

Dare

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 15

TENNESSEE'S GAY AND LESBIAN NEWSWEEKLY

APRIL 14-20, 1989

Knoxville closes peeps, cites AIDS

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Four adult bookstores in Knox County were padlocked last week after a chancellor ruled they are public nuisances and pose "a serious danger" to public health.

That decision, handed down last week by Knox County Chancellor Frederick McDonald, followed by little more than a year a decision to close all adult bookstores in Chattanooga and Hamilton County.

Still pending before federal court in Nashville is a motion filed by attorneys for owners of local adult bookstores which would allow them to replace the doors on private viewing booths and to remove limitations on store operating hours. The doors to the booths were removed and operating hours set from 8 a.m. to 3 a.m. following a 1988 investigation by the Metro Nashville Health Department.

McDonald, in his decision last week, said the four bookstores in the Knoxville are public sex houses and health hazards. He set a June 26 hearing to decide whether the stores should be closed permanently.

"The battle is just starting," said Knox County District Attorney Ed Dossett, who brought the lawsuit to have the stores closed.

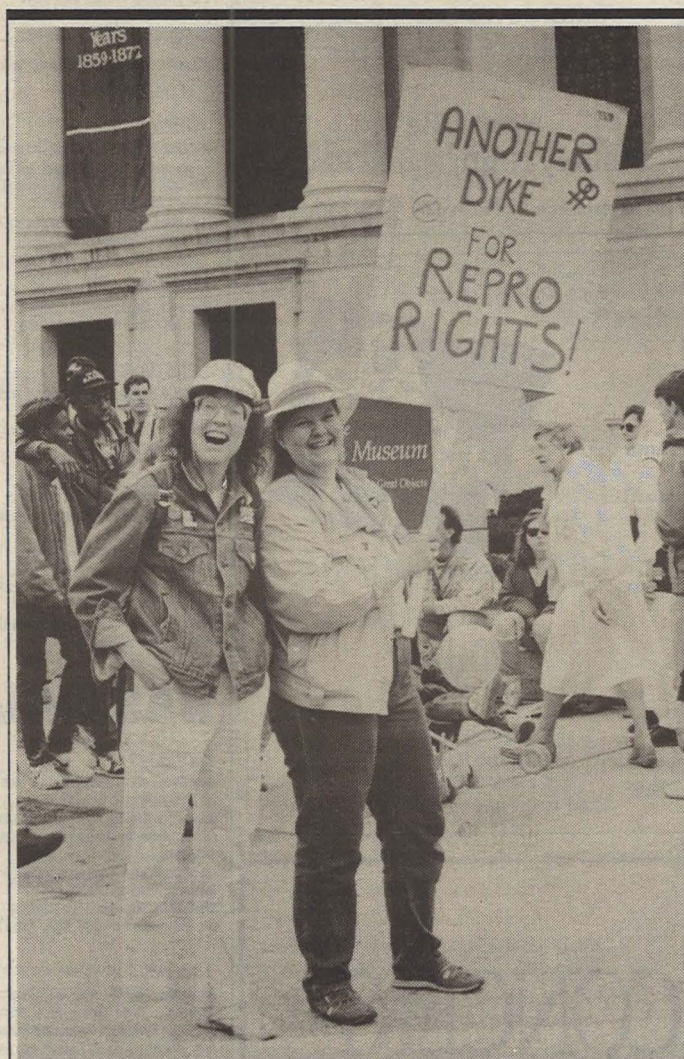
McDonald said the condition of the bookstores' film viewing booths poses a "serious danger to public health...There is reasonable expectation that AIDS can be spread, as well as syphilis and gonorrhea and hepatitis."

In the case involving Nashville-area bookstores, the Health Department's then-director, physician Joseph Bistowich, told members of the Metro Council that adult bookstores are breeding grounds for sexually-transmitted diseases.

Efforts by the recently-organized Nashville Coalition Against Pornography (NCAP) to rid the city of "obscene materials" are expected to include a campaign to close the adult bookstores in the state's capital city.

NCAP organizers are looking to a similar group's success in Chattanooga for inspiration in their efforts. The Chattanooga group was successful in bringing about the closing of adult bookstores and video arcades in that southeastern Tennessee city. According to sources there, the group then turned its efforts to attempts to close the city's gay bars.

Several adult bookstores have since reopened in Chattanooga, but none of them have private video booths, which are prohibited by local ordinance. The Chattanooga ordinance was used as a model for restrictions adopted by the Nashville Metro Council. •



Two of the lesbian contingent at Sunday's March for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C., show where they stand on the issues. Police estimated the crowd at 300,000, while march organizers said that over 600,000 took part. Either figure makes the march the largest since the October, 1987, March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights drew a crowd officials initially estimated at 100,000, then revised after ten months to an estimate of over 750,000. — DARE PHOTO BY SUSAN BRUNINGA

New Memphis AIDS program

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

A state-funded AIDS education program directed at the city's intravenous drug users, will get under way in Memphis by July 1.

Officials said last week that a target date of May 1 has been set for recruiting and training workers. The workers will do AIDS education and referral in prisons and areas of high drug use in the city, said Leo M. Gray Jr., who developed the program at the request of state officials. Some of the recruits will be former drug addicts.

If successful, the program would be the first AIDS outreach directed toward IV-drug users in the Memphis area. The program is being implemented at a time when data indicates a growing number of AIDS cases related to IV-drug use.

