

# The Sentinel

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## INSIDE

Counselors Discuss Runaways... Page 2  
Congressional Testimony... Page 5  
Alexander: Art & Politics... Page 6

## Manslaughter Plea In Larkin Slaying

Henry Luna pleaded guilty on February 5 to one charge of voluntary manslaughter in the November 21 slaying of Michael Joseph Elliot on Larkin Street. He also pleaded guilty to two charges of assault with a deadly weapon for his knife attacks on two other men earlier that night.

## Opel Trial; Still No Date

The state Supreme Court's February 8 decision that Maurice Keenan is entitled to two attorneys to defend him at taxpayer's expense will not result in his prompt trial for the July, 1979 slaying of erotic-art dealer Robert Opel, an assistant district attorney noted. Albert Murray said that "issues that relate to the examination of evidence" are still before the state's Court of Appeal and Supreme Court.

Murray also said that the San Francisco district attorney's office was "discussing with the state attorney general's office, a petition for re-hearing" the February 8 decision. They have up to 30 days to make such a request.

In short, Murray concluded, "the trials are not now near."

Keenan is charged with Opel's slaying and six other felonies. He has made three escape attempts since his arrest for the Opel killing. In his first escape, Keenan was at large for 19 days before being re-captured in Miami, Florida.

A conviction for second-degree murder with use of the knife would have resulted in a 16-years-to-life sentence for Luna. A first-degree-murder conviction would have landed him 26 years to life. The minimum time served would have been, respectively, 10 years, eight months, and 17 years, four months.

Initial reports indicated that Luna, 26, and Richard Weston, 29, spent several hours taunting and harassing passers-by with anti-gay and anti-white epithets before the violent attacks. On December 19, Municipal Court Judge Roy Wonder dismissed charges against Weston due to insufficient evidence.

Smith and D.A.'s investigator Ron Huberman said the D.A. agreed to the reduction of the charge from murder to manslaughter for several reasons. "We had lots of circumstantial evidence, but nothing direct," Huberman summarized.

Smith and Huberman said their best witness saw Luna push his victim into the alley, but did not actually see the slaying. Witnesses did observe the earlier, non-lethal, assaults, however.

Smith said Luna had a blood alcohol level of 19% several hours after the attacks. That is nearly twice the legal, presumptive limit of .10% for intoxication. S.B. 54, the California law which abolishes intoxication as a defense did not go into effect until January 1, and Luna would have been able to argue "diminished capacity," Smith pointed out.

Huberman also noted that since it was Saturday night, most of the D.A.'s witnesses had themselves been drinking, and their testimony would have been subject to impeachment. "All in all," Huberman concluded, "we decided to go with a surety rather than risk having it all thrown out."



HEPHAESTION, young lover of ALEXANDER THE GREAT. The conqueror, incidentally related, was never defeated but by this man's thighs. Steven Saylor discusses the "Search for Alexander" exhibit and the homophobic politics of its spinoffs, on Page 6.

## Agnos, Gayer Square Off On Violence Issue

Democratic Assemblymember Art Agnos' refusal to introduce a piece of legislation to deter anti-gay violence has led activist Richard Gayer to "conclude that only a gay legislator can truly be trusted to protect the rights of his or her constituents." Gayer has vowed "maximum publicity" against Agnos.

Agnos has responded that he is "proud" of his "record of work with the lesbian and gay communities of California" and does "not intend to respond to threats."

On January 1, Gayer wrote to Agnos asking him to introduce a bill to add sexual orientation to Section 51.7 of the state's civil code. The code provides a minimum \$10,000 award for plaintiffs who successfully prove that the defendant's violent attack was motivated by prejudice.

Agnos asked his administrative assistant, Cleve Jones, and Gayer to meet to discuss the proposal. Jones said they met on January 20.

(Continued on back page.)

## Pickets Support Fired Belgian Teacher

by David Lester

A dozen lesbian and gay activists picketed in San Francisco February 16, to lend their support to the hunger strike of a Belgian teacher who claims she was fired because she is a lesbian. S.F. Gay Teachers Coalition organized the protest.

The picketing in front of Sabena Belgian World Airlines' Post Street office was timed to coincide with the U.S. visit of Belgian Premier Wilfried Martens. Martens visited Washington from February 16 to 18 to talk with President Reagan.

Eliane Morrisens began her hunger strike January 18, to persuade her superiors to make some judgment in her year-old case, so she can either have her job back or pursue appeals, said Françoise Morin, a San Francisco sex therapist who knows Morrisens.

Morrisens' dismissal came three months after her October, 1980, appearance on a Belgian television panel show. The topic was homosexuality and Morrisens said on the show she had been denied a promotion because she was a lesbian, Morin said.

"To be a woman was a problem; to be a lesbian was a second one,"

## Deputy Mayor's Son Implicated In Fag-Bashing Incident

by Randy Alfréd

The S.F. district attorney's office has charged Timothy Roff, 21, with three counts of misdemeanor battery in a January 25 gay-bashing incident. Roff is the son of Deputy Mayor Hadley Roff.

Assistant D.A. Ken Cady confirmed he is prosecuting the younger Roff and two associates for the post-midnight episode which took place on a J Church Muni bus after the Superbowl. The deputy mayor said his son has entered a plea of not guilty.

Andy Shallal, 26, an office manager, said he and a friend, Carl Stein, 23, a student and hotel cashier-accountant, boarded the outbound bus on Market Street, near Powell, and took seats in the middle of the bus. A few stops later, he said, three men and a woman got on.

The first man, Shallal reported, took a transfer from the driver, crumpled it, and threw it at Shallal, spitting, "Faggot!"

Stein said he advised Shallal to ignore the slur, but Shallal did not

want to let it go unchallenged.

Shallal said he picked up the transfer and walked to the back of the bus where the man and woman had taken seats. "Didn't you lose your transfer?" I asked him, and "What did you call me?"

"He replied, 'Nothing.' I was satisfied with 'nothing.' Halfway back to my seat, two other guys who'd gotten on blocked my path.

"I said, 'Get out of the way,'

Shallal continued. "Then one hit me on the side of the face. The girl was screaming. The other two also hit me. I was surrounded."

Stein said he came to Shallal's aid. Stein said someone kicked him very hard in the neck, and another passenger was also injured in the fracas.

Shallal said the bus driver drove on for a while before calling police. Once he police came to help, however, the radio came almost at once. At this point, according to Stein, the assailants tried to flee. "That's when we tried to prevent them from leaving."

(Continued on back page.)

## Toklas Club Honors Foster

by Jerome Szymczek

The Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club, the nation's oldest and largest gay Democratic club, will celebrate its tenth anniversary on Saturday, February 20, with a gala, \$50-a-plate, dinner at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The dinner will honor club founder Jim Foster.

Foster is now a special assistant to Chuck Manatt, chair of the Democratic National Committee. The Toklas club and the national committee will split the proceeds.

Dinner organizers expect many state and national Democratic luminaries and gay/lesbian movement organizers to attend. Party chair Manatt, four former or present U.S. senators (Cranston, Kennedy, Tunney, and McGovern), seven U.S. representatives, Governor Jerry Brown, and Mayors Feinstein (S.F.), Hayes (San Jose), Bradley (L.A.), and Eisenberg (Sacramento) are among the dinner's sponsors.

Foster says he and others founded the club in January 1972, with the hope of establishing some sort of gay representation within the California Democratic Council. "Rapid growth occurred during the McGovern campaign," Foster recounts, "and San Francisco was one of the three areas in the country that McGovern carried."

Foster addressed the 1972 Demo-

cratic National Convention, urging the adoption of a gay-rights plank in the party platform. That came to fruition eight years later, when the indefatigable San Francisco was a floor leader for Senator Kennedy's run for the nomination.

Foster speaks now of the founder's vision: "It was a combination of recognizing our own abilities and a desire to force the city to look at us as a viable community capable of making a contribution. In addition, we wanted to take on a certain responsibility for ourselves in regard to city politics."

Today, "although the Toklas Club gets the attention and respect it deserves from California legislators in Washington," Foster points out, that's still not true of the gay movement in general. "Gays are still perceived as powerless and incapable of making significant changes. If this were not so, more gay issues would be addressed, and more gay legislation passed. We would not be witnessing legislation like the Family Protection Act and the defeat of the gay-rights bill in New York City."

Foster has just completed an eight-city, national tour to raise money and support for the non-partisan Human Rights Political Action Committee.

For dinner information and reservations, call 861-4881.

