

# Dare

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

TENNESSEE'S LESBIAN AND GAY NEWSWEEKLY

JANUARY 13-19, 1989



**Rick Hutson (left) and Mark Han** will celebrate their tenth anniversary together next week. They talk about their decade together and the secret of their successful relationship, page 4. —PHOTO JEFF ELLIS

## Rubinfeld predicts victory despite Baptist's inaction

By JEFF ELLIS  
Managing Editor

Despite no apparent action on the part of officials at Nashville's Baptist Hospital, attorney Abby Rubinfeld is hopeful of a court victory in the case of a man who claims he was tested for HIV-infection without his knowledge or consent.

A half-million dollars in damages if being sought by a Nashville man in a lawsuit filed in late December against the hospital and orthopedic surgeon John Lamb.

In the lawsuit, filed by Rubinfeld on behalf of the man identified in court documents only as John Doe, the hospital is charged with performing an HIV test at Lamb's request.

The plaintiff's hospital records indicate the test was administered on Dec. 27, 1987, after the man visited the hospital's emergency room for treatment of a broken leg sustained earlier

in the day.

Lamb told reporters in January, 1988, he ordered the test because the plaintiff "appeared chronically ill."

John Doe, however, said, "I was then and I am now healthy as a horse."

"I haven't heard anything from the hospital or its attorneys," Rubinfeld said. "I'm not sure if they've been served with papers, but I'm sure they've read about the case in the newspapers."

Rubinfeld said that despite the lack of action on the part of the defendants she anticipates a victory for John Doe.

"I'm hopeful because I think the position the doctor took was unreasonable," she said.

In an interview on the first anniversary of his hospital ordeal, John Doe told *Dare* that Lamb "tested me because he thought I was gay, pure and simple."

"The educational points of this lawsuit cannot be overlooked. The hospital is guilty of improper use of the HIV test," Rubinfeld said.

The HIV test is used to determine the presence of the human immunodeficiency virus in the bloodstream. Many doctors and researchers believe HIV to be the source of the full-blown AIDS virus.

"The facts of this case point out some problems of education of people in the medical profession who are not directly involved in the care of people with HIV-infection," Rubinfeld said. "This points out a need of further education for people in the medical field."

The lawsuit seeks \$500,000 in punitive damages and an unspecified amount in compensatory damages from both Lamb and Baptist Hospital.

## Test shows Sharon Kowalski can communicate

By STUART BIVIN  
Editor

Experts have tested Sharon Kowalski and pronounced her able to communicate.

In a report that will surely have a profound impact on Karen Thompson's attempt to gain legal access to Kowalski, three physicians appointed by Minnesota state judge Robert Campbell have informed the court that Kowalski is capable of communicating her wishes.

Kowalski's father Donald obtained unrestricted legal guardianship of his daughter after the accident. He then forbade Thompson to see Sharon after he found out about her relationship

with Thompson, who has since fought a long court battle to gain guardianship.

Thompson, a professor of physical education at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota, has maintained that she had been making progress Kowalski's rehabilitation before contact was broken, and has pointed to evidence of a decline in Kowalski's condition since the forced separation, saying that Kowalski has asked for her since the separation.

The emotional case has generated national and international interest as well as support for Thompson's quest from both lesbian-and-gay rights groups and from disabled-rights groups.

"The reports validates everything I've said all along — that Sharon should have been receiving much higher quality rehabilitation this entire time and that she can clearly understand and express her wishes," Thompson told Boston's *Gay Community News* adding that she had mixed feelings about the report.

"I'm so excited because the results are better than I ever dared expect, but I'm also as angry as I've ever been — at a system that has allowed this to happen. I'm angry at the cost we've had to pay for this victory. Sharon has been limited because she has not received the care she should have," Thompson said.

## Officer accused of gay-bashing

By STUART BIVIN  
Editor

*Dare* has obtained a copy of a statement by a Nashville man charging a Metro Nashville police officer with a December 18 gay-bashing assault.

The man faces charges of resisting arrest and assault in a hearing today in Davidson Criminal Court.

The statement alleges that Metro officer Greg Jones came to the man's house to serve a malicious mischief warrant sworn by the man's neighbor. The statement says that the neighbor had previously been arrested for threatening the man's life.

The man said that, when he refused to give Jones his unlisted telephone number, Jones called him a "belligerent faggot," and hit him in the face with a closed fist and kicked him in the groin.