Gray outlined his plan at a meeting of an AIDS advisory committee former at the request of Eric B. Taylor, state commissioner of mental health and mental retardation. Included on the committee are representatives of the Shelby County Health Department, community mental health centers and The Regional Medical Center at Memphis.

The IV-drug user program would focus on the 206,000 people served by the Memphis Health Center, who live in an area characterized by illiteracy and poverty, Gray said.

Workers would canvass neighborhood churches, pool halls, bars and restaurants to talk about AIDS, Gray said. They would then refer people to proper public health facilities for AIDS testing or treatment.

Gray is head of the Memphis Regional Sickle Cell Council which, in 1988, received a \$50,000 federal grant to develop AIDS education and • continued on page 4

T-GALA recycles to raise money

by HARRISON HICKS
Contributing Writer

If several Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA) members have anything to say about it, besides marching in the streets, Nashville's lesbian and gay community will be searching the sides of those streets for items that can be recycled.

Aluminum cans, newspapers, plastics and other recyclables are the objects of a campaign to raise money for T-GALA.

Devie Levin [pronounced "luh veen"], T-GALA treasurer and coordinator of the recycling project, said she became interested in recycling through her involvement with Recycle! Nashville, a citizen's action group which advocates recycling as a means of conserving energy and resources. She presented the idea to T-GALA and wrote up the idea in the group's newsletter to officially launch the campaign.

Aside from the environmental benefits,

Levin said she believes the project is a good way for people unable to devote time to political issues to make a contribution to Nashville's lesbian and gay community.

"In terms of my own activism, I'm not so much into the politics, but I do want to get involved and contribute," Levin said.

She acknowledged that it is hard to get people to change their habits, but is optimistic about the growth potential of the drive, pointing out that with only a few people participating, T-GALA could clear \$60 from the drive this month, more than double March receipts.

Nashville's Metropolitan Community Church also has an aluminum recycling program, and collects cans at the church, at 131 15th Avenue North in Nashville.

For more information on T-GALA's drive, or to arrange for pick-up of recyclable items, phone Levin at (615) 297-4293, or contact any T-GALA member. •

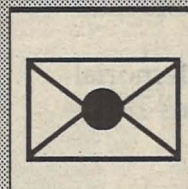
INSIDE

this week's Dare

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More talk about AIDS and humor: Quotes, page 8.



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Blue Rose	Margaret Sloan-Hunter
Cassellberry & DuPree	Jude Narita
Dance Brigade	Laura Nyro
Dianne Davidson	Ova
Disappear Fear	Over Our Heads
Ferron	Pat Parker
Robin Flower	Ruth Pelham
& Libby McLaren	Vicki Randle
Mimi Fox	Toshi Reagon
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D A T E S

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.
Holy Trinity Community Church Worship service, 11am. 1216 Forrest Ave. Info 901-726-9443.
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

Gay Overeaters Anonymous Open meeting for lesbian and gay overeaters. MCC, 5:30pm. Info 615-327-4614.
Nashville CARES HIV+ Education/Support Group. 6:30pm. ARC/AIDS Support Group, bimonthly. 6:30pm. Family Support Group, bimonthly. 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

Nashville CARES ARC/AIDS Support Group. 4pm. Info 615-385-1510.
AI-Anon Closed meeting, MCC. 6:30pm.
P-FLAG Meeting of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 4th Tuesday only. Unitarian Church. 7:30pm. Info 615-662-0332.
MTSU Lambda Association Meeting for lesbian and gay Middle Tennessee State University students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Murfreesboro. 7pm. Info 615-890-3787.
Seber Sisters (Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous) Closed meeting, MCC. 8pm.
Gay Cable Network Viacom Channel 35 (Community Access Television). 9pm.

Wednesdays

Sex Addicts Anonymous Closed meeting for gay men and lesbians. MCC. 5:30pm.
Nashville CARES ARC/AIDS Support Group. 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.

Thursdays

Gay Overeaters Anonymous Open meeting for lesbian and gay overeaters. MCC, 5:30pm. Info 615-327-4614.
Nashville CARES Visualization Group. 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Vanderbilt Lambda Association Meeting for gay and lesbian Vanderbilt students, faculty, staff and alumni. President's House, Peabody Campus, alternates weekly with Film Series (see Special Events). 7pm. Info 615-297-5352.
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

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

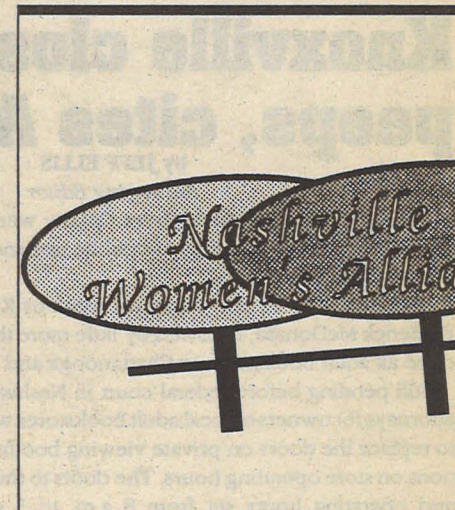
Sundays

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

Special Events

Friday, April 14

Women's Dance *An Evening For Women*. Sponsored by Nashville Women's Alliance. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1808 Woodmont Blvd, Nashville. \$4. 8:30pm.



