

FROM THE HEART OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH

# Dare

FREE

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 21

THE LESBIAN AND GAY NEWSPAPER

AUGUST 12-18, 1988

## Fundamentalists Call for Film's Ban

*'Last Temptation of Christ' Attacked by Religious Right*

By JEFF ELLIS  
Managing Editor

Despite lukewarm reviews from critics and continuing protests of Christian groups throughout the country, Universal Pictures still plans to release Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* in theatres in eight cities Friday.

Nashville will not be one of the eight cities selected for the initial release of the controversial film. And only time will tell if the film plays here at all.

It has already been banned by one of the city's three major theatre chains, Carmike Cinemas, sight unseen. AMC, which operates the 14-screen Fountain Square theatre, and Consolidated Theatres have said they will make their decision whether to schedule the film after first viewing the completed work.

The two-and-a-half hour movie, based on the 1955 book of the same name by Greek author Nikos Kazantzakis, has been the focus of a nationwide effort led by the Rev. Donald Wildmon of Tupelo, Miss., and the Rev. Jerry Falwell, former head of the Moral Majority.

Protestant fundamentalists, under the lead of Wildmon and Falwell, have been campaigning against the movie, which they maintain is blasphemous and questions the divinity of Christ.

The film describes Jesus' life leading to his crucifixion. It is there that he suffers his last temptation - a dream of life as a common man, married to former prostitute Mary Magdalene. In the film, he makes love, has children and lives to old age. The dream comes to an end with a final confrontation with Judas and Christ rejects the dream for reality.

Most of those protesting the film, however, have yet to see the screen version. Wildmon, who was refused admittance to a special screening on Tuesday, was offered a chance to see the film on July 12, but refused, according to Paramount spokespeople.

Opposition to the protestors has been felt throughout the country as well, according to Hedy Weinberg, director of the Tennessee chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU-Tennessee).

"The right to protest, to distribute leaflets and to express opinions is guaranteed by the First Amendment," Weinberg said. "The

ACLU would defend the right of people to protest the film's release and screening."

But, according to Weinberg, ACLU would also defend the right of those wanting to distribute the film or to view it.

"In the spirit of diversity of human nature, the movie should be shown to allow individuals to make their own decisions about it," she said. "The fundamentalists shouldn't be allowed to censor the film."

Weinberg said that her office had received a number of inquiries from people throughout the state, concerned that the protestors could effectively censor the film.

"We've gotten a number of calls from people upset and distraught that the fundamentalists are working to censor the film," Weinberg said. "The fundamentalists, while quite vocal, are still in the minority, I believe."

Because state or federal government will not censor the film, Weinberg said there is no direct First Amendment issue involved in the matter.

"I would hope the fundamentalists would learn a lesson from this, that the First Amendment allows them to speak out, but it also allows people to write, to read books or to view whatever films they want," she continued.

Film critics who attended Tuesday's screening gave generally lackluster reviews to the film which stars Willem Dafoe and Barbara Hershey as Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

Bob Thomas of the Associated Press called the moving an "intellectual exercise of the 'What If?' variety. At times moving, often overwrought and at least 40 minutes too long."

Michael Medved of television's *Sneak Previews* was more direct when he said, "It's the height of irony that this level of controversy could be generated by a movie this awful. I can understand why the religious groups would be offended, as would the public by this boredom."

The U.S. Catholic Conference responded to the film by giving it an "O" rating - morally offensive - and calling it "a muddleheaded movie."

The \$6.5 million movie is set for Friday release in Chicago, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington and Toronto.



*Jamie McMaban, whose battle with AIDS and family reconciliation was chronicled in the five-part Reunion series last spring, returns to Tennessee after four and a half years. See Reunion Redux on page 4.*

## Feds: Door-to-Door AIDS Survey

By JEFF ELLIS  
Managing Editor

Government plans to launch a controversial AIDS study by collecting blood samples and the sex and drug use histories of respondents continues to draw fire from both social workers and health care professionals.

Proposed by researchers at the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control, the plan's goal is to find out just how many Americans are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus, believed to be the cause of full-blown AIDS. Current estimates indicate as many as 1.5 million people are carriers of the virus and the proposed study would give a more accurate count, researchers contend.

However, the executive director of a local AIDS services organization expressed concern about the program's aims and its ramifications.

"My primary concern is with the kind of counseling that would be provided as a part of the study," said Dr. Sandee Potter, executive director of Nashville CARES.

Potter indicated that counseling for people taking part in the study should be a "critical" element whether the HIV test is positive or negative.

"Certainly if the test is positive, the person should be counseled. But if the test is negative, counseling is vital to ensure that the person remains free of the virus," Potter said.

Under the plan, federal officials will begin testing in Washington, D.C., before moving on to New York City in early autumn. A third city will be designated for canvassing in Spring, 1989.

Although details are not yet confirmed, some 800 District of Columbia residents have received letters informing them of

upcoming interviews. Interviewers will then visit the subjects in their homes, questioning them about sex practices and drug use and asking them to take at-home blood tests.