The document goes on to charge that Jones then said, "Now I've got to take this fag to General to get an AIDS test." The man said that he was tested for HIV antibodies at General Hospital without his consent, and then taken back to the Criminal Justice Center where, he alleged, Jones beat and kicked him, both in the parking lot and in the entryway to the building.

According to the statement, the man asked Jones, "Buddy, what have I done to you to deserve this?" and Jones replied, "I don't like fags, and I ain't your buddy."

The man said that he suffered a broken rib and numerous bruises and cuts, and has been unable to work since the incident.

Today's hearing will determine the outcome of Jones' charges against the man, who has vowed legal action against Jones and Metro.

Attempts to contact Jones before press time for comment were unsuccessful.

## I N S I D E

Remember Martin Luther King, Jr., this Monday



Savannah will never be the same: *Sociables*, page 3.



The night the bomb dropped: *One in Teen*, page 6.

A very special anniversary, page 4.





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# D A T E S

## Special Events

Saturday, January 14

**Potluck and Discussion** Martin Luther King Remembered, Black and White Men Together, Memphis. 7:30pm. Info 901 327-3753.

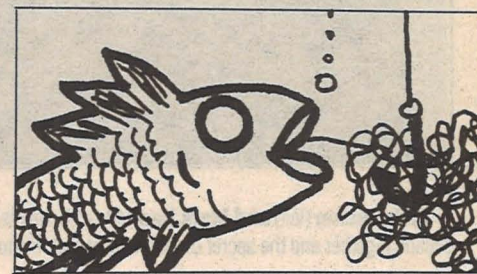
Monday, January 16

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY**

**GayRap** What Does the Bible Really Say About Homosexuality?, led by Bill Tracer, assistant pastor, Agape New Life Church. Sponsored by Memphis Gay Coalition. Meeting Room B, Memphis Public Library, corner of Peabody and McLean. 7:30pm. Free. Info 901 324-GAYS.

Saturday, January 21

**Party** Recoup from the Holidays, movie and popcorn, Gay Women's Social Group, Memphis. 7:30pm. \$2 donation. Info 901 324-6949.



Saturday, January 28

**Spaghetti Dinner and Fish Fry** Black and White Men Together, Memphis. 7-10pm. Info 901 452-5894.

Friday, February 3

**Mardi Gras Ball** Party and dance, Towne House Tea Room, 167-1/2 8th Av North, Nashville. Food, drinks, and costume contest. Sponsored by Metropolitan Community Church. 8pm-1am. \$5 donation. Info 615 228-8571 or 615 320-0288.

Saturday, February 4

**Party** Hors d'oeuvres, Memphis Gay Coalition. BYOB, potluck. Party room, Bryton Tower, 1271 Poplar, Memphis. 8pm-11pm. Free. Info 901 324-GAYS.

Tuesday, February 14

**Out and About Ball** Valentine's Day Dance Warehouse 28, 2529 Franklin Rd, Nashville. Sponsored by Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance. 7:30pm. \$6 per person. Info 615 333-2215.

Saturday, February 18

**Seminar** Loving Yourself Unconditionally, Susan Taranto. Sponsored by Gay Women's Social Group, Memphis. 7:30pm. \$2 donation. Info 901 324-6949.

## Memphis

**Mondays**

**Gay Alternative Hour**  
Radio show, WEVL-FM 90, 6-7pm.  
**Phoenix** (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

**Tuesdays**

**Phoenix** (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

**Wednesdays**

**Phoenix** (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

**Thursdays**

**P-FLAG** (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)  
Support group, St. John's Episcopal Church, 322 S Greer. 1st Thursday only. Info 901 761-1444.  
**Phoenix** (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30pm. Info 901 272-9459.  
**Into the Light** (Women's Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 276-7379.

**Fridays**

**Phoenix** (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 10pm. Info 901 272-9459.

**Saturdays**

**Twisted Sisters** (ACOA)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. Noon. Info 901 276-7379.  
**Phoenix** (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

**Sundays**

**Agape New Life Church**  
Sunday School, 9:30am. Worship service, 11am. Info 901 276-1872.  
**Into the Light** (Women's Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. Noon. Info 901 276-7379.  
**Phoenix** (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

## Nashville

**Mondays**

**Nashville CARES**  
AIDS/ARC Support Group. 6:30pm. HIV Education Support Group. 6pm. Family Support Group. 6:30pm. Info 615 385-1510.  
**Lambda Group**  
Closed Alcoholics Anonymous meeting for gay men and lesbians, Unitarian Church. 8pm.  
**MAGNET** (Married and Gay Network)  
Support group for married gay men. 1st & 3rd Mondays only. MCC. 8pm. Info 615 320-0288.