Saturday, April 15

Concert *Lucie Blue Tremblay*. Regis Inn, 1220 Memorial Pkwy, N.W., Huntsville, Alabama. 7:30pm. \$10 advance, \$12 at the door. Alternative housing available. Info, tickets 615-386-9222 or 615-646-8945.

BWMT Workshop *Hot, Horny & Healthy*, sponsored by Black and White Men Together, Memphis. 7:30pm. Free. Info 901-726-1461.

Women's Dance *Random's Spring Dance*. Beer, set-ups available. Laurel Theatre, 1538 Laurel Ave, Knoxville. 8pm. \$4. Info 615-688-3428.

Forum *Church and Community Forum*, a panel of black lesbians and gay men will speak. Metropolitan Community Church, 131 15th Av N, Nashville. 8:30pm, following weekly Mortgage Meal. Free. Info 615-320-0288.

Round Up On the River *Puttin' on the Lips*, lip sync contest. Memphis Lambda Center, 241 N. Cleveland. \$5 admission, \$10 entry fee. Info 901-725-5399.

Sunday, April 16

Planning Meeting Nashville Pride Week '89. 1pm. Info 615-297-4293.

Feminist Book Circle Unitarian Universalist Church, 1808 Woodmont Blvd, Nashville. 5-7pm. Free. Info 615-297-5352.

Dinner Black and White Men Together, Memphis. At Spaghetti Warehouse, 40 West Huling Ave, Memphis. 7pm. Info 901-327-3753.

Monday, April 16

Consciousness Raising Discussion group. Black and White Men Together, Memphis. 7:30pm. Free. Info 901-726-1461.

GayRap *Why We Celebrate Gay Pride*. Main Library, Peabody and McLean, Memphis, Mtg Rm. A. Sponsored by Memphis Gay Coalition. Free. 7:30pm. Info 901-324-GAYS.

Your nonprofit event can be listed free in *Dares*. Write to *Dare*, Box 40422, Nashville, TN 37204-0422, or phone 615 327-3273 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.

PAGES

Facing the Tank

Facing the Tank, by Patrick Gale. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1989. \$17.95, hardcover.

reviewed by **JOE MAROHL**
Staff Writer

THE BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE of Barrowcester (pronounced "Brewster"), a free-thinker and outspoken critic of dogma and religious sentimentality, peeks inside the tomb of the town's sainted patron (a "reformed Viking butcher") and makes a startling discovery.

The centuries-old skeleton, in good condition as skeletons go, consists not only of skull, rib cage, pelvis, arms and legs, but also the remains of a large pair of angelic wings, folded modestly across the saint's middle.

Can the Bishop's doubt stand up in the face of empirical evidence for the miraculous?

Not wanting to put his faith in unfaith to the test, the Bishop detaches the wings and manages to dispose of them under cover of the night, only to have his treachery circumvented by the occurrence of an even flashier miracle in the presence of a public congregation.

This miracle makes Barrowcester the focus of national attention and serves as the center of *Facing the Tank*, Patrick Gale's fourth novel — his fourth in three years.

As the book's dust-jacket enthusiastically announces, this is Gale's most ambitious novel yet, carrying further his artful juggling of multiple plot lines (this one has seven, not counting subplots, of which there are legion) and beginning a new tack for the gifted novelist into the realm of magic realism.

The end result is a communal, rather than individual, protagonist: the town of Barrowcester and its citizens (the "Barrowers"). Barrowcester is two parts Peyton Place (of the eponymous novel of the 1950s) and one part Macondo (the isolated microcosm in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*).

Though individual story lines are sometimes difficult to keep straight, the reader is compelled to view Barrowcester as a metaphor for the occurrence of the magical and heroic in the midst of the insipid and mean — the disruption of all that seems secure and obvious.

Besides the falsely open-minded Bishop who must now learn to accommodate the supernatural, there is a resident Satanist who waits naked on evenings for some sort of inverse epiphany (which occurs in the novel's bizarre and moving catastrophe — which I did not fully understand, frankly). There are

epiphanies and miracles along secular lines, some more spectacular than others, some altogether unspectacular.

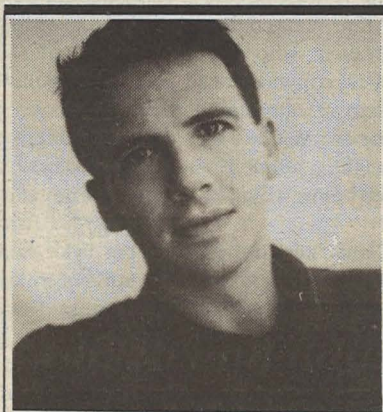
There is a boy who suspects that he has impregnated his favorite dog. There is the daughter of incest who is going to have a Cardinal's baby (a sort of scientifically explainable "immaculate conception" and "virgin birth"). There is the openly gay fashion designer who falls in love with a Caribbean black woman. There is the gay interior designer who, having survived the loss of his lover to AIDS, is saddled now with an ailing and incontinent mother, whose unusual toilet habits are the inspiration for the book's title. There is the lonely and loveless religion teacher, who compensates for her personal frustration through encouraging her students to imagine and draw the more grisly episodes of the Old Testament.