Persons wanting to know the test results would be able to get them through local AIDS counseling centers, while those not wanting to know the results would not be contacted.

The proposal could lead to a nationwide study, a follow-up to President Reagan's request for door-to-door surveys to determine more accurate figures.

Potter said, however, that such a door-to-door survey could prove misleading: "You get one kind of answer if you interview a person verbally, in person, and still another answer if a person answers a written questionnaire." She contended that scenario has been borne out by other research in the area of human sexuality.

The proposed study comes at a time  
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## AIDS Update

### Fighting AIDS on the International Front

By **SANDEE POTTER**  
Special to *Dare*

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Second International Conference on AIDS Education in Charleston, South Carolina. The main idea of this three-day conference was to bring together people from different countries to review current AIDS education efforts, discuss various public health, psychosocial, ethical and public policy issues relevant to AIDS education and share educational strategies that might be of help in preventing and/or controlling AIDS.

The conference was well-organized and attended by 400 people representing all fifty states and over 20 countries. Conference keynote speakers were: June Osborn, Dean of the University of Michigan's School of Public Health; Gillian Williams, Director of Health Education Program, King's College, London University; Paul Kawata, Executive Director of the National AIDS Network; and Colleen Conway-Welch, Dean of Vanderbilt University's School of Nursing and member of the President's AIDS Commission. The list of the other speakers and presenters at the Charleston gathering read like a who's who in the world of AIDS education.

How does it feel after going to such a conference? What thoughts become so lodged in the mind that you find yourself repeating them to anyone polite enough to inquire about "the AIDS Conference?" My first response is that the world's experience with AIDS is, to date, merely prologue. The approximately 100,000 cases of AIDS reported by 136 countries represents an incredibly tragic casualty list, but the worldwide estimate of 5 to 10 million HIV-positive individuals is almost beyond human comprehension.

One hundred U.S. AIDS cases each day are now being reported to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta. Dean Conway-Welch noted that it is a misnomer to say that we have a health-care system in the U.S. and that it would be more accurate to speak of

an illness system. She graciously offered modest praise for President Reagan's response to the recommendations of the President's AIDS Commission, while failing to verbally note how frustrating it must have been to have served on a commission that knew, in advance, its work would be ignored by the man who appointed it.

Alan Emery, AIDS educator and consultant to the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, spoke of San Francisco as a city in mourning. According to Emery, San Francisco has lost more men to AIDS than it has in both world wars, the Korean War and Vietnam combined. Emery didn't note that America will, within the next few years, begin to lose as many men and women to AIDS *annually* as was lost in the entire Vietnam war, but then, most of those at the conference knew that. A reminder was not necessary.

Paul Kawata of the National AIDS Network told of attending 47 funerals in the last year and said that, emotionally, he could not bear to go to that many or more funerals in the coming year. Kawata believes that you must be "strange and unusual" to do AIDS work. It was clear from the audience response that many present agreed with him. He challenged the audience to care not only for others, but also for themselves.

On the last day of the conference, June Osborn offered "An Overview of the AIDS Epidemic." She spoke of the need to move beyond the "us" and "them" mentality that many people have adopted when confronted with this epidemic and cautions about the foolishness and dangers involved in making "exclusions from the human family."

Osborn's speech was interrupted by a malfunctioning alarm system. The audience was told by hotel management that the matter had been investigated and that there was no fire. The incident seemed a fitting, if somewhat ironic, juxtaposition to an international AIDS conference.

Sandee Potter, Ph.D., co-author of *Women-Identified Women*, is executive director of Nashville CARES.

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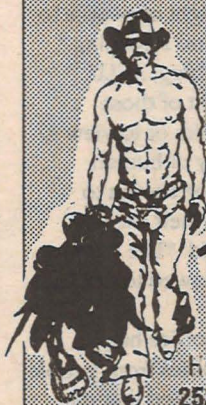
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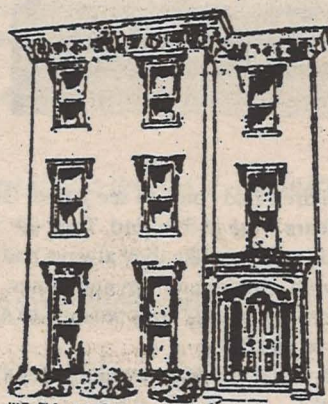
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## Metro Schools: Superintendent May Order HIV Tests

By JEFF ELLIS  
Managing Editor

Metro School System employees who are suspected of carrying the AIDS virus can be ordered by the school superintendent to undergo an HIV test under new guidelines adopted by the Board of Education Tuesday night.

System workers who test positive for the virus may face suspension or termination from their jobs.

"The steps were taken to have the system in compliance with state guidelines," said Eugene Dietz, director of communications and community relations for the system.

The new policy replaces the AIDS policy approved by the Metro Board of Education in February, 1987. Under that policy, the school superintendent would appoint an evaluation team to determine the course of action if a system employee is suspected of carrying the virus.

Under new guidelines, the superintendent will be able to order any system employee who is suspected of carrying the virus to

undergo a blood test. If the test is positive, the employee may face suspension or termination from his job.