Morin, who came to the United States from France 15 years ago and still travels frequently to Europe, said lesbians and gays in Belgium must be much more cautious than the Dutch to the north

or the French to the south, where legal and cultural reforms have made life much more comfortable. She said sex laws are stringent in Belgium, a nation where both pornography and gay magazines are illegal, and gay bars are all private membership clubs.

"It's not like San Francisco," Morin said. "When you leave a gay bar you cover your face with your hat or the collar of your coat and run as fast as you can. The police watch, who comes and goes."

"Sporadic protests throughout Europe, together with the hunger strike, have placed pressure on Morrisens' superiors to settle her case."

If the settlement is not in her favor, Morrisens may appeal to the *Conseil d'Etat*, the Belgian supreme court.

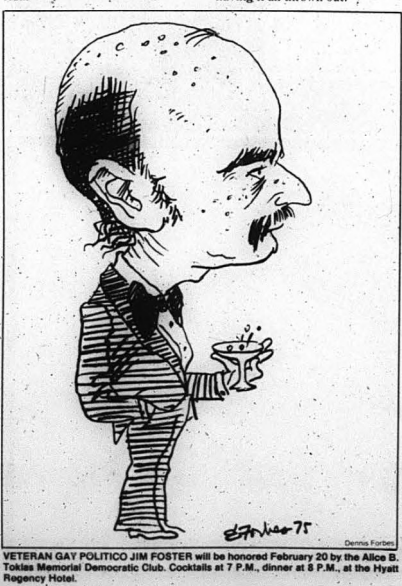
After a settlement there, Morrisens may appeal to *La Cour Européenne des Droits de l'homme*, the European human rights commission in Strasbourg, France.

"This commission recently took a stand in favor of an Irishman whose civil rights had been violated because he is gay, Morin said. The commission has only advisory powers, however."

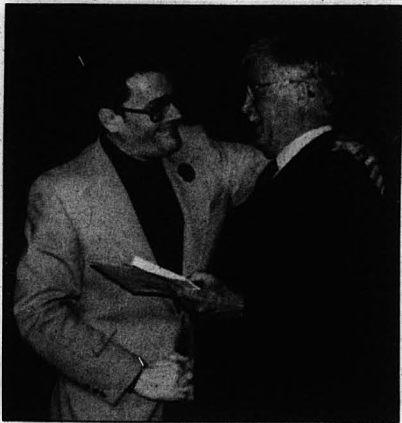
Hank Wilson of the San Francisco Gay Teachers Coalition said, "We're tremendously inspired by what she (Morrisens) is doing."

Hank Wilson and Del Martin were among a dozen activists who picketed the Sabena Belgian Airlines office on February 16, to express support for a Belgian lesbian fired by her regional school board.

Bobby Moore



VETERAN GAY POLITICO JIM FOSTER will be honored February 20 by the Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club. Cocktails at 7 P.M., dinner at 8 P.M., at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.



SUPERVISOR HARRY BRITT (l.) presented the Harvey Milk Human Rights Award to trial attorney GORDON ARMSTRONG (r.) of the Public Defender's office, at the Cable Car Awards, on February 7.

## Fire Dept. Revives Panel

by D.B. Kreitzberg  
Deputy Fire Chief Emmet Condon is scheduling a meeting of the Gay Community Fire Safety Task Force for early March. The panel has not met in more than three years.

On December 7, 1981, a smaller, steering committee of the task force resurrected a three-year-old proposal that would affect both new and existing bathhouses. The proposal would require the installation of smoke detectors in existing facilities and automatic sprinkler systems and emergency lighting in new facilities, according to Condon.

The steering committee has sent the proposal to Robert Levy, chief of the city's Bureau of Building Inspection. It also suggested that that bureau and the fire department's own Bureau of Fire Prevention jointly draft the proposed ordinance.

Condon said he expects Levy's reply by March 1, and he will then call a meeting of the full task

force, including bathhouse owners, to work out final details. The task force and the two bureaus would then submit the proposal to the Board of Supervisors.

John Schmidt, Frank Fitch, Larry Epinette, Phyllis Lyon, and George Banda comprise the gay-community representation on the steering committee. Banda is business manager of *The Sentinel*. He and Lyon were the only representatives present on December 7.

What becomes of gay and lesbian runaway youth after they arrive in the big city was discussed last weekend by the Gay Lifestyle Education Committee of the California Personnel and Guidance Association (CPGA) at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Two other panels at the

## Guidance Convention Discusses Runaways

by Dion B. Sanders

Sixteen-year-old Tommy knew he was gay. He knew that from the time he was ten years old, and he made no real attempt to hide it. Everyone at his school knew that Tommy was not attracted to girls, despite pressure from his male peers to "score" with a girl. They could not accept the idea that Tommy was a "fruit" or a "queer."

Thus, when Tommy finally decided not to hide his homosexuality any more — he had a crush on his best friend, Billy — he was ostracized unmercifully not only by his peers, but by his teachers as well.

Inevitably, Tommy's parents were informed about their "labeled" son, and the confrontation that ensued between parents and child made Tommy decide to split town.

Tommy already knew about the gay communities in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York, but didn't know a soul in any of those cities. Tommy made up his mind, however, that he couldn't take the rabid homophobia of his hometown, and he headed for San Francisco.

Tommy's story is only one of thousands of stories of gay and lesbian youth that either run away from or are kicked out of their homes and migrate to large cities each year, often unaware of the pitfalls that face them once they arrive at their destinations.

What becomes of gay and lesbian runaway youth after they arrive in the big city was discussed last weekend by the Gay Lifestyle Education Committee of the California Personnel and Guidance Association (CPGA) at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Two other panels at the

CPGA convention also discussed gay issues.

Paul Gibson, clinical affairs director at Huckleberry House in San Francisco, told panelists that gay and lesbian runaway youth have one major problem that other runaways don't have. "They often have no family support. In fact, they are told to leave the house."

Many such runaways arrive in San Francisco with the feeling that "they are the only ones (suffering harassment), leading to a high incidence of suicides."

Gibson said that of the 500 to 600 youths that Huckleberry counsels each year, "about 20 to 25 percent identify themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual." Seventy-three percent of their clients, he said, "have either contemplated or attempted suicide."

Committee chair William Upton described as inaccurate press reports on a study by the federal department of Health and Human Services that found that male adolescent prostitution is on the upswing as a result of the emergence of openly gay communities in the larger cities.

Russell Zellers, director of youth services at Hospitality House, told conferees that, contrary to media reports of male prostitutes enjoying their work, "the streets are a mixed bag of pleasure and pain. The fast life is marked not only by pleasure and riches, but also by fear, drugs, ripoffs and violence. You never know when you may get a crazed, sadistic customer."

Panelists agreed that young people need positive gay and lesbian role models, and in some

cases, gay families to provide the security and warmth that was absent in their own families.

Marny Hall, an associate staff member of the Human Sexuality Program at the University of California Medical Center, said that the "unmentionability of homosexuality often makes communication with parents impossible."

Hall added that young people are constantly bombarded with negative images of homosexuals and homosexuality. She also noted a double standard on homophobia, citing a survey that showed 70 percent of teenage boys but only 30 percent of teenage girls oppose homosexuality.

Steve Morin, a private psychologist told panelists that while watching the movie *Making Love* in San Bruno, he observed "outright hissing, booing and catcalls" by the predominantly straight audience during the male-male kissing scene.

"Homophobia is a very powerful force to be reckoned with," Morin said. "I was the only person in the theater who applauded the scene — and got hostile glares from many in the audience."

For Third World gays and lesbians, the coming-out process is complicated by cultural conflicts.

Dr. Fernando Gutierrez, a counseling psychologist at the University of San Francisco, noted that Latino culture is dominated by *machismo* or the need to be hyper-masculine, and the church, which holds the most important position in the lives of most Latinos.

Dr. Jose Gutierrez (no relation), a staff psychologist at UCSF,

warned conferees that words are often abused and misunderstood when used in a cross-culture context. While *machismo* has negative connotations in Anglo culture, it is a "very positive force in Latino culture, for it signifies the ability of the man to be the provider for his family."

Even gay and lesbian Latinos, Jose Gutierrez said, "consider themselves Latinos first, and gays and lesbians second, unlike their Anglo counterparts."

Most gay Latinos, according to Gutierrez, are androgynous — that is, they equally endorse masculine and feminine attributes.

For Latinos, homophobia is more severe, he added, partly because of the militancy of straight Latino men to preserve the traditional sex roles of men and women in the face of the feminist movement.