To be ideally enjoyed, *Facing the Tank*, like Gale's previous novels, requires reading all at once without long interruptions. That the novel is longer by half than his previous works makes for an impossibly long sitting, and the complicated plots, which at times seem more trouble than they're worth, require careful attention to myriad details. Even so, the novel does not unknot all its ambiguities at the end. Quite the opposite, it introduces some new ones.

The novel's theme seems to be that categories (of experience, reality, logic or love) simply do not work...ever. As one character says early on in the story, "I hate categories. We're not gay or straight; we're just Tobit and Gloire who fancy each other."

BY THE END of the novel, the reader is convinced that Gale is a romanticist without idealism, without respect for old or new categories, no matter how inventive and "free-thinking," an iconoclast of other iconoclast's closet idols. I agree with the idea. Also, I like magic realism as a device for exploding conventional concepts of history and reality-principle.

However, Gale's real talent is creating enjoyable characters and an intricately balanced plot, though he lets this one wobble at times. Nevertheless, his implications about the relative nature of scandals and miracles, hell and heaven, doubt and faith, are entertaining and enlightening and memorable. •



Patrick Gale, author of *Facing the Tank*.

The novel's theme seems to be that categories (of experience, reality, logic or love) simply do not work...ever. As one character says early on in the story, "I hate categories. We're not gay or straight; we're just Tobit and Gloire who fancy each other."

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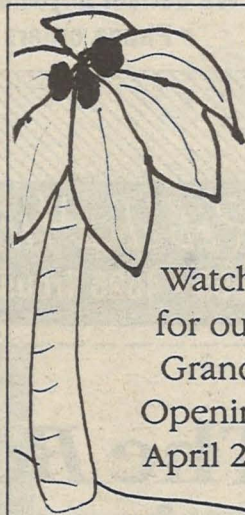
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Dare

Tennessee's Lesbian and Gay Newsweekly

McClard park-entrapment, harassment suit goes to trial

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Retired Metro Nashville police detective Ray McClard this week said his suit against the Metro Board of Parks and Recreation and park ranger Jeff DeBusk will "probably come to trial within the next few weeks."

McClard seeks damages in excess of \$1 million as the result of malicious prosecution which followed his arrest in Cedar Hill Park in June, 1986. McClard has maintained that DeBusk entrapped him by first mentioning sex in a restroom at the Park. Those charges were dropped on technical grounds.

More than 300 people were arrested in an undercover operation conducted throughout Metro Parks in an effort to curtail illicit sexual activity. DeBusk was involved in more than 200 of the cases.

Several respondents to a summer, 1987, survey of park arrestees by the Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA) maintained that they were approached by DeBusk, who they said initiated sexually explicit conversation with them before arresting them on solicitation charges. DeBusk was described by McClard as being in his early thirties, weighing about 250 pounds, standing 5'10" tall and being "a big old husky boy."

Since his initial arrest, McClard claims he has been the victim of harassment at the hands of Metro Park rangers. Further, he said that a September, 1987, charge that he had sex with a 16-year-old boy was directly related to his park arrest.

McClard, 60, was charged with having sex with the boy who had been boarding his horse at the retired detective's east Nashville farm. Those charges were dropped last July, after prosecutors failed to produce enough corroborating testimony.

"We believe, after a lengthy investigation,

that the boy is telling the truth," said Assistant District Attorney John Zimmerman.

Throughout the proceedings, McClard had claimed his innocence. He was accused of engaging in mutual masturbation with the boy twice in 1986 and once in August, 1987. McClard was accused of fondling the boy some 15 years over the course of the previous year.

McClard's arrest followed by one day the filing of his suit against DeBusk and the Metro Board of Parks and Recreation.

"When the charges were dismissed in the case of the boy who boarded his horse on my farm, I drove to Cedar Hill Park to have lunch, figuring I would see DeBusk at some point," McClard said. "Sure enough, DeBusk drove up and told me it was illegal for me to be sitting on the picnic table."

After that, McClard said, the park ranger left.

However, on Nov. 16, 1988, McClard said he was issued a traffic ticket for running a stop sign in Centennial Park, a move he termed "harassment." Fighting the ticket in court, he was found guilty and ordered to pay the \$5 fine. He has since appealed that decision, filing a 12-point discovery motion to determine if he had indeed been singled out by Park Rangers.

In a forum at the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) last summer, Metro Parks Director Jim Fyke said he had no knowledge of entrapment in any of the undercover operations. He said that all officers involved in the operations were given guidelines concerning evidence and told not to deal with cases where the evidence against someone might be considered "shaky."

"People allowed themselves to get in situations allowing themselves to be susceptible to suggestion or entrapment," Fyke said, adding that from the evidence, including videotapes, most of those arrested had been the instigators and not victims of entrapment. •

...new Memphis AIDS program

• continued from page 1

prevention programs aimed at the black community.

L. Rudy Broomes, assistant state commissioner of alcohol and drug abuse, said \$150,000 would be made available to fund the IV program.

Figures released by the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control show that nearly 27 percent of the 88,096 AIDS cases reported as of Feb. 28 involved IV drug use. State figures indicate that IV drug use is a risk factor in 21 percent of all AIDS cases reported in Memphis. •

...unapologetic apology

• continued from page 6

homophobia. There was fear of myself, of the labels that might be attached to me in every word I wrote. Whenever I find myself looking to the words of others more than my own (whether George Bernard Shaw or my cultural hero, Montaigne), I know that wanting others to speak for me may mean there is something I'm afraid of saying myself.