**Tuesdays**

**Vanderbilt Lambda Association**  
Meeting for gay and lesbian Vanderbilt students, faculty, staff and alumni. Vanderbilt Divinity School, Room G 23. 5:30pm. Info 615 385-4283.  
**Al-Anon**  
Closed meeting, MCC. 6:30pm.  
**Nashville CARES**  
HIV Education Support Groups. 7pm. Info 615 385-1510.  
**Sober Sisters** (Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Closed meeting, MCC. 8pm.  
**Gay Cable Network**  
Cablecast, Nashville Viacom Channel 35 (Community Access Television). 9pm.

**Wednesdays**

**Sex Addicts Anonymous**  
Closed meeting for gay men and lesbians. MCC. 5:30pm.  
**Nashville CARES**  
AIDS/ARC Couples Support Group. 5:30pm. AIDS/ARC Support Group. 6:30pm. HIV Support Group. 7pm. Info 615 385-1510.  
**MTSU Lambda Association**  
Meeting for lesbian and gay Middle Tennessee State University students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Murfreesboro. 7pm. Info 615 890-3787.

**Thursdays**

**Nashville CARES**  
HIV Support Group. 6:30pm. Visualization group. 6:30pm. Info 615 385-1510.  
**Alternatives** (Alcoholics Anonymous)  
Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC. 8pm.  
**Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics** (ACOA)  
Meeting. 8pm. Info 615 385-4776 or 615 352-5823.

**Fridays**

**Sex Addicts Anonymous**  
Closed meeting, MCC. 5pm.  
**Gay Parents Support Group**  
Meeting, MCC. 1st Friday only. 7pm. Info 615 831-2941 or 615 320-0288.  
**Alcoholics Anonymous Program Study Group**  
Meeting, Belmont United Methodist. 7:30 pm.

**Saturdays**

**Nashville CARES**  
AIDS/ARC Support Group. 4pm. Info 615 385-1510.  
**Metropolitan Community Church**  
Mortgage Meal, all you can eat. 7:30pm. \$5.  
**Gay Cable Network**  
Cablecast, Nashville Viacom Channel 35 (Community Access Television). 8pm.

**Sundays**

**Metropolitan Community Church**  
Worship services, 11am and 7pm. Info 615 320-0288.

Your nonprofit event can be listed free in *Dates*. Write to *Dare*, Box 40422, Nashville, TN 37204-0422, or phone 615 292-9623 and leave a message. Please include information about time, location, cost, sponsor, and a contact person's name with address and/or phone number for verification. Deadline noon Tuesday for publication next Friday.



## S O C I A B L E S

## Stalking Savannah

by JAAN STURGIS  
Staff Writer

WHO HAVE I talked to lately who is ringing in the new year in grand style? Why, Diane Easter, of course. It's rumored that she and several of her "girlfriends" are headed for Atlanta at month's end in what she terms a "tuna wagon" (Now what does she mean by that?) to attend the Southeast planning meeting for the Lesbian Agenda conference, later this year.

Diane also says to watch Gay Cable Network for a new lesbian soap opera called *Two in Twenty*. She suggested starting "tuna parties" all over town to watch together. I am not making this up.

Moving right along, Terry Ralston is about to finish up work at MTSU for his nursing-home administrator's certification. Just for the hell of it, he's taking an art history course. What is the world coming to when these business types are taking art courses? They must think that they can be part of the artsy-fartsy crowd.

When I was out and about lately someone said to be sure and mention a man in a monochrome. Why is it that this stuff confuses even me? Oh, well.

When Jim Grooms rung me up the other day, he said to be sure to remind y'all how much fun the Mardi Gras party at the Gas Light in Nashville is going to be Friday, February 3. For a wee \$5 donation (proceeds go to MCC-Nashville), you'll probably have the time of your life. Well, at least for February. Yes, you can come in costume and there will be a trophy for the best one. Other suitable attire would be your "best" clothes, whether that be leather, a stunning gown from the DAV or a plain old suit. There'll be wonderful free hors d'oeuvres, and when the eleven o'clock hour comes around the king and queen will be crowned. (Wouldn't I love to be queen for a day.) And they promise a show that will have all of us chatting about it clear into the spring social season. So, dearhearts, make your plans now.