Throughout the session, those in attendance asked why there was so little information available on counseling lesbian clients, where lesbian runaways go, and why there was no information on the experiences of lesbian Latinos.

The panelists acknowledged that little such research had been done, partly because of the low visibility of lesbians, compared to the high visibility of gay men.

The CPGA organized the Gay Lifestyle Education Committee in 1977 to assist rehabilitation counselors, mental health counselors, school counselors, and educators in dealing with clients who are gay or lesbian and have gay-related concerns. It is the only openly gay and lesbian counselors' organization in the United States.

## GGBA Offers Tax Advice

The Golden Gate Business Association will present a free seminar on how the new tax laws affect you and your business on Thursday, February 25. The meeting, titled "Taxes '82," is open to both members and non-members. The panel includes financial planner John Darragh, Attorney Scott Thomas, C.P.A., and representatives of GGBA member firms in the fields of bookkeeping and

accounting.

The Swedish-American Hall at 2174 Market Street (near the Balcony) is the location. No-host cocktails begin at 7 P.M. The seminar starts at 8 P.M. and will be followed by a question-and-answer period.

The GGBA says constant changes in the tax laws make this "the time to get into a better tax position."

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# GAY CANCER JOURNAL

## The Herpes Viruses

By Bobbi Campbell, R.N.  
This is the first in a two part series on the viruses that make up the Herpes family. This column will discuss Herpes simplex I and II (cold sores and genital herpes), Herpes zoster (shingles), and Epstein-Barr virus (infectious mononucleosis).

In the next issue, I'll cover the last, and possibly most significant Herpes: cytomegalovirus.

### Herpes-yeuck.

Of all human viruses, Herpes viruses are among the nastiest. Their effects range from a mild flu to excruciating sores to cancer.

All are difficult to control. After an initial infection, the virus may remain latent, only to be re-activated years later.

There is no cure at this time, and no vaccine is available to prevent infection. Current medical management is aimed only at relieving the patient's symptoms.

Herpes viruses are ubiquitous. Nearly everyone has had at least one such infection. I have the dubious distinction of having had all five infections at one time or another. Yeuck, again.

These viruses are of particular interest for two reasons. First, they are widespread in the gay male community, partly because they are spread by close human contact. Second, they are particularly dangerous to people whose immune systems are compromised. What's more, they themselves are immuno-suppressive. Medical researchers who are investigating the current rash of gay cancer and gay pneumonia suspect that these illnesses may be linked somehow

to Herpes virus infections.

Let's take a general look at viruses. Unlike other germs, such as bacteria, amoebas, or protozoa, viruses are not composed of cells. Instead, a double strand of DNA — the stuff that genes are made of — is surrounded by a protein coat.

That's it. Because viruses do not breathe, eat, produce wastes, or reproduce in the usual sense, many biologists argue that they are not even alive.

How, then, do they work? Viruses simply "hijack" host cells, forcing them to reproduce the viral DNA, thus making lots of new viruses. The new viruses are free to travel about and invade new cells.

Your body makes a substance called interferon, which offers healthy cells some protection from invasion. No medicine can kill viruses without killing the host cells. Instead, you must wait for your immune system to conquer the invader.

That's why we cannot cure the common cold, which is caused by viruses. You can take medication to relieve your headache, open your sinuses, reduce your mucus production, or lessen your cough, but you'll still have a cold. Antibiotics kill bacteria but not viruses. So, they're of no use, either.

Herpes viruses present an additional problem. After you control an initial infection, the virus becomes dormant in nerve or lymph tissue. It never leaves the body. Months or years later, stress, trauma, infection, or immuno-suppression re-activates the virus. It spreads from its resting place to the skin, where new sores appear. Such secondary infections, if they

occur, are usually milder than the initial disease.

**Herpes Simplex Virus I (HSV I)**  
HSV I usually causes cold sores or fever blisters on the mouth or around the eyes. As many as 90% of Americans have had this infection. Typically, we acquire it in childhood, from a kiss by a well-meaning but infected friend or relative.

### Herpes Simplex Virus II (HSV II)

HSV II causes painful sores on the genitals, or near the anus. It is the second most common venereal disease in the United States today. It is usually transmitted during sexual activity.

A pregnant woman with HSV II can transmit the virus to her baby during birth. Doctors often perform Caesarean sections to prevent this.

### Varicella-Zoster Virus (VZ)

The virus that causes chicken pox (varicella) in children may reactivate in adulthood to cause Herpes zoster. Zoster, or shingles, is usually a disease of people in their fifties or sixties. Lately, immuno-suppressed gay men are developing it as well.

A year ago — on Valentine's Day, no less! — I noticed that my forehead was tingling. The next day, I had a splitting headache and small bumps on my forehead. Within a week, I was hospitalized with raw, open lesions and the most painful and disfiguring illness I'd ever had.

My doctors could treat the symptoms: they gave me medicines to reduce the swelling, pain, and itching. Nothing could cure the disease itself, and I was miserable for months. I still have headaches, blurred vision, and some facial scarring.

When I heard that Randy

Johnson, a well-known gay figure, has a severe case of zoster, I called him to commiserate. He said, "No one else can know how awful this is, how much it hurts, how much it itches. My roommates tell me not to scratch, but I can't help it."

I knew how Randy felt. When I couldn't leave my scabs alone, my doctors offered to put mittens on me, as though that would help.

My lover made warning noises whenever I got near my zoster. So, I would pretend to be parting my hair, and then I'd home in for a good scratch.

HSV I, HSV II, and VZ can cause serious complications. If the virus gets into the eye, it can infect the cornea — this did in fact happen to me. I suffered temporary double vision and permanent reddening of the eye, but it can cause blindness.

Worse, the herpes can travel along nerve roots to the brain and cause encephalitis, a brain infection with a 70% death rate. I was lucky: it didn't happen to me — but it almost did.

### Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV)

EBV causes infectious mononucleosis. The virus lodges in the nose and throat and causes an unpleasant respiratory infection. It is transmitted by kissing. Dormant EBV remains in the lymph glands.

Recently, researchers discovered the EBV was associated with Burkitt's Lymphoma, a cancer of the lymph glands.

This association is clinically significant. It is the clearest connection yet between a-virus and a human cancer. If some cancers can be clearly shown to be the result of viral infections, the war on cancer could take a new direction. Perhaps an anti-viral, anti-cancer vaccine could be developed.

Next column: Cytomegalovirus. Does it cause gay cancer?



THE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE defeated the GAY MEN'S CHORUS, 31-19, in a February 12 basketball game at Kezar Pavilion to benefit the Gay Athletic (Olympic?) Games.

## War on Clap Advances

Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council has awarded a grant to Dr. John Davies to isolate the gene which enables gonorrhea germs to alter their protein coating. If he is successful, a gonorrhea-preventing vaccine could be on the market in three or four years, Campaign reported recently.

Back in the U.S., Paul Wiesner, M.D., chief of venereal disease control at the national Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, reports that the University of Pittsburgh's Dr. Charles Brinton is now testing his anti-clap vaccine on human volunteers. An earlier test with a different strain of bacteria offered "good protection," but field tests have not begun. Wiesner says that marketing of the vaccine is

not "imminent."

In a related matter, the Food and Drug Administration has approved piperacillin, a new antibiotic tested to be effective against gonorrhea, the resistant strain of gonorrhea. It must be administered intravenously and will not be available in pill form, according to wire service reports.

## CUAV Offers Gas Training

Community United Against Violence, in cooperation with the Community College District, will present a class on the legalities of using mace and other personal tear-gas weapons. The class will include tips on street safety and self defense, CUAV announced.

The class will be held at 117 Diamond Street, two blocks west of Castro, between 18th and 19th Streets, at the Most Holy Redeemer School. The class will begin promptly at 10 A.M. on Saturday, February 27.

The class is free to anyone who wants to take it. After the class, participants may purchase a California permit to carry tear-gas weapons. The permit fee is only \$1.35. "Tear-gas weapons" will also be available for purchase for less than \$10.

Call 864-8347 to register ahead of time.

## CRIR to Hear Maureen Reagan

U.S. Senate candidate Maureen Reagan will speak at the next meeting of Concerned Republicans for Individual Rights, on Wednesday, February 24, at 5:30 P.M., on the third floor of Sutter's Mill, 30 Kearney Street in the financial district. The meeting is free and open to the public.

CRIR has invited the other six candidates for the Republican Senate nomination. At press time, only Reagan had accepted the invitation.

### CORRECTION

On February 4, *The Sentinel* reported incorrectly that Mark Brown was former commissioner of both the Gay Softball League and the Community Softball League. Brown, in fact, was commissioner only of the GSL.