In my zeal to distance myself from the "man-hating" rhetoric of Dobkin, I said much about my fear of that label she so proudly owned: the fear of being labeled a "man hater" because I am a lesbian. The easy explanations of my writing strategies failed to tell me why I was afraid because the reason was personal, not political. And disguising my personal fear within a political argument or an editorial is surely more dangerous than the fear itself.

I had much to learn about my own fear and attempts to "closet" that fear while writing the

Dobkin piece. I learned I'm not safe from my own fear of labels, or safe from my past. My fear of Dobkin had much to do with my fear of my mother's rhetoric when speaking of my father, a man she had grown to "hate." I feared her hate, her attempts to contaminate me with it because I feared the loss of him as much as I feared what he had done to her.

I still fear hatred of men in the same way I feared hatred of my father, because living in a world without him felt too much like living in a world without me, without access to the source of my anger, my fear, my love. I needed him for the very dialogues that would tell me about myself: where I needed to go, where I had been, what I feared. I still need that and we all do. I thank Alix Dobkin for bringing my fear home to me and for the wisdom of a friend who understood my misgivings about my self-confidence. It's an "apology" to everyone I would gladly make. •

BOX 40422

Transatlantic mail

Book Editor Sherre Dryden received this letter from Scottish publisher Konrad Hopkins in response to her request for a review copy of the book *A Turn of the Wheel*. We think the letter illustrates very well the subtle and not-so-subtle problems that lesbians and gay men have in common the world over. — Editor

DEAR MS. DRYDEN:

Thank you for your letter of 10 November 1988, postmarked 6 March 1989 (it arrived here on 14 March), requesting a review copy of our title *A Turn of the Wheel* by Oliver Friggieri, which is enclosed. I can't imagine how you heard about us in Nashville, unless you read a review of this title in *Publishers Weekly*.

Thank you, too, for the free copy of *Dare*, Vol. 1, No. 30, 14-20 October 1988, which I'd never seen before. I read it thoroughly, and must tell you that it gave quite a lift to my

ary on the gay actor Eric Stryker, who died of AIDS, a report on anti-gay hate crimes in America, an essay on a Swedish film star, and an article on gay-spirit communities springing up in California—all very "obscene" stuff, you see, and a threat to the Victorian values of Mrs. Thatcher's Britain, the Perfect Society, in which the AIDS epidemic is spreading like wildfire, unchecked—so I have been able to carry on my own "fight back" regardless of the Gestapo.

So, yes, reading *Dare* did me good (there's no newspaper like it in Scotland), even though the news in it wasn't all good. It's encouraging to know that some gay people in Nashville are "celebrating" who and what they are.

I AM ENGAGED IN preparing a cycle of novels in a series of six trilogies on inter-related gay themes (six of the novels are already done in first drafts), ranging in time from Leonardo da Vinci's Renaissance to the Age of AIDS, all for the U.S. market. It's a very ambitious undertaking for a very small publisher—and I may not live to complete it—but it's part of my personal campaign to "celebrate" and "remember." As Joe Marohl said in his review of *The Swimming-Pool Library* (which is the best review I've read of this novel), "The novel demonstrates the necessity of gay history as an alternative to the history

codefied and preserved in the mainstream." But if we are to learn from history, or had better learn from history, first we have to know what the history is, and that is one of the themes of the cycle of novels I'm preparing.

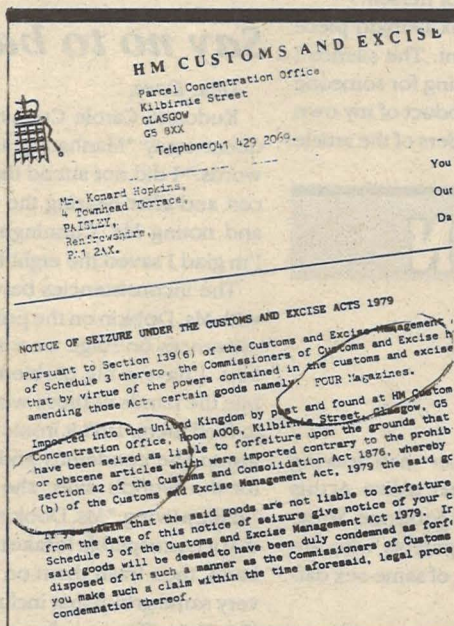
I notice that *Dare* is a member of the Gay and Lesbian Press Association. Although I am located in Scotland, I am an American citizen, and I wonder whether Wilfion Books might be eligible to join the Association. Can you give me any information on this question?

AGAIN, THANK YOU for your letter, the request for a review copy of our publication and the copy of *Dare*. If you publish a review of *Wheel*, I'd like to see it. I'm also enclosing a flyer on the novel, giving the address of our U.S. distributor (Dufour Editions, from which just today I received another good order for *Wheel*) and the U.S. price, a copy of which I've sent to Dufour along with a copy of your letter, for their information. Copies of both your letter and the flyer have also gone to Dr. Friggieri in Malta and the translator, Professor Grazio Falzon, in Forest Grove, Oregon (neither of whom is gay, by the way.)