State guidelines also require that a state evaluation team decide whether students suspected of having AIDS will be able to attend school or if alternative education methods are needed. The previous policy called for the local system to empanel a team to evaluate the need for alternatives to classroom instruction for students with AIDS.

Metro Schools Director Charles Frazier told the board Tuesday that students being tested for AIDS would be guaranteed confidentiality. However, teachers and staff members will not be given such assurances, he said.

"All school systems in the state must be in compliance with state guidelines by Sept. 1," Dietz said.

Lucille Nabors, assistant superintendent incharge of curriculum and instructional services and the system's spokesperson on AIDS policy, was unavailable for comment at press time.

## ...Door-to-door tests

*Continued from page 1*  
when drafters of the 1988 Republican Party platform are meeting in New Orleans to complete wording of the document to be presented at next week's national convention. Although AIDS was not addressed in the 1984 platform, this year's draft promises

to "not only marshal our scientific resources against AIDS, but...protect those who do not have the disease."

The platform draft remains silent on AIDS-related civil rights legislation, which was recommended earlier this year by the President's Commission on AIDS.

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## Reunion Redux: A Family Comes to Terms with AIDS

Last spring, through a five-part series entitled "Reunion: A Family Comes to Terms with AIDS," Managing Editor Jeff Ellis chronicled his family's reaction to the news that one of their own - Ellis's nephew Jamie McMahan - was living with AIDS. The series focused on the relationship between McMahan and matriarch Mama Ellis.

By **JEFF ELLIS**

Managing Editor

Jamie came home last week.

Almost two years after he was diagnosed as having AIDS and almost six months after our family was told of his illness, my 25-year-old nephew came home to see his hometown, his aunts and uncles, friends and enemies alike.

And, most importantly, to see the one person who really matters - Mama.

Jamie's last visit home was in February, 1984. Much has changed in those four years. When last he was home, Jamie was undeniably healthy and happy - tanned by the bright rays of the Florida sun. When he returned this summer to Bethel Springs, a small West Tennessee town of some 800 people, he was still tan, still seemingly happy, but his body had undeniably withstood the ravages of what he calls his "dis-ease."

Much thinner than he was that cold February day four years ago, Jamie still presented a portrait of courage and grit as he made his trip home.

Before Jamie arrived at the Nashville airport last Thursday, his plans were almost upset by two events: my father's unexpected bout with gallstones and my sister Stella's meddling.

Almost two weeks before Jamie was to arrive, my father suddenly became ill - our longtime family doctor, Dr. Jim (as he is known in our small town), had difficulty determining just what was wrong with Daddy. A brief visit home left me feeling especially worried about him; he seemed to have aged at least ten years since I had last seen him. He looked like an old man.

Mama was noticeably upset - she appeared worried and haggard. She expressed concern about Jamie's visit at such an inopportune time, worrying that she wouldn't be able to care for two sick men - one old, one young. My assurances that Jamie was able to care for himself seemed to fall on deaf ears.

Finally, the doctors back home were able to determine the source of Daddy's ailments and his condition, both mentally and physically, began to improve. But his illness prompted an examination of other problems and a realization that my father is exhibiting the first signs of Alzheimer's disease.

It was my father's illness that brought my sister Stella to the homeplace for a brief visit. When my mother told her Jamie would be home the next week, she responded by saying that Jamie would grow bored with the slow and easy ways of the country and likely would want to leave for more exciting environs.

My mother is a proud woman. The thought of one of her children or grandchildren growing bored no doubt hurt her deeply. She called me and confessed her fears: Jamie won't like it here. And some members of the family might be less than cordial in their welcomes.

Jamie and I discussed all of this over lunch just after his arrival in Nashville. Having lived with AIDS for two years, he has grown accustomed to the reactions, both good and bad, which the knowledge of his



Jamie McMahan and Lee Pollack

condition engenders in people. He could handle it, he assured me.

"I just can't wait to go home and see Mama Ellis," became his plaintive refrain. "If anyone else doesn't want to see me, that's their business."

Jamie felt his visit home would be a success due to his newfound source of inspiration - rebirthing and other things metaphysical. As skeptical as I am about such things as crystals and subliminal suggestions, Jamie's enthusiasm has almost made a believer of me.

While Jamie, my lover Stuart and I were driving along Interstate 40 toward West Tennessee, I was reminded of *The Trip to Bountiful*, the story of an elderly woman dreaming of one last trip to her girlhood home. Jamie's longing to see McNairy County was as poignant and moving as was Carrie Watts' desire to see Bountiful.

Still, we were concerned about the welcome we would receive. We knew, of course, that Mama would be wonderful, but what about everyone else? Would they hug Jamie? Would they prefer to keep their distance? And would Daddy even remember Jamie's name?

When we drove into McNairy County, we laughed about all those years when I was in high school and delivered the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* to everyone in town and about the time Jamie tried to get me to run over a rabbit on one of those early morning excursions.