*The Sentinel* regrets the error.

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# HEAD SPACE

Cruising: Make It What You Want

by Jim Boland, Ph.D. & Allan Sable, Ph.D.

Dear Head Space,

Your column on the shy fox was a bunch of crap! How dare you give these good-looking creeps any more power than they already have! How about us other men who get treated like shits by these mindless heartless pretty-boys, who the only thing they want in the world is to have others fall dead in their tracks?

How about us poor "toads" who are just average looking and would like a piece of pretty-boy ass or a lick of pretty-boy cock once in a while?

Poor Toad

Dear Head Space,

I enjoyed your column on the shy fox very much and hope that you can help me with a problem I have regarding foxes. I am not a fox myself, but like everybody else I'm attracted to them.

When I see a man that I'm attracted to I panic. He doesn't even have to be that much of a fox, as long as I am attracted to him I get really scared. Sometimes I just flee, leave the bar or whatever without even talking to him. Or if I do go up to an attractive man, I get all tongue-tied and make a jerk of myself.

How can I stop getting so afraid so that I can cruise more naturally?

Jerk

Dear Toad/Jerk,

We have selected your two letters out of the many that we have received regarding our shy fox column of several weeks ago. Some of these letters were from shy foxes themselves, thanking us for the understanding we have shown them. But many were from men such as yourselves who expressed a great deal of pain arising from bad experiences with good-looking men in the cruising scene.

Frankly, we were amazed at the extent and depth of the response to this column. It received more response than any column we have written in almost two years, and indicated that the cruising scene is the source of an almost incredible amount of pain for gay men.

We want to use this column to help the many men who experience pain because they are not super good-looking. This pain can take many forms, ranging from

the anger and resentment you state so very well, dear Toad, to the fear and intimidation you show in your letter, dear Jerk.

You both express what virtually every non-good-looking man who wrote us expressed: feelings of powerlessness, frustration and low self-esteem. All of these feelings are the natural and understandable outcome of participating in the ruthlessly competitive cruising scene.

The gay (and straight) cruising scene operates like any free-market system. Those with the necessary resource (chiefly looks) get what they want. Those without them don't. And like any free-market system, the human cost to those who participate is very great, whether they are "winners" or "losers."

Over time, the deprivation, hurt and rage of the losers often become internalized into feelings of low self-esteem. As both of you have discovered, anger, frustration and low self-esteem only render you less powerful and less attractive, leading to more hurt and pain, and an even lower self-image.

Although it is impossible for an individual to eliminate this lookist system that causes everyone so much pain, it is possible for people to minimize its effects. For it is the degree to which one puts looks at the center of his relationship to himself and to others that a person becomes vulnerable to it.

Now, we are by no means saying that gay men should ignore their looks or other men's looks. It helps greatly to be realistic: if you really are what most men would consider an extremely unattractive man physically, then going after the one live centerfold in the bar probably is only going to result in rejection.

For one thing, attractiveness is only one component in sexuality. If one truly wants to cruise for the hottest men, it is important not just to consider the shape of a prospective partner's face, chest, cock, ass. The contours of his brain, heart and soul are equally, if not more, important. As any sex therapist can tell you, some of the hottest looking men are total duds sexually. And in many an average looking body burns a sexual fire



that would light up the darkest night — fabulously!

So if you aren't particularly good looking, one thing you can do is get in touch with your own sexual fire. If you know, accept and express your sexual feelings, you will send out vibes that could have many a fox feeding out of your hand, or wherever.

Also, it's important for you to test our observation that looks are only one component of sexuality. Next time you are in a bar or bath or wherever, notice the hottest man, then the next hottest, and the next, down to about the fifth or sixth hottest.

Focus on this man. Try to get in touch more and more with what is sexy about him. Get more and more in touch with your sexual attraction to him. And more. And more. When you can't stand it any more, go up to him... and take him home for a fabulous time!

We can almost guarantee that this focusing of your sexual energy will lead to a good time, as well as teach you something important about looks and looksism: they don't have to matter that much. Incidentally, if Mr. 5 or 6 turns your down — which he probably won't since he'll be so turned on by your vibes — choose Mr. 7 or 8 and go after him.

What we have said so far relates mostly to cruising. However, a major aspect of the anger

and pain you both feel is that if you are like most gay men, most of the connection you have to other gay men is through cruising. Thus a very great proportion of your gay self-image and your images of other gay men come from this narrow band of experience, in which you are at a relative disadvantage when compared to foxy men.

What would happen if your contacts also included being in gay political groups, the band or a chorus, a religious group or sports teams, etc.? Competitive cruising surely goes on in these contexts, too, but we bet that you would begin to see both yourself and other gay men in more complex ways and to value yourself and others on more than just looks.

You are not a toad or a jerk. You are a sensitive, needing, feeling, sexy man with all sorts of humanly valuable qualities. And so are many of those scary (and scared) foxes. And remember that in many fairy tales, toads have turned into princes!

Finally, we would like to recommend some reading that in our opinion should be essential for every gay man: Chapter 2 of *The Little Prince*, by Antoine de Saint Exupery. There a fox and a prince learn to love one another. "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."

# ON LIVE!

with Randy Alford

**UMBRELLAS/PARASOLS:** Organizers of the boycott of *Making Love* at theaters being struck by the janitors union have decided not to ask the Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Committee for support. Claude Wynn, a gay member of the janitors' union, told me they want broad backing but understand that not all gay people will agree.

"There are plenty of other organizations to support us," Wynn observed. "The parade committee is one organization that should be an umbrella for us all."

I agree. I think the L/GFDC should be involved in nothing other than planning and raising funds for Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day and associated events and projects, like its printed program, Gay Pride Week, and Gay History Month.

**BUBBLE, BUBBLE, DOYLE AND TROUBLE:** Golden Gate Bridge directors have resisted a concrete protective barrier down the middle of Doyle Drive, because it would remove the flexibility afforded by moveable lane markers. It would also save a few lives every year, but why let that impede the smooth flow of commute traffic to and from mighty, muddy Marin?

Well, we can have our cake and eat it, too. Why not install two concrete barriers, two lanes apart in the middle of the roadway? The center lanes would be used southbound in the morning; northbound in the afternoon, perhaps as express lanes for carpools.

**SUPED UP:** Board of Supervisors President John Molinari would lose that post to Quentin Kopp this June if voters approve San Francisco Charter amendment automatically making the top vote-getter in the citywide supervisorial elections the board president.

"It's not going to pass," Molinari remarked during the Cable Car Awards early this month.

"But if it does, the battle for first place this November will not be between Wendy Nelder and Richard Hongisto. Nelder barely came in eleventh in 1980. How's she going to go from last place to first? The battle will be between Hongisto and Lee Dolson, if you ask me."

**ADVISE AND CONSENT:** May-

or Dianne Feinstein has named Arthur Lazere to her new Advisory Committee on Economic Development. Lazere, a C.P.A., is past president of the Golden Gate Business Association and president-elect of the National Association of Business Councils. The new panel is supposed to keep the recession away from San Francisco by creating jobs and fighting unemployment.

**NET GAIN:** Elizabeth A. Lynn discusses her brilliant new novel, *The Sardonyx Net*, on *The Gay Life* on KSAN, 95 FM, on Sunday, February 21, at 11 P.M. *Net* is an intergalactic novel about power, slavery, drugs, and sex. In this society, women and men have equal rights and equal access to power, and same-sex and opposite-sex relationships are equally valued.

On February 28, Randy Shilts will discuss his Harvey Milk biography, *The Mayor of Castro Street*, on *The Gay Life*.

**HOTCAKES:** Shilts reports that the B. Dalton's bookstore in New York's Greenwich Village is selling *The Mayor of Castro Street* at the astonishing rate of ten copies an hour.

Here in San Francisco, one store alone, Noe Books and News, sold a few hundred copies in the first week since publication, according to owner Paul Boneberg.

**WHITE HOT:** Shilts' book is subtitled *The Life and Times of Harvey Milk*. Another writer is about to take a rather different approach to the city's recent political history.

Mike Weiss, who covered the Dan White trial for *Rolling Stone*, has begun research and interviews for his book on the political life and times of Dan White. Believe it.

**WHITE STUFF:** Check out the photo of Alexander the Great's lover, Hephaestion, on the front page of this issue, to see what snoring too much coke can do.

**MATTERS OF STATE:** Sacramento's Association of Lesbian and Gay State Employees reports that a similar group has formed in San Francisco and will meet again next month. Call Joe at 829-1872 for details.