With all best wishes, and hoping to hear from you again, I am,

Yours sincerely,

KONRAD HOPKINS
Co-director
Wilfion Books, Publishers
Paisley, Renfrewshire, Scotland



Amsterdam. When I was there in September 1988 to visit my partner, Ronald van Roekel, I saw a British flag draped over a balcony, adorned with the double gay male/female symbols and emblazoned with the words 'We Fight Back'—but they had to go to Holland to do so, because gays' human and civil rights are being steadily eroded in this country.

And I—an American with a Dutch partner—"fight back" in my own way, alone if necessary, for I get precious little support from the "literary" community in Britain. In Amsterdam, I bought four American gay magazines (unavailable here), one of them *The Advocate*, which I wanted to use in research for a book and a play I'm preparing on the coming of the AIDS crisis in the States. I decided to send these magazines to myself here, but having a premonition that they would get through, I first removed several articles of special interest and put them in my inside coat pocket, then posted the remnants of the magazine air mail, to my Paisley address.

MY PREMONITION WAS RIGHT. A few days after I got back here, Here Majesty's Gestapo (Customs and Excise Division) sent me a letter saying that they had seized and confiscated the four magazines as "obscene and indecent." If you want to see what such a document looks like—and it should be stamped with the swastika—I am enclosing a photocopy of it.

But I had the material I needed—an obitu-

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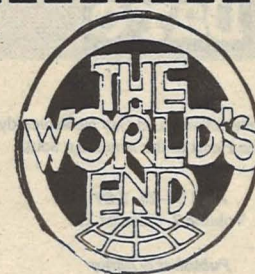
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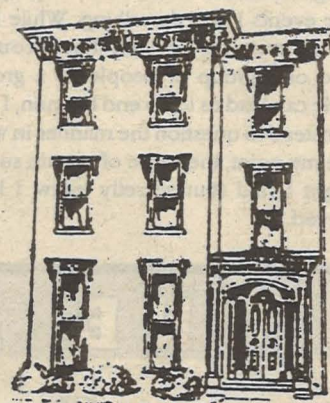


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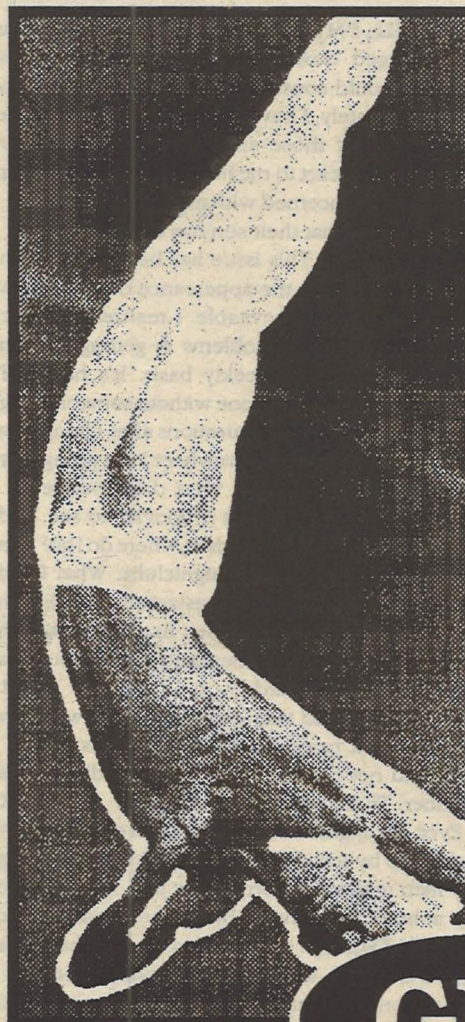
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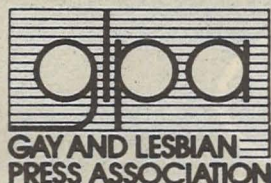
And Drink Specials



LETTERS

We welcome your letters. Submissions over
500 words will be considered for publication in the
Soapbox space. Letters must be signed and include the
writer's address and phone for verification. Names will
be withheld on request. We reserve the right to edit
for length and clarity. No defamatory material
will be published. All letters become the sole property
of Pyramid Light & Power and will be assumed intended
for publication unless otherwise explicitly stated.

Dare is an institutional member of the
Gay and Lesbian Press Association.



BETWEEN THE LINES

An unapologetic apology

by **CAROLE CUNNINGHAM**
Staff Writer

THE KIND OF WRITING called apologetic has sadly lost its popularity. As a form of writing, the apology is somewhat different than what we are used to calling an apology. The apologies of Augustine or Montaigne are less concerned with repenting or withdrawing an argument than with explaining the argument or the writer's personal investment in the argument. While the need for apologies may have diminished with presumably superior modes of self-analysis, I need as a writer to give a written explanation of my work.

When I wrote a self-styled "analysis" of the rhetoric in Alix Dobkin's recent concert appearance, I realized while writing that my own self-righteousness seemed out of proportion to the events I was describing. While I don't wish to retract my position that encouraging hatred of a group of people as a group of people can lead us to no end but ruin, I would like instead to question the manner in which I made my point, the sense of certain success I thought I had (but secretly knew I hadn't) achieved.