Speaking of Jim Grooms, two of his designs will going to Washington next week for the Bush inaugural hoopla. Fashionable Nashville socialite Tish Hawkins Hunt will be seen at one of the inaugural balls in a to-die-for black empire beaded ball gown Jim designed. Too, Jim's designing a tailored suit for Tish to show off at a luncheon given for Barbara Bush, who is not George's mother.

Dearhearts, did I have the time of my life in Savannah, Georgia, during this holiday season just past. In fact, I no more than blew into town than who did I see but former Tennessean (drum roll)...yes, dears, you've guessed it, that former Warehouse 28 darling, Steve Sparks. He's still turning records at that Savannah institution Who's Who. Steve sends a special "hi!" to Steve Smith and all the gang at the Warehouse.

Were the bartenders chatty in Savannah? You're darn tootin'. They can hardly wait to see

their names in print. Well, one of my favorites (and they were all cute) was Randy at the Who's Who. Always a ready smile and a chatty little line, I bet that boy goes far in life. And, of course, speaking of the Who-Who's-Who, I couldn't forget Stacey Hirsch.

And on to the new cha-cha palace in Savannah, Club I. My friend Richard Cason, affectionately known as "Mutha" to the locals, is the head bartender and manager. Yes, Richard, you were a charming and gracious host during my week-long stay at your lovely Queen Anne abode. (Can you imagine anyone putting up with me for a week? My last lover didn't even do that.) Michael and Eric are two of the favorite bartenders at Club I and everyone just drools when they see that pretty Sean Nelson bringing out the drinks. Obviously, Club I will be in Savannah a long time.

For that intimate and cozy feeling, I stopped in to see John Wall at Faces. John is a chatty man from Danbury, Connecticut. Well, Mutha had the night off when we stopped in there and your should have heard the two of them carry on.

WHAT DID I DO besides the bars? The highlight was a tour of historic inns. Some of those inns had some rather unhistoric pieces inside them. Furniture, I mean.

There was Graden at the Gastonian. When he adjusted his all-clear glasses to fit just so on his nose my immediate response was, "Are you a student at the Savannah College of Art and Design?"

He told me he was a junior majoring in historic preservation. The faculty has changed so much there since I lived in Savannah that he didn't recognize any of the names I dropped.

The Gastonia is charming. Two wonderfully restored homes overlooking Forsythe Park downtown. I just about died when I saw the suite featuring a huge bath tub in the middle of a huge room named after some Roman emperor. It was truly divine decadence! Not to mention Graden.

The other inn I loved was Magnolia Place, also on Forsythe Park on my favorite street, Whitaker. Whitaker's lined with charming, palatial Queen Anne and Second Empire structures that make preservationists think they're in heaven. I was greeted by a cheery redhaired fellow named Kevin Howell. When I told him I write for *Dare*, his lips couldn't stop moving. He loves his job hosting in the inn. Really.

Back in Tennessee, I hear Nashville's Dr. Deborah Kowalski and staffer Kelley Oatts were in Atlanta to receive awards for distinguished service in chiropractic. Congrats!

My dears, another *Sociables* has come to an end. Now let me know where you've been lately. London, Paris, New Haven, maybe even Shelbyville? Ring me up at (615) 226-4034 and tell all. You could read your name here, too. Till next time, *ciao*. Or was that "chow?" •



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Rick Hutson

# A D E C A D E

By **JEFF ELLIS**  
Managing Editor

**TUCKED AWAY** into an east Nashville neighborhood of bungalows and ranch houses, the home of Rick Hutson and Mark Han exudes warmth and a feeling of security. And well it should.

Ten years ago when Rick Hutson and Mark Han first met, the two men had no idea they would be spending the next decade together as lovers and as partners.

Just one week shy of their tenth anniversary, Hutson and Han remembered the past ten years while looking forward to a lifetime together.

Hutson, 34, a hairdresser for a Nashville salon, and Han, 28, an assistant retail manager, say the secret to the longevity of their union is freedom — freedom to be individuals as well as a couple.