## What bar would you take your parents to?

Asked in Hayes Valley.

Photos: Bobby Moske



Will, self-employed, Sunset.

Since I don't go to bars anymore, I'm not sure I'd take them to one. They might like a nice place for brunch, but I don't think I'd take them to bars on Castro Street.



Jack, delivery person, Mint Hill.

To a bar that is also a restaurant, perhaps Sutter's Mill, because I don't think my parents could deal with the affectional demonstrations that are going on in other bars.



Bob, electrician, Alamo Square.

Probably to a bar like the P.S. — a piano bar. They'd enjoy that.



Terri, grocery employee, Glen Park.

At 83 First Street there's a little bar called Alvin's. It's not a real party place, but it's nice and quiet.



Tory, bartender, Hayes Valley.

The P.S., because it's got a dash of elegance and hospitality that I haven't found in too many places.

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## COMMENT

## National Gay Rights Bill Needed

by Jean O'Leary

In my testimony this morning, I'd like to spend a few minutes telling you what this legislation would do, and, more importantly, what it will not do. I'd like to bring to your attention some of the cases of discrimination in employment that H.R. 1454 is designed to prevent, and give you a brief overview of the kinds of arguments that opponents have to this legislation.

First, let me tell you what H.R. 1454 is all about. I'll restrict myself to comments on employment for the purposes of today's hearings. Quite simply, the legislation now before this subcommittee would extend to lesbians and gay men the same kinds of protection that every other citizen in the United States takes for granted: the right to work secure in the knowledge that an irrelevant criterion such as sexual orientation will not be used as a consideration for hiring or continued employment.

Now, let me call your attention to what this bill will not do.

H.R. 1454 will not impose a quota system or affirmative action program for homosexuals, as opponents claim. Unlike discrimination against racial minorities and women, gay people can and often do hide their sexual orientation, so employment discrimination against gays usually occurs after they've been hired. It can take the form of firings, demotions, or a refusal to promote.

Therefore, gay people are in all parts of the workforce at both and affirmative action is present and unnecessary and undesirable.

H.R. 1454 will not affect marriage law in any way.

H.R. 1454 will not "condone" homosexuality. Legislation to protect gay people from discrimination would not endorse or approve homosexuality, any more than the inclusion of "religion" in civil rights legislation indicates support for any particular religion, religion in general, or even an absence of religion. The overwhelming support of religious leaders and organizations, many of whom continue to hold reservations on the lifestyle, speaks clearly to this point.

H.R. 1454 will not endanger the advances of other groups protected by civil rights laws. As I've said, most gay people are already employed and require only the assurance that their position will not be endangered by some irrelevant factor unrelated to job performance. So we are not discussing another division in the affirmative action "pie."

Ironically, some opponents who claim that advances made by racial minorities and women would be threatened by this legislation did not support those groups' quests for justice in the first place. And on the other hand, we have found very strong support from these groups precisely because they understand the devastating impact of discrimination.

Finally, let me lay to rest one major myth about the legislation. The passage of H.R. 1454 will not put gay people in the schools. There are gay and lesbian teachers in the schools across this country, and there will continue to be gay

teachers whether this legislation passes or not.

What will change is that these teachers will know that they will be judged by their individual performance and ability to do the job.

The issue of concern to parents is teacher misconduct, not sexual orientation. Teachers can be fired for misconduct, with or without this law. Many cities have adopted ordinances guaranteeing civil rights for gay people. These ordinances have caused no problems because they don't protect misconduct. And neither would the federal bill.

The passage of this legislation is long overdue. It is not designed to approve a lifestyle or create a special minority — but simply to prohibit arbitrary discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation.

The legislation before you seeks to address countless cases of actual discrimination and also to address the fear of millions of gay men and lesbians who are currently working in jobs — jobs which they could lose if their private lives were brought into question.

The myth persists that there is no discrimination against gay men and lesbians. There are good reasons for the existence of this myth. First, the invisibility of the group does not lend itself to easy survey or polling. And, second, most gay men and lesbians who suffer from such discrimination do not protest the injustice publicly.

There are two reasons that many follow this course — because in most parts of this nation there is no legal recourse, and because these individuals must pick up the pieces of their lives and find new jobs. They fear that visibility might endanger that possibility.

An in-depth study by Dr. Evelyn Hooker, who was Chair of the National Institute of Mental Health's Task Force on Homosexuality, showed that at least 16% of gays experienced employment difficulties related to their sexual orientation, and a full nine percent lost their jobs solely because of their sexual orientation.

San Francisco's experience with anti-discrimination laws might prove the point even better. Following enactment of a gay rights ordinance in 1978, the Human Rights Commission of San Francisco documented 180 cases of discrimination in 1977, a high of 330 cases in 1978, and 74 cases in 1979, the last year for which I have data. These are cases occurring per year, in one city alone. The magnitude of such cases nationwide must truly be staggering.

The academic world is generally regarded as among the least oppressive of workplaces for lesbians and gay men. Yet a special study by Joan Huber of the University of Illinois for the American Sociological Association found just this year that anti-gay discrimination stifles even academic freedoms.

Among other things, Ms. Huber found that 45% of sociology department chairmen said they could not hire a known homosexual. About 35% said they probably

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A three-alarm fire at the Ritch Street Baths killed one patron and injured two others. Four San Francisco firefighters also sustained injuries.

Fire department officials said only 12 persons were in the building when the blaze broke out. They estimated damage at

\$65,000. They later cited evidence of arson at the scene and ruled the death as homicide.

The facility re-opened that autumn as Club San Francisco.

Anita Bryant began her campaign to repeal the just-enacted, Dade County, Florida, gay-rights ordinance. Voters defeated the ordinance, 69%-31%, in June.

deprived of the abilities of fine, effective employees.

I challenge any opponent of this legislation to tell the millions of gays in the work force who live in fear of their jobs that discrimination is not a problem. It is, and it requires legislative action.

I challenge any opponent of this legislation to demonstrate that gays as a group are poor employees, that their sexuality impinges on their work skills, or that gays simply cannot perform jobs held by heterosexuals. Such is not the case, but only legislative action can provide security from those who would have us believe otherwise.

It is the ultimate unfairness that lesbians and gays participate as consumers in the products of the American marketplace, and yet are denied their place as contributors to that marketplace. No one questions their right to buy goods or services; only their ability to receive pay for goods and services is called to task.

H.R. 1454 deserves your consideration to provide the job security for gays that Americans expect as a way of life. To do otherwise denies a vital component of society the most basic of human rights — the right to earn a living.

Jean O'Leary is president of the National Association of Business Councils, executive director of Gay Rights Advocates, and a member of the board of Gay Rights National Lobby.

She presented this testimony to the House Sub-committee on Employment Opportunities on January 27.

## EDITORIAL

by W.E. Beardemphl

## How Does Your Garden Grow?

Dear Mr. Beardemphl:

I read your recent editorial, "Fruits Arise," with great interest. I would appreciate any further time you could give to help me start to look into the development of diversified, organic, truck gardening.

Sincerely,

John Grimes

For those who want to understand the dire implications, here are more facts about food production in this country and some leads to follow that may help you start a growing project of your own. We do not suggest the excessive storage of food advocated by doomsday predictors. What appears sensible are investments in your home and garden for producing, processing, and storing food that will help meet your needs.

Understand that farming is different from the horticulture that will be used for home, organic gardening. Horticulture produces far more food per unit of land area than farming. The United States loses almost six million acres of farmland a year.

Chemical pollution and acid rain cause grave concern about future productivity of much of our farm areas. Some farmers claim that overuse of strong fertilizers and pesticides is "burning up" their soil.

Present farm methods lose five or six bushels of topsoil for every bushel of corn, beans, or grain produced. Wheat farming loses ten bushels of soil for every bushel of wheat. Iowa has lost half of its topsoil in the last 80 years.

In sharp contrast to this "mining" of our farm resources, is the possibility of building soil and, consequently, food production through organic horticulture. Manures and compost can improve even marginal land to become productive for centuries. Organic methods of food production are expensive in a limited, short term, but they have proven to be the only overall, economical method for food production and soil conservation in the long term.

The federal government is the best and least expensive source of basic information. For pamphlet listings, write to: Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009. Report and Recommendations on Organic Farming and other publications may be obtained from: Office of Governmental Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. The best monthly magazine is *Organic Gardening*, 33 East Minor Street, Emmaus, PA 18049.

For a listing of many small farms that can be visited for purchases and information, write to: Sonoma County Farm Trails, P.O. Box 6043, Santa Rosa, CA 95406.