My reluctance to soften or temper my own rhetoric in the Dobkin piece was in one sense a conscious attempt to elicit a response—from readers, from friends, from those I was certain would disagree with me and call me to the carpet. But in the two weeks since the piece was published, I have received nothing but glowing support from both men and women for the position I took and the way I expressed that position. Nearly every remark of approbation I received was marked by the same sort of self-satisfaction I felt myself when I wrote the piece. And as a friend of mine seldom given to literary analysis told me this week, whenever she feels self-satisfied after reading something, whenever she feels everything has been said that needs to be said on a given subject, she knows there is reason to be suspicious—suspicious of the writing and of herself.

The problems with the Alix Dobkin piece are fairly simple and apparent. The silence I have encountered while waiting for someone to criticize the piece is the product of my own rhetorical strategies. I left readers of the article

only two options: they could either agree with me or they could be Nazis. The rhetoric I used to attack Dobkin was as over-charged and ill-advised as her own; it left no place for dissent, disagreement or discussion. And that is its own kind of violence.

Moreover, the heat of my words told me later something equally important, and the very thing I hoped someone would say to me: that there was hatred in what I was saying. Not hatred of Alix Dobkin, but of myself. In my attempt to shatter another's words and position I could see one disturbing part of my own

• continued on page 4

BOX 40422

Say no to hate

Dear Dare,

Kudos to Carole Cunningham for her eloquent essay "Manhating and the violence of words." I did not attend the Alix Dobkin concert and after hearing the reactions of others and noting Ms. Cunningham's observations, I'm glad I saved the eight bucks.

The inconsistencies between the interview with Ms. Dobkin on the previous page and her utterances on stage were apparently many at best. I have a big problem with people who bite the hands of those who attempt and help to feed them. Isn't it ironic that men, the same group she condemns and holds responsible for the world's evils, she needs in order to "make a living." Ms. Dobkin thinks and teaches that it is acceptable to take their support on one hand, then trash them on stage the next, the very same group that includes Bob Dylan and Kris Kristofferson who, as she mentioned in her interview, assisted her onto that stage in the first place. Dobkin's misuse and abuse of men in this fashion is no better than the centuries of their misuse and abuse of us. There is no justification.

To be intolerant of any group of people is ignorant and immature. We need all people, of all likes and dislikes, in order to survive. An example of this is the positive and encouraging publicity that Ms. Dobkin received prior to and subsequent to her performance through this newspaper and through T-GALA [the Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance]. Both are organizations that consist of men. While Ms. Dobkin is accurate about the violence that exists in some men, she must admit at the same time, the kindness that exists in others. The denial of this fact is doing a serious dis-service to our children. She still denies boy-children to be included in her audience. For this I am grateful. I only wish the same would be accorded girl-children as well for I do not want either to be a witness to Ms. Dobkin's rhetoric of hate.

So take heart, Ms. Cunningham and the others in the audience who also found themselves uncomfortable. If us lesbians, one-tenth of the earth's female population, aren't enabling her to make her rent payments, then her message isn't getting through after all.

LAURA TEK
Nashville

ONE IN TEEN

Church and date

by **JASON ANDERSON**
Contributing Writer

HII WELL, I'M BACK again. As usual, I have been bogged down with work. Today, I thought I could constructively release a little frustration. Lately, I have been thinking about the attitudes of those around me and how people would react to me having a boyfriend. Mostly, I am concerned with my family's reaction to the fact that their son has a boyfriend.

Boyfriend first. This issue has become important to me since the appearance of a boyfriend in my life is inevitable. I realized that there would be real problems in getting together on a regular weekly basis. It's hard enough to talk on the phone without someone listening in or asking 20 questions after I hang up. Then, I have to explain where I am going without giving away that it's a date. Before long, I'm going to run out of movies to see. Then once I do get out on a date, where do I go? I'm too young for bars or nightclubs. What I figured I'd do is go to a restaurant that is somewhat romantic and quiet. In this atmosphere, we could enjoy a meal and talk without fear of being overheard.

I figured I could take a guy to dinner with little fear of it being discovered that this is a date, and not just two friends eating dinner together. That's pretty much the limit.

Even the slightest sign of affection could be picked up by some. While many lesbians and gay men might not worry about this, I do still live at home and have to be careful in dating.

THEN THERE'S the question about what I would do if we wanted to be alone. I don't mean alone so that we can engage in sex. I mean alone so that we could talk and maybe kiss or just be close without being watched, or taking a chance on the appearance of a police officer. Unfortunately, I haven't found a good

answer to this problem other than leaving home and getting my own place to live. At this point, that option is not a very good one. Some teens out there might have parents who are understanding and accepting of same-sex dating.

They're lucky.

As for the other issue, what about the attitudes of those around me toward my sexuality? Mostly, I mean the other members of my church youth group. We're now doing a series of sex education programs for our meetings. The facilitators of last week's meeting suggested that we discuss homosexuality next week. The immediate reaction of most of the youth was very negative.

ONE GUY INSTANTLY said, "Oh, no, we don't want to do that." Another said, "We could tell gay jokes for an hour." While one person did say that it would be an acceptable topic for him, the group decided not to talk about homosexuality. Instead, we are going to talk about sexuality. This reaction really upset me. I find it hard to be a part of a group of people who I know do not believe in what I am.

So, I have considered leaving my church and joining MCC [Nashville Metropolitan Community Church]. But there's a problem with this. Should I come right out and tell the group why I am leaving, should I lie about why or should I just disappear? All three choices will create family problems and criticism by many at my church.