"When we met, there was a difference in the level of our experience in the gay culture," Hutson said. "So I felt it would be wrong to tell Mark what he could or could not do. There were a lot of things he still had to experience."

Han agreed: "Rick had done so much more for me, and I was just coming out. I couldn't very well set limits for him because I didn't want limits set for me."

Freedom for Hutson and Han extends to their circle of friends, co-workers and the occasional sexual partner.

"There was an experience difference between us. I had been the entire route that our community offers — the bar scene, the bookstore scene, you name it. I went through it all," Hutson said.

"I didn't think it would be right to tell Mark he couldn't have sex with other men."

"But just because one of us might decide to have sex with another man, it doesn't mean the end of our relationship," Han said.

This openness about sex, and about life in general, Hutson said, has helped to make their relationship stronger, although friends often criticize the couple's outlook on extracurricular sex.

"We tackled that from the beginning, so it's never been a problem for us," Hutson said.

"I guess a lot of people are jealous because our relationship works. I realize that it wouldn't work for everyone, because everyone is different. But they shouldn't criticize us because they don't agree with one aspect of our relationship," Han offered.

"I think we would have broken up seven or eight years ago if we hadn't given each other the freedom we both wanted," Hutson said.

Hutson came out at age 14 and by the age of 24, when he met Han, he knew what he wanted in life.

"I've never really been in the closet. I've always been gay. I've never wanted to be straight," he said.

Han, however, was rather inexperienced when the two first met.

"He told me he had a lover that he was breaking up with. I was very naïve about the whole thing. I thought, 'Well, that doesn't mean we can't see each other, does it?'" he remembers.

Having met each other in January, 1979, the two men moved in together some months later. According to Hutson, it was "seven, eight or nine months" later, while Han argues the move came "six months after we met. It was in June."

**AFTER TEN YEARS** together, the men are likely to complete each other's sentences, with their voices overlapping during the course of their conversation. Their smiles indicate to even the most casual observer, they they're obviously used to it.

Hutson was born in Arkansas, but spent most of his life in Nashville; Han is a farm boy from Springfield.

Han's small-town upbringing, coupled with his "slower lifestyle" initially attracted Hutson. Conversely, Hutson's "more action-packed" life appealed to Han.

After spending their first two years together in Music City, the two moved to New Orleans for a six-year stay after a visit to Mardi Gras.

"Rick's mother had moved to New Orleans and we went down for Mardi Gras a couple of times and decided we wanted more excitement than Nashville offered," Han said.

"We loved New Orleans and would go out almost every other night. The level of energy there is much greater than in Nashville," Hutson added.

But the frequency of their trips to middle Tennessee helped the two men to decide to move back to Nashville, where they've remained for the past two years.

"We decided to live in Nashville and visit New Orleans instead of living in New Orleans and visiting Nashville," Hutson said.

"The biggest adjustment we've had to make is to the nightlife here. And in New Orleans, the lesbian and gay society is more progressive, I think," Han said. "Comparatively speaking, we've slowed down our social lives drastically since moving back."

Returning to Nashville, of course, meant leaving behind many friends, getting to know new people and renewing old acquaintances.

"My family is here and some old friends from high school," Han said. "We've made a lot of new friends in Nashville who are single, but in New Orleans a lot of our friends were couples."

"I think sometimes it's easier to relate to other couples because they might better understand what we're doing or going through. But we still have a lot of single friends. I have to admit that I

What do you get when you combine:  
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Mark Han

# O F L O V E

sometimes live vicariously through them."

Han's family, which includes both his parents as well as three sisters and a brother — "the average family, I suppose" — have never openly discussed his sexual orientation or his relationship with Hutson.

"I've only openly discussed it with my mother. She's a very religious woman and although she's not thrilled with it, she accepts it," Han said.

Hutson's mother, on the other hand, has always known about her son and at times has even met young men and told them, "You really should meet my son."

"My mother's been very cool all my life. She's always said I could make my own decisions about anything — drinking, drugs, smoking, sex — as long as I don't make any decisions that might hurt me," Hutson said.

"And there have been times when she has met a cute guy and told them about me. I picked her up at the airport once and she told me she had sat next to the 'nicest' boy and had bought him a couple of drinks and told him he should look me up whenever he was in town."

"I freaked out! I couldn't believe my Mom was picking up tricks for me on an airplane."