As we approached the street where my parents live, however, we became noticeably quieter and more subdued. As we pulled into the driveway, we saw Daddy and my brother Dennis sitting in a swing awaiting our arrival.

Mama came out on the porch and greeted Jamie with a hug. She didn't cry as we expected her to, but tears were in her eyes.

"Well, how do you think Jamie looks?" I asked.

"He looks like Jamie. He's a little thin, but he looks much better than I had expected," she answered.

Before the weekend was over, almost all my brothers and sisters and their spouses

and children had come to see Jamie. Our initial fears were ill-founded. They all greeted Jamie just like they always had in the past - with smiles and hugs and kisses.

"We're not afraid," they seemed to say.

"We love you."

Both Jamie and Mama were grateful and pleased.

But my sister Stella, Jamie's mother, was not there. As I write this story, he still waits for her to come to visit.

Some months ago I wrote that I couldn't understand her reticence toward Jamie. But now I think I do. She's scared to death. Of death.

Jamie, her chance at immortality, is, by no fault of his own, affirming her mortality as he fights for his life. And the one person he has loved all his life, despite her faults, is afraid to admit her own shortcomings by accepting the shortcomings of her oldest son.

We are, however, heartened by the response of the rest of our family.

I'm very proud that we share the same blood and the same name. Of my parents' children, I'm the only one to graduate from college and by virtue of that fact, I've always been thought of as the uppy, educated one, I suppose.

But my brothers and sisters made me realize last weekend the wealth of intelligence, concern and compassion we all possess. And Mama and Daddy are responsible for instilling in each of us a healthy respect for human life and its diversity.

Diversity is something our family certainly exemplifies. We may disagree vehemently with each other, but we all know that the others will support us through whatever life throws our way.

We were afraid that AIDS would prove our undoing, but instead it has proven to be a uniting force for our family, enabling us to overlook our differences to make one of our own feel at home and to feel loved.

No matter what the next few weeks, months or years may bring, the Ellis family will survive.

And we'll be fighting AIDS and ignorance, both inside our family and out, every step of the way.



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# Dates

## Mondays

**Nashville CARES** AIDS/ARC Support Group. 5:30pm.  
**Nashville CARES** Gay Couples Support Group. 6pm.  
**Nashville CARES** Family Support Group. 6:30pm.  
**Lambda Group** Closed Alcoholics Anonymous meeting for gay men and lesbians, Unitarian Church. 8pm.

## Tuesdays

**Nashville CARES** HIV Education Support Groups. 7pm.  
**AI-Anon** Meeting, MCC. 6:30pm.  
**Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous** Closed meeting, MCC. 8pm.

## Wednesdays

**Nashville CARES** AIDS/ARC Support Group. 6:30pm.  
**Nashville CARES** HIV/Chemical Dependency Support Group. 7pm. Info phone 385-1510.

## Thursdays

**Nashville CARES** AIDS/ARC Support Group. 5pm.  
**Alcoholics Anonymous** Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC-Nashville. 8pm.  
**Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA)** 8pm. Info phone 385-4776 or 352-5823.

## Fridays

**Sexaholics Anonymous** Closed meeting, MCC-Nashville. 5pm.  
**Alcoholics Anonymous Program Study Group** Meeting, Belmont United Methodist. 7:30pm.

## Saturdays

**Nashville CARES** AIDS/ARC Support Group. 4pm.  
**Metropolitan Community Church-Nashville** Mortgage Meal, all you can eat. 7:30pm. \$5.

## Sundays

**Metropolitan Community Church-Antioch** Worship service, 11am. Info phone 833-8581 or 834-4491.  
**Metropolitan Community Church-Nashville** Worship services, 11am and 7pm.

## Special Events

### Saturday, August 13

**Nashville Men Sing for Women's Choice** Benefit concert for Tennesseans Keeping Abortion Legal and Safe (TKALS), featuring Frank Sheen, Fred Koller, Sweet Medicine, Bothy Bar Band, New Bond, Kenny Arnold and more. Vickie Carrico, emcee. 9pm. \$10. Advance tickets at Book Treasury, 2216 8th Ave South, or from TKALS members. Info phone 297-8540.

### Sunday, August 14

**Feminist Book Circle** Discussion of Audre Lorde's *A Burst of Light*. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1808 Woodmont Blvd. 5-7pm. Free. Info phone 298-9931.

### Tuesday, August 23

**Vanderbilt Lambda Association** Meeting. For lesbian and gay Vanderbilt students, faculty, staff and alumni. 118 Sarratt Center, Vanderbilt. 6pm. Free

### Saturday, August 27

**Vanderbilt Staff Council** Sixth Annual Flea Market, to benefit the Vanderbilt Child Care Center. Natchez Trace at Vanderbilt Place and 25th Ave, across from the stadium. Booths available for \$10. 8am-5pm. Info phone 322-8240.

**Nashville Voters'Coalition** Super Saturday, voter registration drive. Meet at Nashvillians for a Nuclear Arms Freeze. 1312 5th Ave North. Refreshments. 9am. Info phone 244-4353.

**Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA)** Raffle drawing. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1808 Woodmont Blvd. Info phone 333-2215.

**Nashville Women's Alliance** Coffeehouse. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1808 Woodmont Blvd. Follows T-GALA Raffle drawing.

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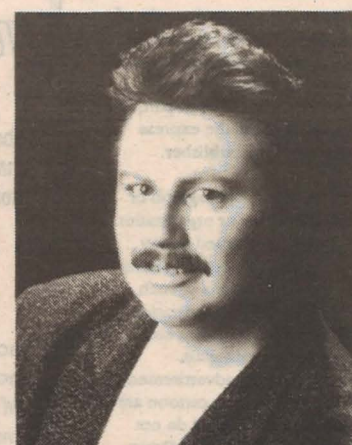
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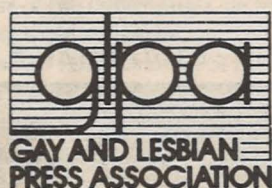
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## Views

### Board Needs Some Education

Tuesday night's meeting of the Metro Board of Education was indeed an interesting one.

Seeking to comply with recently adopted state guidelines regarding AIDS in the school system, the Board adopted a policy under which the superintendent of schools can order any employee who is suspected of carrying the AIDS virus to undergo a human immunodeficiency virus test.

Should the test come back positive, an investigative committee empanelled by the state government will look into the ramifications of the continued employment of that individual.

If the individual tests positive, firing or suspension is allowed under the newly-adopted guidelines.

The room for abuse and misuse of the policy is apparent. Thoughts of witch hunts are not so fantastic. Homophobia is rampant

throughout the country, particularly so here in the south. Any school system employee considered suspect by authorities could well fall victim to harassment and prejudice.

Adoption of such a policy once again illustrates the dire need for widespread education throughout this country. For this policy to be adopted by the board of education is both ludicrous and insulting.

If the fault lies with the state government, which apparently it does, as the new guidelines were adopted to bring local schools on line with state rules, the insult is even greater, but not unexpected.

What else can we expect from a state government that is reluctant to earmark any funds for AIDS education or services?

What else can we expect from a state government which entrusts Metro Health Director Fredia Wadley with the chair of the state AIDS advisory committee?

What else can we expect from a state that continues to ignore the deaths of almost 300 Tennesseans as a result of AIDS?

While former Gov. Lamar Alexander's Better Schools Program has been lauded by educators worldwide as a harbinger of better days ahead for Tennessee school children, the need for better education of our public officials is one area of concern too long overlooked.

A message must be sent to our political officeholders, both locally and statewide: Mandatory testing is not the answer.

Perhaps it is time we make that point clear to the members of the Metro Board of Education. We urge you to contact the Board's members and express your displeasure with the new policy.

If we wait any longer, it may just be too late.

### Temptation to Censorship

As the controversy swirls around the planned release of Martin Scorsese's film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, something very obvious seems to have been lost amid the turmoil.

Most of those people protesting the film, set for release today in several major cities across the country, have not seen the final print and are, essentially, advocating censorship without knowing what it is they are protesting.

Based on a book written some thirty years ago, *The Last Temptation of Christ* supposedly contains a scene in which Jesus Christ, nailed to the cross, fantasizes about living life as a common man married to Mary Magdalene. According to some reports, Christ is shown engaged in a sexual act with Mary Magdalene.

All of this, of course, is conjecture, based

upon the seemingly endless media accounts of the controversy. We've not seen the film and are unable to give a truly accurate account of what it contains.

The protesters are led by the Rev. Donald Wildmon, the Tupelo, Miss., minister who, for the last decade, has led a crusade against all that is questionable on television and in the movies. Wildmon and his flock have had a field day with *The Last Temptation*, gathering new followers among fundamentalists throughout the country.

Many members of the Southern Baptist denomination, the country's largest with some 14 million people, received requests from the Baptist hierarchy asking for their support in fighting the film. Members of other denominations have jumped on the anti-*Temptation* bandwagon and their voices, raised in unison, are quite loud.

So loud, in fact, that Nashville's Carmike Cinemas have decided to ban the film from their screens - sight unseen.

But, once again, we see a need to point out a very obvious point: most of those protesting don't know what they are protesting.

Yet what is most disturbing is that a small group of people are trying to determine what everyone else will see at their local theatres this fall. While they have every right to express their opinions, and every right to refuse to see the film, they are stepping over the line by suggesting that no one can see the film.

The decision to see the film is a personal and individual one. By allowing a small group of people to make our decisions for us, we are sacrificing our rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution.

## One in Teen

### Teens Need Lesbian, Gay Adult Support

This is the first of a new series of columns by and about lesbian and gay teens. Because the author is a minor, he will, in keeping with our policy, use a pseudonymous byline.

By PATRICK HILLS  
*Special to Dare*

When I first realized I was gay there was no one to talk to. It was a truly lonely feeling not knowing any other gays. After a couple of years of confusion and self-pity I finally met a lesbian teacher. Meeting her made me realize that I was not alone and that there were other gay teenagers like me. Later, I met a gay man who is in his mid-twenties. He is studying psychology and is a big help when I have a problem that I need to share. He lent me several books about gay teenagers, such as *One Teenager in Ten* and *Independence Day*. Both books were very beneficial to my dealing with my homosexuality.