For professional assistance and unusual plants, contact: Western Hills Nursery, 16250 Coleman Valley Road, Occidental, This is located west of Sebastopol, in Sonoma County. For community gardening information in San Francisco, call Jan Glee of the Recreation and Park Department at 558-5031.

## Well Done, Alice!

The Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club is celebrating its tenth anniversary and honoring its founder, this Saturday night. Over the last decade, "Alice" has amassed a considerable record in furthering the rights of homosexuals. It has also served as an inspiration for dozens of similar clubs throughout the nation.

We join "Alice" in marking this momentous milestone and wish both the club and its founder many more decades of success in their endeavors.

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# Arts & Entertainment

## Art

### "The Search For Alexander": Grand Relics From A Distorted Past

by Steven Saylor

"Sex and sleep alone make me conscious that I am mortal."

Alexander the Great

#### I. ART: Vessels of Magic

The *Search for Alexander*, an exhibition appearing February 20 through May 16 at the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, is a breathtaking collection of almost 200 works of art from the age of Alexander the Great.

The organizers readily admit that none of the objects in the exhibit actually belonged to Alexander — no such objects have ever been found. But the exhibition does include several striking portraits of Alexander in marble and bronze, and a number of artifacts from a recently excavated grave in northern Greece believed to be the tomb of Alexander's father, Philip II of Macedon. *The Search* is a success: the halls of the de Young resonate with the grandeur of the ancient world and the spirit of Alexander the Great.

One of the most striking objects appears in the first room of the exhibit, which is devoted to sculptures of Alexander, his father, and Hephaestion, Alexander's lover. Dominating the room is a dark green bronze head of Alexander, several times larger than life. The head, of Roman origin, contrasts sharply with the more humanistic Greek portraits around it. Imposing and awesomely beautiful, almost intimidating, it suggests a god in human form — or a man become a god.

Of the other large items in the exhibit, perhaps the most impressive is an immense bronze krater (urn) depicting a Dionysian revel. The details are almost rococo: gods, beasts and mortals swirl riotously around the urn. Out of the chaos peers the face of Silenos, the bearded, shrewdly smiling, voluptuously chubby spirit of drunkenness.

Silenos always shows up wherever pleasure is the theme in Greek art. He appears elsewhere in this exhibit, as a minor motif on drinking bowls and jugs and on a highly unusual boudoir lantern. It is always good fortune to meet up with him; Silenos, plump as a teddy bear and silly as a demon, is the emblem of good-natured excess and lazy eroticism.

Equally striking is the large, floor mosaic from Pella depicting two naked youths battling a lion. The youths may represent Alexander and his friend Krateros. Unlike the more familiar Christian icons, the Pella mosaic is not made of semi-precious stones, ceramic, or glass, but of thousands of ordinary pebbles. The effect is refreshingly naturalistic. A certain awkwardness about the lion makes me doubt that the artist ever saw one — but the superbly detailed torsos and limbs of the young

hunters are proof that he was an accomplished student of the male physique.

The male body (usually Alexander's) is celebrated in several of these works, and most outstandingly in a small nude statue of Alexander in the guise of Pan. Two tiny horns protrude from the locks of his hair. The marble is decayed, the limbs are lost, but the perfection of what remains is irresistible.

The Western ideal of male beauty — the fine balance between youthful grace and mature muscularity, the exactly right proportions that appeal to the instinct as well as the eye — comes to us directly from the ancient Greeks and from

are breathtaking, some merely charming, but all are worth seeing.

The objects made of gold, large and small, attract the eye first, but a point should also be made to study the less glittering surfaces of the bronze pieces, especially the common soldier's helmet. Here, the exposed bronze has corroded over the centuries to acquire a smooth patina of iridescent green and reddish purple, shot with filaments of other colors less readily defined.

The mottled effect resembles the surface of a stagnant pond, or an artist's palate, and speaks as eloquently as any painting about the effects of time and the

table history book, posters and postcards, lectures and film presentation and of course the familiar bald pate of Telly Savalas, television pitchman for *The Search for Alexander*, who is to Alexander the Great what John Travolta is to Julius Caesar. Beneath all this elbow-jostling of high and low culture is a curious strain of homophobia: the clumsy suppression of the fact that a man who lived 2300 years ago had sex with other men.

There is no homophobia in the exhibit itself, where the subject of sex is appropriately absent. The inscription beneath the marble head of Hephaestion identifies him as Alexander's "best-loved friend," which may be intentionally innocuous but is not inaccurate. But deliberate suppression is very evident in the television series.

It is called *The Search for Alexander the Great* and is currently appearing Thursday evenings on KQED. Unlike the exhibit, the television drama searches but does not find. Even before its original airing on PBS

beside the other branches of their project." Grateful enough, it appears, to change some of his previous opinions considerably in order to conform to the prejudice of his sponsors.

Nine years ago, Fox wrote a biography called *Alexander the Great*, which was amazing for its sexual candor. Fox discussed the high regard for homosexual love among the Macedonian kings and dealt at length with Alexander's cosmopolitan sexual tastes. According to Fox, Alexander slept "with at least one man, four mistresses, three wives, a eunuch and, so gossip believed, an Amazon."

Bagoas, the "young and extremely handsome" Persian eunuch, was "the most startling of all Alexander's intimates," but Hephaestion was "the man whom Alexander loved." Fox coyly related the claim of the ancient historians that Alexander was defeated only once in his lifetime — and that was by Hephaestion's thighs.

In *The Search for Alexander*, published last year, Fox barely touches on homosexuality, and

doubting Alexander's normal affairs with women — what a relief for the Greek bankers! On the slight chance that Alexander did have an occasional romp with his lifelong male companion or with his handsome Persian eunuch, Fox apologizes for him: chink it up to the craziness of youth, and the fact that his father was often absent from home.

*The Search for Alexander* is a very pretty book, immaculately printed and designed. It is also a monument to academic opportunism at the expense of gay people.

Who are the Greek sponsors trying to fool? After all, Alexander's bisexuality is a fact known to every literate person — or is it? Mary Renault, who informed the world of Alexander's nature with her famous novel *The Persian Boy*, recently published a sequel, *Funeral Games*. John Leonard, one of America's most influential critics, snidely panned the book in

*The New York Times Book Review*. He chastised Renault for her persistent portrayal of "a bisexual Alexander" (as if a false, heterosexual version were preferable) and for "dangling" her readers with "homoeotic innuendo." His ultimate judgement: "She is all sex and no philosophy." So much for Mary Renault, and so much for her "bisexual Alexander."

John Leonard and his Greek brothers in homophobia have, for the moment, prevailed. Historian Fox has reneged on his appraisal of an omniscient Alexander. Mary Renault has been called a hack in the pages of *The New York Times*, the Public Broadcasting System has presented a queer-free Alexander to American television, and the *Search for Alexander* exhibition has toured the country without a whisper of the ancient "gossip" about you-know-what.

Alexander the Great's legacy is not locked away in a vault in the National Bank of Greece. It belongs to anyone who feels a kinship for the man who loved men and women, eunuchs and Amazons, who wanted to make the whole world and all its people his own.

The educational facets of *The Search for Alexander* might have performed a service for gay people in this country by presenting their "subject" as he was: brilliant, adored, remarkable in his time for his utter lack of racial, religious or cultural prejudice, first citizen of the world — and bedmate to a general and a eunuch. Instead the sponsors have deliberately kept the record incomplete, and cheated everyone of the historical human truth.

The moral: See the Alexander exhibit — but beware of Greeks bearing gifts.



THE WESTERN IDEAL OF MALE BEAUTY began with works like this pebble floor mosaic, discovered in 1937 at Pella, Alexander the Great's birthplace. Two naked statues such as this one. In an age when sculptors have abandoned the beauty of the human body to depict the alienation of the human spirit, no opportunity should be missed to experience firsthand the sublime elegance of Greek sculpture, which can not be captured by photography.

For the Classical Greeks the male body, that perfect form taken by gods and mortals alike, was the most splendid thing encountered in life. This reverence for the masculine physique as a vessel of magic is one the modern gay community's most precious, poignant links to a glorious and abandoned past, when flesh was free of guilt.

There are at least a dozen other major works of art in *The Search for Alexander* exhibit, and scores of smaller pieces — vases, cups, coins, military artifacts, terracotta figurines of Aphrodite and Athena, ancient earrings (which always look impossibly heavy) and other items of jewelry. Some

strangeness of matter.