**OF HIS RELATIONSHIP** with Han, Hutson said his mother is "pleased by the security of our relationship."

"Let's face it, once you've spent ten years with someone, they are your lover for life. You may have had other people you've called lovers, but you've spent less time with them. After ten years, you learn the importance of the word," Hutson said.

But do they ever fight?

"We don't fight, we bicker," Hutson said. "We've had maybe one or two knock-down, drag-out fights in the past ten years, but we have a rule to not fight in front of other people."

Han interjects: "We believe in having constructive arguments."

Hutson continues: "The most important thing to remember is to not fight in front of witnesses, friends, family. Most people who know us have never seen us fight. I feel bad letting someone else hear bitter, facetious things. It's a poor example to set."

The absence of major arguments from their lives can be attributed to the freedom the two men give each other, they believe.

"We've never let petty jealousies play a role in our lives. We feel secure in the relationship. We both know that no matter what happens, we're not going to break up," Hutson said.

"There were times when we've both feel a little threatened by a flirtation, I guess. But it's was never anything serious," Han added.

On the job, Han said that his co-work-

ers probably suspect he is gay, but he's never discussed it.

"I don't go into any details and neither do they," he said.

Hutson said he chose his profession — hair-dressing — as a means of being openly gay in his career.

"I've always been gay and I wanted a career where you could be open about it. Being a florist or an interior decorator didn't appeal to me, so I became a hairdresser instead," the veteran of a stint in the U.S. Army said. "I laugh about it, but it really was a big factor in making my career choice."

**ALTHOUGH THE TWO** men have not taken legal steps to protect each other in the event of catastrophe, both Hutson and Han acknowledged the importance of legal documents should tragedy strike.

"We haven't written formal wills, but we really should. I think all couples should do that," Han said.

"Whenever you hear the story about Sharon Kowalski and Karen Thompson, it really scares you to death to think something could happen to your lover and you could be totally shut out of his life," Hutson said.

And while both men hope mainstream society will finally accept same-sex couples as equals to heterosexual couples, they both believe such acceptance will be a long time in coming.

"We've all got our fingers crossed that things will change, but I don't think it will ever really happen. There will always be people who don't like someone simply for who they are," Hutson said.

"A lot of gay people get a pretty raw deal. Of course, AIDS hasn't helped any and now so many heterosexuals are frightened of gay people. And Nashville lesbians and gay men suffer from the fact that we're right in the middle of the bible belt," Han said.

But whether a straight society never accepts them or not, Hutson and Han say they are happy with their lives and with their life together.

"If we broke up today — just one week short of our tenth anniversary — I couldn't complain. We've had so much love and happiness in the past ten years. We've lived such a good life together and have shared so many good times," Hutson said.

"Maybe that's the secret to our success — having fun. Sometimes it's hard to find someone to share the fun with. The added security of having someone to grow old with, who you can also have fun with, is what makes everything so wonderful," Han said.

"When we met, I'd been out for ten years," Hutson said. "And I thought I'd really lived. But I was wrong."

"The past ten years have made me realize what life is really supposed to be." •

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From the Heart of the American South

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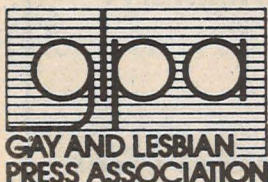
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## SOAPBOX

### Psychologist, Heal Thyself?

by ANN TAYLOR

**JOHN C. MASTERS** has pleaded guilty and Assistant District Attorney Richard Fisher has recommended a 7-year suspended sentence, 15 years probation and that Professor Masters design a treatment program for sex offenders. I am appalled.

Now there are a few things I need to make clear. I believe that consenting adults should have the freedom to determine their private sexual lives. To wit, when informed consent exists among adults, be they of the same or opposite sex, be there an exchange of money or not, it should *not* be, in my opinion, within the jurisdiction of the state to determine what is acceptable and what is not.

So, in my mind, John Master's crime is having sex with a minor whose sexual and emotional development is not yet complete, making the boy incapable of an informed consensual decision. This is a crime which entails the abuse of power. That abuse of power also exists in a police department which solicits the assistance of a minor in a sting operation and

a mother who supports such action.

The issue of guilt here, though, has been decided. John C. Masters pleaded guilty to a charge of soliciting a minor for sex.