Anyway, I've vented my frustration for you to read. Writing it down has made me feel better, but the problems are still there. Once I graduate high school in May (and I can't wait!) I can handle these situations with fewer constraints from school, church or family. •

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• **PLEASE NOTICE** our new phone number: 615-327-DARE [327-3273]. Our mailing address is still the same: Box 40422, Nashville, TN 37204-0422.

• Help fight proposed new homophobic changes in the law. Donate to, volunteer for, Advance, the political action committee of the Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance. Advance, Box 24181, Nashville, TN 37202.

• Dare classifieds work! Those two vacuum cleaners got sucked right up.

• Catch our new look! Watch GCN/Nashville Tuesdays at 9pm, Saturdays at 8pm. On Nashville's Cable 35.

• **LONG HOURS. HARD WORK. NO PAY.** Dare is accepting applications from writers. Learn community-oriented journalism, and be one of the best. Dare, Box 40422, Nashville, 37204 or phone 615-292-9623.

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"Wouldn't it be great if you could only get AIDS from giving money to television preachers?"

— **Comedian Elayne Boosler**

"What a pleasant surprise to see a mainstream magazine feature an article about Southern gays in a positive and unbiased light! As the proud parent of a young gay, I am delighted that my child now has role models in our region demonstrating high standards of success and creativity."

— **Joyce Rankin, South Atlantic Regional Director of P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) in a letter to the editor of Southern Magazine.**

"Mr. Barnes fears that not discriminating against sexual preference will formally justify sin. Question here. Does the nondiscrimination code attempt to justify race, sex, or color? Heavens, no! What's the use of justifying something that doesn't ask for or need justification? What a ludicrous thing to imply! The lexical definition of nondiscrimination is 'failure to make a distinction in favor of or against a person or thing on the basis of prejudice.'"

"This code simply acknowledges that these differences do exist and that they have no bearing upon a person's worth or eligibility. Vive la difference! Get a grip, John, and start worrying about things that matter, like the possibility that fearful people like you constitute the majority. It's enough to keep me awake at night."

— **Claire McLaughlin Ferguson, in a letter to the editor of the Vanderbilt Hustler, on the continuing controversy over efforts to add sexual orientation to the school's antidiscrimination policy.**

"This is a letter of admonishment to Mr. Barnes' Bible-thumping fundamentalism contained in the March 31 issue. Mr. Barnes, I hope you pay as much attention to your classes as you do to your Bible."

"Homosexuality, 'unrighteous' or not, has been practiced, as acknowledged by you, since ancient times...The Bible should not be interpreted literally and those who do so should be reminded of the adolescent 'eye for an eye' mentality expressed in the Old Testament. Under your system of sin should thieves lose the hands they stole with? Also, since you seem to be quite eloquent listing those 'unrighteous according [to] the law of God,' please give the good people of Vanderbilt your knowledge of salvation."

"If you are free from sin, you may cast the first stone, or so the saying goes..."

"Hopefully, you are unique in your attitudes concerning a sexual preference clause in the discrimination code. There should not be a need for the clause, but currently, the code requires it."

— **Douglas M. Gibler, in a letter to the editor of the Vanderbilt Hustler.**

"I agree with Gore Vidal that acts, and not

people, are homosexual or heterosexual, and that an attack against 'homosexuals' is a socially mandated vent for natural human aggression and sexual insecurity."

"...It is a fact that members of the Vanderbilt community have homosexual orientations, and the overt and tacit discriminations against them need to cease if a truly open forum is to exist."

"Students with a homosexual orientation, especially undergraduates, often feel that they must hide their sexual preference or suffer violence and ridicule at the hands of other students. Professors with a homosexual orientation have a well-grounded fear that they may lose their job if the nature of their sexual preference were to become known. The fact that the proposed clause of non-discrimination against homosexuals has become such a major issue at Vanderbilt shows the extent of the discrimination of humans by other humans and defines the issue as a political one."

"...This enquiry into socially mandated injustice requires much further exploration."

— **Adam Wallas, in a letter to the editor of the Vanderbilt Hustler.**

"The irony is Nancy's best friends are gay and their son, Ron Reagan, is gay. The essence is they sold their son down the river. Ron Reagan could have been the biggest hero in the world if he had

had the courage to come forth and say he was gay, to shame or encourage his parents to do something about the epidemic. And because he didn't more of us are dead."

— **The Normal Heart author Larry Kramer, founder of both Gay Men's Health Crisis and the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), on the Reagan administration's response to the AIDS crisis.**

"For the thousands afflicted and those who care, AIDS is a medical crisis, not an issue of sexual preference. There is a stark difference between activism on behalf of AIDS victims and base self-promotion. With his thoughtless, pointless remarks, Mr. Kramer has apparently chosen the latter."

— **Ron Reagan Jr., in response to Kramer's remarks.**

"The whole series is well-intended in trying to draw attention to a scourge in a way that makes people talk about it. But a humor situation in a hospital room with a person with a fatal disease? I don't think it works."

— **David Hall, editor of the Bergen County, New Jersey, Record, on cartoonist Garry Trudeau's treatment of AIDS in his syndicated strip "Doonesbury." The strips dealing with AIDS were pulled from three newspapers, including the Record.**

"I feel ashamed I couldn't find a way to get at it earlier. I had a hard time finding the right approach."

— **"Doonesbury" cartoonist Garry Trudeau, on his strips dealing with AIDS.**

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