cut your losses. Throw it out. ▼

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Green Mountain Coffee (back hall)

Newest Places to Find APEX

Condom Sense, Portland
Green Mountain Coffee, Portland

RESOURCE GUIDE

WILL RETURN

NEXT MONTH

CORRECTION

The photo appearing on page 3 of our October issue should have been credited to Noreen Hogan. Sorry Noreen!

More VIDEO from pg 8

Finally, the reality of heterosexism and homophobia is linked to video in its very construction. The video camera is designed for and targeted at the family, and the "camcorder" reinforces "family values" by mindlessly capturing and celebrating the images and rituals of heterosexuality. It is marketed as a tool of the popularized family, and its idea of the real. This privileged model oppresses not only us as gay people, but as people of color, us as women and even us as straight people. Furthermore, as a creative gay man, it is very limiting to have to use a tool that is designed for the straight family.

Video is assumed to be a tool of a truth and history which exists independent of the camera. It is not yet recognized as a creative medium in and of itself and it therefore lacks a self conscious subjectivity which would speak "to" instead of "at," or even worse "for." By recognizing and questioning the representation of video within the larger context of a racist, sexist, homophobic patriarchy we may open up video to the possibility for change. We may yet use it and recognize it as a creative and critical tool.▼



More CULTURAL from pg 7

family was working class Irish, they went to church, aspired to be "lace curtain," and worked for the post office and telephone companies. In Mom's family, the women wore the pants, in Dad's the men were in charge.

Summers were different, they were the best. We had a camp and we had a flat-bottomed boat with a three horse Evinrude. My parents let me run

pretty free. I went where I wanted and was free to swim any time at any place. The area was pristine. Much of the shoreline was untouched. Pleasant Pond taught me about innocence. I experienced the innocence and vulnerability of the Earth. I acquired a spirituality on that pristine water which I carry with me today.

Life was hard but it was also very good. Adult realities were

campfire stories. I heard the stories, helped with the work, and saw the pain of living. I am unmistakably a product of those experiences. I yearn to understand the world around me. I am enchanted with history and politics. When I need spiritual nourishment I head for the woods. I am committed to social justice and have bluebirds, robins, and cardinals as close friends.▼

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