*The Search for Alexander* exhibit is, as its sponsors claim, the most important body of artifacts ever to leave Greece. It should not be missed. But... the shadow of homophobia lurks over the exhibit. If San Francisco is the city of gay identity and freedom, *The Search for Alexander* — not the exhibit itself, but the cultural bric-a-brac attached to it — resembles a Trojan horse rolled into the heart of town by a band of homophobic Greeks.

#### II. POLITICS: Who's Afraid of Alexander the Great?

*The Search for Alexander* exhibit is only the central ornament of a very large-scale, long-term public relations campaign mounted by Time, Inc., the National Bank of Greece, and the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sciences. Along with the exhibit, there is a television series on PBS, a coffee-

house, perhaps Alexander and his friend Krateros, but a lion, a certain awkwardness about the lion makes me doubt that the artist ever saw one.

last thing, the makers of the four-part series were answering charges of evasion. The story makes no reference to Alexander's homosexual love affairs. Since Alexander is almost as famous in America for being queer as for conquering the world, the omission was blatant. Censorship? Yes.

The producers and writers put the blame on the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sciences and on the National Bank of Greece, both of which had leverage over the project — the ministry's permission was required to film on location, and the bank was financing production. Both wanted homosexuality cut from the script; the Ministry because Alexander is officially straight in Greece, the directors of the National Bank because they associate homosexuality with scandal and feared that a gay Alexander would be bad for tourism.

The Greek officials had their way. The script was "cleaned up" and cut two-thirds of its original length.

Fortunately, bad storytelling is self-nullifying, and *The Search for Alexander the Great* may be the worst bit of storytelling ever broadcast over PBS. It is illogically conceived: everyone, alive or dead, who knew Alexander meets after his death at a sort of Olympian cocktail party to reminisce. Filmed with all the grandeur of a movie (on actual Greek locations, to be sure), the series will change no one's opinions about bisexuality in the Classical world. It will probably end up being shown as a teaching aid in classrooms. I can imagine that captive audience of history-hating schoolchildren nodding off one by one, saved from the dangerous truth about Alexander but not from boredom.

More subtle and more damaging is the homophobia inherent in *The Search for Alexander* by Robin Lane Fox, the coffee-table history written expressly to accompany the exhibit. In a preface, Fox thanks the organizers: "I am very grateful... for the invitation to write this book

when he does he reads with great caution. 'Later gossip,' he tells us, 'presumed that Bagoas was Alexander's lover. That is uncertain.' Fox also reverses himself on Hephaestion of the conquering thighs, who is no longer 'the man whom Alexander loved,' but the man 'with whom later gossip claimed that Alexander had a love affair.'

Alexander's homosexual affairs, it turns out, are only a matter of gossip, like his supposed tryst with an Amazon. But 'there is no

## Books

FUNERAL GAMES  
A novel by Mary Renault.  
(Pantheon, 1981; 335 pages, \$14.50.)

by Steven Saylor

Ten years ago, Mary Renault wrote *The Persian Boy*, and American readers swooned. Renault's novel of the conquests of Alexander the Great, as seen through the eyes of his consort, the Persian eunuch Bagoas, was one of the decade's best-sellers. Renault's achievement went beyond commercial success: as Gore Vidal noted at the time, *The Persian Boy* compelled its wide audience "to recognize that bisexuality was once our culture's norm." Vidal concluded, "the culture is the better for her work."

*The Persian Boy* was preceded by *Fire From Heaven*, a novel about Alexander's early days and his relationship with the young Hephaestion, and followed by *The Nature of Alexander*, a biography. Renault's new novel reveals what became of the Persian boy, and completes her multi-part, multimform Alexander

trilogy. Renault tells of the power struggle that followed Alexander's death, one as intricate as a game of chess. At stake is the world empire that Alexander created. The players begin with unequal powers, but in this game

a pawn may become a king, or a general become a god. The penalty for failure is almost certain death.

In a large, shifting cast of characters whose ambitions and sufferings are larger than life, one stands out: the androgynous woman-child Eurydice, a forgotten relative of the royal family, who was brought up in seclusion by her mother to be a warrior queen. Barred from power because of her sex, Eurydice strives for it with a doomed intensity that is heart-breaking, and she remains in the game until the harrowing end.

Mary Renault's Classical novels have always been played against the black, unfathomable screen that the Greeks themselves saw as the backdrop to their lives. Existence is mystery. Time is irresistible. There are disasters no man can prevent.

The period of entropy that followed Alexander's death provides the materials for a story ideally suited to Renault's fatalistic sense of tragedy. Her writing is as smooth and opalescent as ever, crystallizing at moments of climax into a kind of hard, dark poetry. In what may be the final novel of a long career, Mary Renault has created a tragedy of which Euripides himself would have been proud.



The Bizarre Imagery of Yoshitoshi, an exhibition of 58 woodblock prints, one drawing and one painting by the Japanese printmaker Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839-1892), opens Friday, February 26, in the Aschenbach Galleries of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor.

Yoshitoshi, the foremost print artist of his time, helped develop the techniques of the Ukiyo-e woodblock print. That art form lost favor in Japan with the advent of photography and increased industrialization at the turn of the century.

The Yoshitoshi installation, which includes works by Utagawa Kunisoshi (1798-1861), Yoshitoshi's mentor, and works by Yoshitoshi's followers, continues through May 7.



## Theatre

Doric Wilson Grows Respectable,  
But Not On Broadway

by Beau Riley

Doric Wilson grew up in the Pacific Northwest, but has spent the last twenty-one years in New York City building his career as a playwright. His *And He Made a Her* (1961) was one of the first plays written for Caffé Cino, and thus for Off-Off-Broadway. He founded one of the earliest gay theatres, The Other Side of Silence (TOSOS), in the late '60s.

His *West Street Gang* (1977) and *A Perfect Relationship* (1979), moreover, are cornerstones of the modern gay theatre. His newest play is *Street Theatre*, the first major play about the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York. It has its world premiere in San Francisco, when it opens February 18 at Theatre Rhinoceros.

People are calling *Street Theatre* an important document about Stonewall. What do you think?

"Well, I suppose in a way it is, but the play doesn't really tell the story of the riots, only of some of

political statement, even if it only comfortably reinforces a stereotype, like a sitcom does, or like most Broadway plays do. Only when art ceases being decorative and becomes direct address would I call it political art. What I am trying to do is simple reportage, about what happened to us and what we felt. As an example, the epigraph of the play is a pair of graffiti that were on the wall on Fourth Street in those days. 'Faggots are revolting,' and under that 'You bet your sweet ass we are.' I used to see that every day as I was working."

Did Boys in the Band start a trend in theatre?

"Yes, I think so. But up until four or five years ago there still wasn't anything you could point to as gay theatre in America. At that time Harvey Fierstein was just getting started. My *West Street Gang* was just happening. Theatre Rhinoceros was coming together. It's been an amazing development. Now, Harvey, Bob

regional theatres are growing in this country, especially those which are minority-oriented. This is the trend.

"Rhino, for example, is not only surviving but prospering in this recession, and they've never gotten that much public money. Also, there are several houses publishing gay plays, as well as individual gay publications.

"Also, there's the case of

Fierstein's *Torch Song Trilogy* which is a major breakthrough. Not only were the plays initially presented at LaMama, which is a neutral house, but in the current production, the plays became the first truly gay-liberated work to be treated seriously by the uptown critics. The *Times*, the *News*, the *Voice* and others reviewed them — celebrities in the audience, the whole bit. Of course there's still no great flood of money in it for Harvey, but the play will pay for itself, as *Boys in the Band* did. So the myth that a gay play can't pay is breaking up."

Are you personally coming into your own, too?

"Yes. People talk to me who wouldn't at one time. All of us

who began in Caffé Cino days are now becoming the mainstream in theatre. Robert Patrick, Marshall Mason, Tom Egan, Lanford Wilson — what became Off-Off-Broadway and was an alternative theatre is now right in the center. I've become more respectable, and so has TOSOS. Back then, an agent could advise an actor not to play a gay part because it might hurt his career, but now an actor would laugh if he heard that.

There was some public discussion of that when Bent came to America.