Some lesbian and gay adults might not

extend such outreach to a lesbian or gay teenager due to the possible legal risks. This adult could be charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor, or another, similar charge. However, I feel outreach to lesbian and gay youth is very important and should not be against the law. As long as an adult is not encouraging a youth to be gay, but showing that homosexuality is not the end of the world, outreach should be encouraged, not discouraged. The two adults who helped me did not convince me that I was gay. Rather, they helped me understand that I was not alone and could get help from people such as the Reverend Paul Tucker, of Metropolitan Community Church - Nashville. The fact that I realized that I was gay was the reason for approaching these lesbian and gay adults.

For teenagers who are not sure of their sexuality, there should be sources available for these teens to be able to try to under-

stand their sexuality, whether it be heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. I firmly believe that much of the heated homophobia in high schools is due to the lack of education about homosexuality and confusion about their own sexuality. Current education about homosexuality in my high school, Hillsboro High School, is vague at best. In my health class, lesbians and gays were not mentioned except for the one day which was devoted to AIDS education. The two issues homosexuality and AIDS, should be taught separately and more thoroughly than that which is taught presently.

Having gained so much from the outreach of lesbian and gay adults myself, I encourage all lesbians and gays to let youth know that being gay is not the end of the world and to share with these youth. It is important to remember that the lesbian and gay teenagers of today will before long be a major part of the lesbian and gay community.



# Pages

## Sex and Morality in Western Thought

*Adam, Eve, and the Serpent.* Elaine Pagels. New York: Random House, 1988.

By **JOE MAROHL**  
Staff Writer

Several years ago I read a book which changed my reading of the history of Christianity. That book was *The Gnostic Gospels*, and its author, Elaine Pagels, has now published a highly readable and provocative book about the development of moral attitudes towards sexuality within the early Christian movement. The book is called *Adam, Eve and the Serpent*.

In her earlier book, Pagels studied unorthodox ("heretical") beliefs within the early Christian community and how gradually these were culled out in the interest of imperializing the church, following the political pattern of Rome. According to Pagels, Christianity as we recognize it today began as a capitulation to Roman class respectability and the idea of centralized authority and power. Diversity, radicalism and individual interpretation of religious experience were dumped in the interest of unification, homogenization and catholicity. Even the Protestant Reformation was unable to eradicate the attractive and secure ideas of

"orthodoxy," "authority" and "the absolute truth," though now every denomination insists on and enforces its peculiar own. (Even present-day radicalism finds it difficult to escape the idea of "political correctness.")

What has come down to us as Holy Scripture, Pagels demonstrated, is largely the work of a rather censorious editorial board, whose motives cannot have been entirely unmixed, disinterested or apolitical. Primitive Christianity was not as single-spirited as official church history has led us to believe.

In her new book, Pagels considers the history of the church's attitudes towards sex as manifested in its official interpretation(s) of the first three chapters of Genesis. It is a companion book for not only *The Gnostic Gospels* but also Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* and John Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*. Although homosexuality is given little attention in Pagel's book, the ideas she discusses bear directly on our understanding of how homosexuality and other nonstandard sex practices received the lasting condemnation of church authority.

This book is very short and nontechnical, unlike Foucault's or Boswell's studies. Six

chapters in all, the book examines changing practices and doctrines within unstart Christianity pertaining to virginity, procreation, divorce, sexuality and evil, individual will, female ministers, perversion and "nature."

In almost every instance, Pagels emphasizes the radical aspect of pre-canonized Christianity — how it was viewed as morally suspect and atheistic by non-Christians, Jews and Roman pagans alike. Though ostensibly not political, Christianity was eventually shaped into its lasting form by the same political and cultural forces that persecuted it in its early form(s), all of which helps explain the ease with which the once-persecuted religion became an active and cruel persecutor of alternative forms of itself in the Middle Ages and later.

The particular focus of the book is Augustine's doctrine of original sin. This doctrine is the cornerstone of Christian humanism in that it presupposes man's centrality and preeminence in creation. It also, Pagels argues, successfully divorces sexuality, suffering, physical health and free will from the Western idea of nature. In Augustine's view of the world, sex, pain, death and choice are not part of God's

original creation but rather the results of Adam's sin in Eden.