Now the Assistant District Attorney recommends leniency.

It is my experience that, with sexual offenders who have an honest desire and motivation to stop the offending behavior, mental health treatment is more effective than imprisonment. But to recommend that the sex offender himself design such a treatment program?

This is at best the kind of plea a defense attorney might make, throwing his client on the mercy of the court. Defense attorneys are hired to protect the rights of their client, to question the state's case, and to argue for the most lenient treatment of a convicted client.

So why this burst of compassion from Assistant District Attorney Fisher?

Is it because Professor Masters is a member of the educated elite? Because he once chaired the Psychology Department of a prestigious

private university just up the road from the Courthouse?

Would a car mechanic been shown the same compassion? Does Assistant DA Fisher routinely recommend that sex offenders design treatment programs for other convicted on similar charges?

I doubt it.

**OF COURSE**, it is a novel idea. Think of the applications. Convicted murderers could run stress-reduction groups and multiple DUI offenders could be asked to head up treatment programs for alcoholics and drug addicts.

John C. Masters needs mental health treatment. Not because he pays for sex and not because he engages in sex with partners of the same sex. He needs treatment because he abuses his personal power when he engages youth in sexual activities.

He has had training in psychology, yes, but he clearly is not the person to design a treatment program for offenders. Not now.

Maybe never. •

## ONE IN TEEN

### The Night the Bomb Dropped

by PATRICK HILLS  
Contributing Writer

**WELL, BELIEVE IT OR NOT**, I am still alive. Due to family problems, homework, family problems, college applications, family problems, exams, and family problems, I have been unable to write my column. It sure does feel good to have a grasp on my life again. You might have noticed that family problems were included in my list of excuses. Since the other excuses are fairly self-explanatory, I will discuss the family problems. This is what I call entering dangerous territory, but I don't have much to lose.

I must begin with the night of November 6. After several weeks of thought and discussion with friends, I decided that I would tell my mother that I was gay within the week. However, I never got that chance. My mother decided to listen in on one of my phone conversations.

As you probably have guessed by now, she found out that I was gay. Her first reaction was to call one of her friends. "May I come spend the night at your house? (pause) I don't think I can stay here. (pause) I found out Patrick is gay." This is when I realized that she had been listening in on my conversation.

While she waited for her friend to come pick her up, she made a few more calls. She called my brother, and she became enraged when she learned that he already knew but had not told her. Next, she called my grandmother. "Well, Patrick is gay," she began the phone call. All my grandmother had to say was that she loved me. This support helped me a lot. Because my grandmother said this, my mother became very angry at her.

In need of someone on her side, she called my aunt (her sister) and my uncle. "Well, Patrick is queer as a two dollar bill." Two thoughts entered my head after hearing this.

The first should not be printed in such a nice paper.

The second was that it is a three dollar bill. They were very saddened and felt sorry for her. Via Ma Bell, I received a lecture from both my aunt and uncle. I was told how confused and mixed up I am by my aunt. My uncle

*In need of someone  
on her side, she called  
my aunt (her sister)  
and my uncle.*

*"Well, Patrick is queer  
as a two dollar bill."  
Two thoughts entered  
my head after hearing  
this.*

*The first should not be  
printed in such a nice  
paper.*

*The second was that it  
is a three dollar bill.*

quoted some bible verse and told me I was making a mockery of God.

**MY MOTHER** then ceased to use the phone. I told her that God made me gay. She stared in awe and said, "God would not do that to anyone!" At this point I decided to leave and go

to my grandmother's house since she seemed to understand a little. At 11:00 p.m., I hopped on my bike and rode to her house. I was so tired at this point, I went right to bed without finishing several major homework assignments.

This was only the beginning of the ordeal. My mother constantly insults me and my sexuality and calls me queer. It seems like everyday I learn that she has told someone else that I am gay. Every once in a while she lectures me about sodomy or something like that.

The worst part is that she does not trust me. She wants to know where I am every minute of the day, and she checks up on me.

By now, I have sorted things out and my life is in some order. Fortunately for me, I was already very comfortable and at ease with my sexuality. When I think back about how I was dealing with my growing realization that I am gay several years ago, I also think what would have happened if I had told her then.

**THIS THOUGHT SCARES** me. She would have probably put me through all kinds of therapy and tried to convince me that I am not gay. I hate to think how that would have affected me. I feel very fortunate to have come through all my troubles and fears and be proud that I am gay.