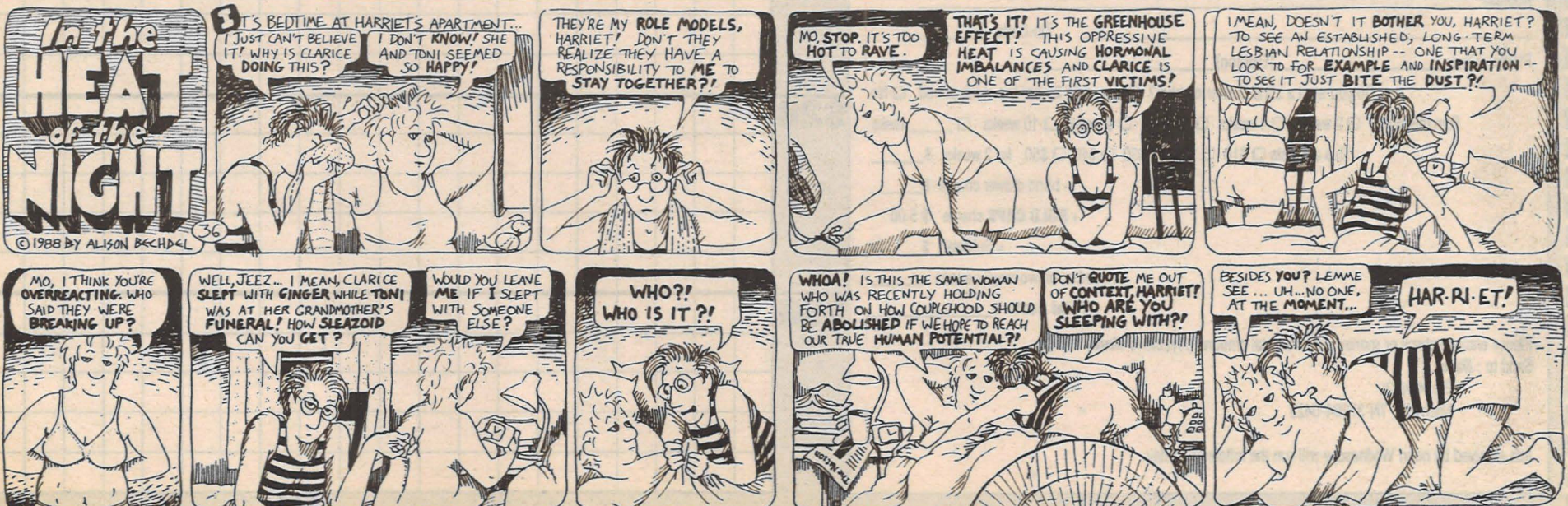
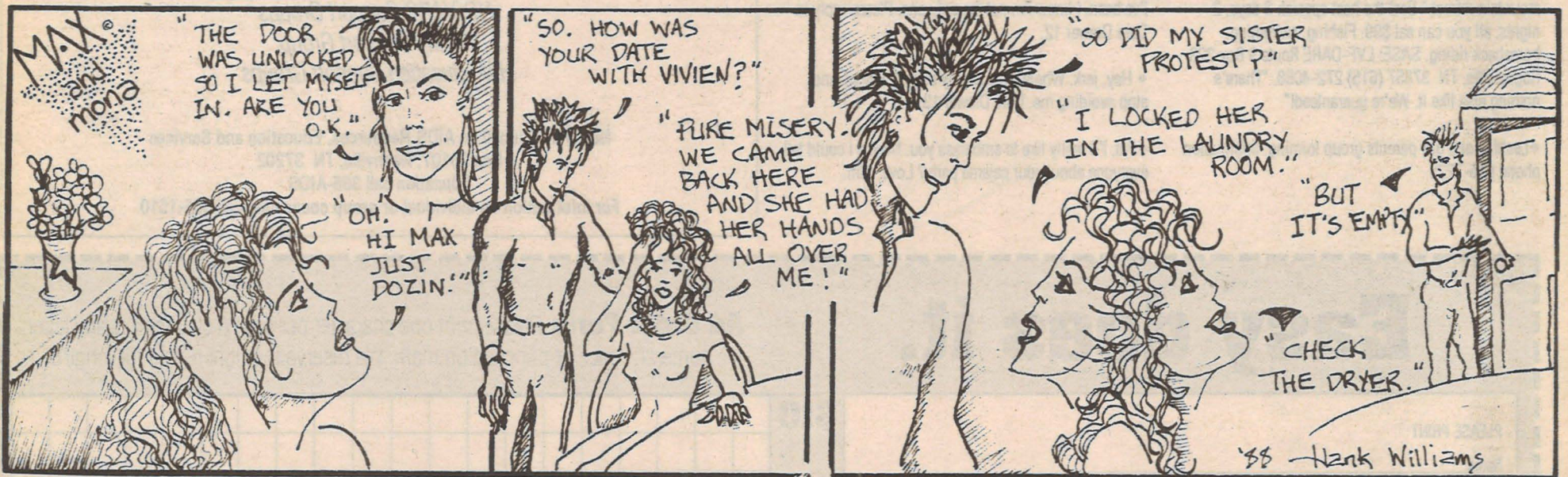
Thus, they are unnatural and now exist as unfortunate necessities. Augustine's view was not representative of the consensus in his time, but it came to dominate Christian thought as the church moved towards centralization and hierarchy.

If nature and human will are completely depraved, strict government is necessary to subdue the depraved instincts of man and woman (the natural "animals") and to limit the actions of their perverted wills. For Augustine and eventually others, sexual desire of any kind was unnatural and inherited from the Fall.

Pagels presents her thesis forcefully, but she treads very gently on the reader's individual conscience and religious conviction. Her motivations, she says, are primarily historical, not theological. Her new book is an eloquent addition to the study of the history of ideas.

Its ideas are pertinent to all Westerners, not just Christians or students of religion. Christian and non-Christian, we are all affected by the cultural definitions of human nature and morality which shape our worldview and our laws.

## Max and Mona/Dykes to Watch Out For





## Notices

We're proud to introduce *Notices*, our new classified section. All ads run two consecutive weeks, and cost \$10 for each 100 characters (including letters, numerals, punctuation and spaces) or part thereof.

For example: Up to 100 characters cost \$10 for two weeks, 101-200 characters cost \$20 for two weeks, 201-300 characters cost \$30 for two weeks, and so on.

We reserve the right to edit ads for length, and to reject any ad. Sexually explicit ads will not be accepted.

No ad will be accepted without payment in full in advance.

Blind drawers are available for *Personals* if you do not wish to use your own address. Please check the blind drawer space on the order form, and add \$5 for each two-week period. We will assign you a drawer number. Responses addressed to a blind drawer will be forwarded to you for four weeks after the last appearance of your ad.

To respond to an ad using a drawer number, write to:

**Dare**

Drawer # \_\_\_\_\_

Box 40422

Nashville, TN 37204-0422

Send your ad on the form below with a check or money order for the full amount to:

**Dare**

Box 40422

Nashville, TN 37204-0422

Ads received by noon Wednesday will run the following Friday. Questions? Phone 292-9623 for information.

## Announcements

• Therapeutic massage for womyn & gay men by appointment. Rita Roxas 352-1369

• Gay or lesbian teenagers who would like to meet others and are interested in forming a support group in Nashville: write Box 158002, Nashville 37215-0082. All correspondence held in strictest confidence.

• **HAVING A CITY ATTACK?**  
Fight back at Lee Valley Farm. "The stress-free mountain retreat." Beat the heat special: 3 days, 2 nights, all you can eat \$99. Fishing, swimming, horseback riding. SASE: LVF-DARE Route 9 Box 223 Rogersville, TN 37857 (615) 272-4068. "There's nothing else like it. We're guaranteed!"

• Lesbian and gay parents group forming. Information phone 646-7225

• **TIMBERFELL LODGE:** 250 private acres. Mountains, creeks, pond. Gourmet food, deluxe rooms, sauna, jacuzzi, horseback riding, and bunkroom. Clothes optional. Men only. Airport pickup. Write ATTN: DAR, Route 11, Box 94A, Greeneville, TN 37743 (615) 234-9272 or 234-0439. 2 miles off I-81 at exit 36.

• Missed a Dare? Back issues mailed to you (except V1 #2 and V1 #4) Send \$1.50 with name and address to Dare, Box 40422, Nashville, TN 37204

• New: business notices - a 1/32 page notice display ad at a special introductory rate. Let the community know you're there for pennies per reader. Ann Taylor, Dare Advertising Sales Coordinator, 352-5823.

• Goddess books, visualization, alternative health, Eastern thought, and more...Dragonfly Books 112 Second Avenue North, 242-1250

• T-GALA raffle tickets \$2! Win a car or any of 40 other great prizes. 269-4283 or 333-2215 for details.

• The Dare tee is back. \$10 plus \$2 p&h to Dare Tee, Box 40422, Nashville 37204. Specify L, XL or XXL.

## Personals

• I'm sorry, Ginge. I was wrong. Can't we talk? Please call me collect. No strings. Jen.

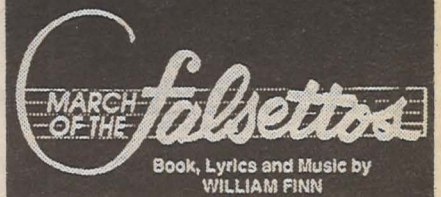
• Gay Viet Nam vet seeks other gay Viet Nam vets. I just need someone to talk with who has been where I've been. I know I'm not the only one. Please reply to Dare Drawer 12.

• Hey, jerk. Where's my twenty bucks? Pay up and stop avoiding me. Dare Drawer 13.

• Pat, I'd really like to embarrass you. Maybe I could tell everyone about your pajama party? Love, Kim.

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And tell 'em you  
saw 'em here.

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His wife is confused, his psychiatrist loves his  
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In this mixed-up world, love and commitment  
are still the answer.



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Wednesday 7 pm - 11 pm

BEER BUST  
Saturday 4 pm - 8 pm  
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Family Support Group  
HIV Education Support Groups

Nashville Council on AIDS Resources, Education and Services  
Box 25107, Nashville, TN 37202

Education call 385-AIDS

For information on individual or group counseling call 385-1510

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Phone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want a blind drawer number? ☐ Yes. Add \$5 per two-week period. ☐ No

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+ blind drawer charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_

+ **BOLD CAPS** charge \$ 5.00

= Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_

x number of two-week periods \_\_\_\_\_

**Total cost** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose check or money order for total amount, payable to **Dare**.

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