The fact that some lesbian and gay teenagers are not so lucky concerns me deeply. I want and plan to do whatever I can to change this fact. My main goal in life is to have made a significant contribution to the growing demand for rights and fair treatment by the lesbian and gay community. •

**Patrick Hills lives in Nashville. Because he is a high school student, he writes under a pseudonym. -editor**



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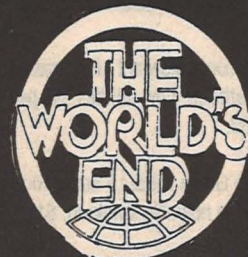
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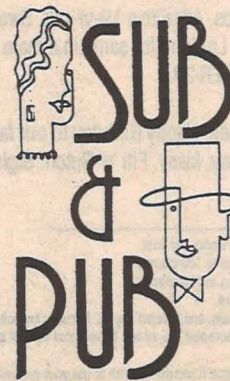
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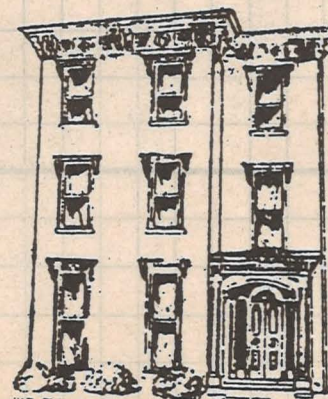
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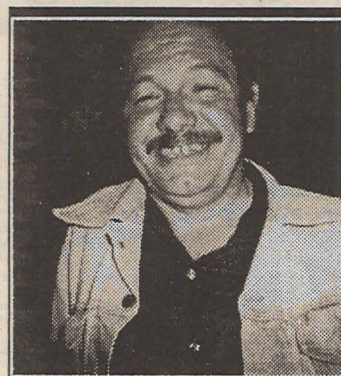
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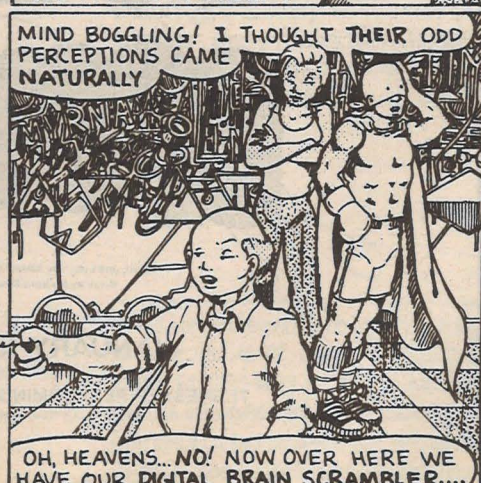
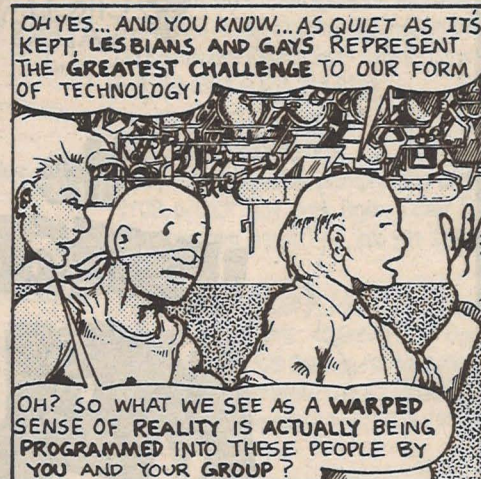
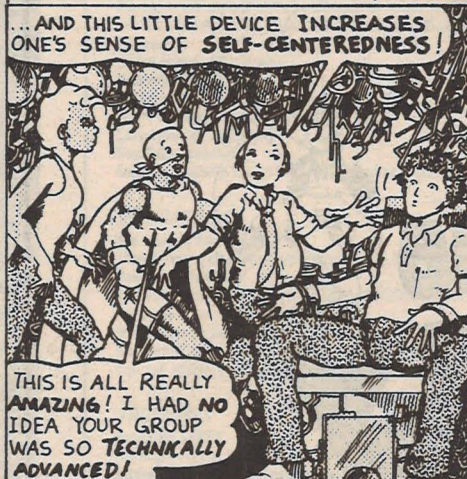


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