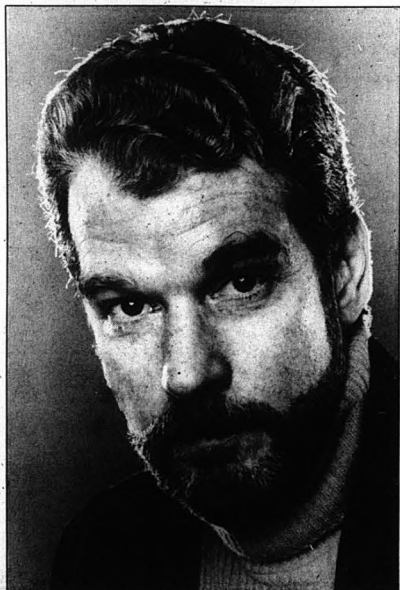
"Bent isn't really a gay play. It's more about the Holocaust than about what concerns gay people. Bent broke even on running costs, but it didn't repay its investors. Very few rank-and-file gay people went to see it. But having said all that, I'm not really sure there is such a thing as 'gay theatre.' I'm not really happy with the word gay. I always took it to mean a certain type of homosexual, one who goes to Fire Island, eats quiche, and likes disco. In that sense gay is a style, not a word to describe us all. In the early days after Stonewall when we were trying to put together the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activists Alliance, we argued about what word to use. I think 'gay' got chosen because, unlike 'faggot,' 'queer,' or 'fairy,' it wasn't a word that automatically excluded women. Ironically, women now don't identify with the word."

You are a 'father of gay theatre.' Your plays have always been about gay characters.

"People confuse the narrative of a play with its subject. The subject of *Street Theatre* is that we can and we must fight back against repression. All of us. We must resist any oppression, even Ronald Reagan's."

"The Play is about how six or seven people decide that they have to do something, and this is what interests me, not the question of whether those individuals are gay or not, or homosexual or not. I chose Stonewall for its dramatic appropriateness, and because it's something I know about. But it didn't have to be that."

"Since the time of Stonewall our differences — our controversies — have magnified, not gotten better. And if wanting a change is political, it is so in a general civic sense, not in a partisan one."



NEW YORKER Doric Wilson says regional theatre will nourish the country's gay playwrights.

"I used to see a pair of graffiti: 'Faggots Are Revolting,' and under that, 'You bet your ass we are.' "

the people who were on the streets then. I don't think a play could deal with the riots themselves. A movie maybe or a dance probably, not a play.

"*Street Theatre* is very personal — everything in it either happened to me or in front of me. When I was writing it, I realized that some of the things we understood as pre-Stonewall attitudes or events are still going on. The play is not about politics so much as it is a personal thing. Plays are sometimes partisan, but this one isn't meant to be. It is sort of dedicated to Thornton Wilder, who was a great influence on me. Like *Our Town*, this is a play about people."

But mustn't we take the play as a political event of some kind?

"Any play, any work of art is a

(Robert Patrick), and I, as well as seven or eight others, are being produced all the time. Most of the top plays among the two- or three-hundred submitted to the Gay Theatre Alliance playwright contest end up getting productions. Of course it would be nicer if there were more money in it. Yes, I make my living writing plays, but it's at or below the poverty level."

Do you see anything better in the future?

"I think so. But clearly there's no future for gay theatre on Broadway, which is big business — a question of real estate and how it's used. There isn't much room for small plays uptown now. The future there is for huge shows in huge theatres where a lot of money can be made. But

## Piaf Play Bows

La Môme Piaf, a musical tribute to the late French singer Edith Piaf, plays Monday, February 22, 9:30 P.M. at the Plush Room. Patricia Butler, who plays Piaf, won a Drama-Logue Critics' Award last year for her role. Cover charge is \$5.

Funny Women  
Hit the Boards

Laugh Riot, an evening of humor featuring an all-female lineup of comics, hits the boards Saturday, February 27, 9 P.M. at the Women's Building, 3543 18th St. Paula Pondstone, Carol Roberts, Susan Healy and Ruby Rodriguez will entertain. The evening will benefit Lilith, a women's theatre collective.

Pat Bond, another "funny lady" of the stage, will appear Saturday, February 20, at the Valencia Rose, 766 Valencia, 10:30 P.M., in *Gerry Stein is Back Back in Back*. The following Saturday, Bond will present another one-woman show, *Murder In The Women's Army Corps*, based on her post-World War II military experiences.

## Gay Vid Kids

A selection of recent lesbian and gay video will be broadcast each Thursday through March 26, 9:30 P.M. on cable channel 25. Frameline, sponsor of the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, presents the series, which represents both local and national artists.

Programming includes *Moss* by Bruce Pavlov and John Riddle; *Gay Is Out* by the Chicago collective Horses; *Madam of Many Faces* by Bob Paris; and *Ghetto Girls* by San Francisco's John Canally and John Riddle. *Ghetto Girls* is described by Frameline as "a transvestite video musical," combining "the dogma and rhetoric of S.C.U.M. (Society for Cutting Up Men) with indescribable fashion and make-up ideas in a Utopian vision of female domination and male subjugation."



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## Dance

## A Glorious Celebration Of Love: Ballet's Fire and Ice

SAN FRANCISCO BALLET  
War Memorial Opera House  
February 9-14

by Mark Woodworth

The first striking note to the San Francisco Ballet's third program is the glorious music — Bartók, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky. The second note is the theme of all four ballets — Love: its social evolution, its recon-

role. Of Bartók's bittersweet *Quartet No. 5*, she made a nicely shaped work that looks modern, yet doesn't trap its characters in emotional limbo.

Dancers in earth-tone leotards roll in from the wings, rise to knees and fall like evolving social beings, group, then partner off, as the string quartet gathers a sweet menace. The eye recalls bent-knee-arched-arm poses, sculptured clus-

This dance seems to be "about" dancing. Yet in it Erickson, with some movement inventiveness, reveals a humanistic sensibility.

*The Dream*, Sir Frederick Ashton's 1964 ballet based on Mendelssohn's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," launched the great Sibley-Dowell duo. In a *pas de deux* from that work, we see Wendy Van Dyck, a Titania of supernal willowiness in snow-blue, with Paul Russell, a strongly gracious Oberon in lilac, doing steps that impossibly mix fire and ice.

Van Dyck's carriage of the arms is incredibly fast, fostering the illusion of flight. (*All faires should be so fleet and thin.*) Near the end, with a *frisson* of ecstasy in Russell's embrace, she's altogether his. And when he rocks her straight out across his arms, so well has Ashton prepared us, that the sight fills the stage.

After a 20-year hiatus, S.F. Ballet again possesses what to many is ballet's apotheosis — *Swan Lake*, (well, at least the meat of it — Act II). This new production, a trade from Pacific Northwest Ballet, has Kent Stowell's version of the 1894 Ivanov choreography. The sylvan set is handsome, the Performing Arts Orchestra gives the Tchaikovsky full measure, and the company creditably does all the famous ensemble work — though naturally not as crisply as American Ballet Theatre, whose full-length *Swan* flies into town next week.

Jamie Zimmerman and Jim Sohm, one of several pairs cast as Odette and the Prince, dance their tragic roles correctly enough, and next season may render more compelling portraits. Laurie Cowden and Dennis Marshall have perhaps a slight edge on them in terms of fluency.



DANCING THE MEAT OF SWAN LAKE are Jamie Zimmerman and Jim Sohm in Act II of Kent Stowell's version of Ivanov's classic.

ter, expansive off-center turns, stringent upside-down lifts. At work's end, dancers retreat to solitary positions, leaving Vane Vest centered in post-modern-man isolation.

ter, expansive off-center turns, stringent upside-down lifts. At work's end, dancers retreat to solitary positions, leaving Vane Vest centered in post-modern-man isolation.

## Films

## Coppola's Fractured "Heart": It Ain't Worth A Hill Of Beans

ONE FROM THE HEART  
Starring Teri Garr and Frederic Forrest.  
Directed by Francis Coppola.  
At the Cinema 21.

by Steve Beery

I like fantasy. I like musicals. I like pastel colors, fancy wipers, arty dissolves and tricky matte opticals, but I also know too much of a good thing when I see it. *One from the Heart* isn't about people — it's about a gargantuan, multi-million-dollar, soundtrack set that Francis Coppola built and didn't know quite what to do with.

Watching this movie is akin to gorging yourself on dessert and still feeling hungry. Without a believable human context, all the flash and sparkle doesn't add up to a hill of beans.

*One from the Heart* shows us six lonely people in a stylized Las Vegas, where the perpetual night is illuminated by perpetual neon. What is never illuminated is who these people are or why we should care about them. Teri Garr and Frederic Forrest are the primary protagonists: she of the comical, elliptical face, and he of the sodden, Neanderthal potbelly.

Raul Julia and Nastassia Kinski portray the romantic distractions,

and they're a likeable if unexpressive pair of imported ciphers. Getting the least attention but making the most of their moments are Lainie Kazan and Harry Dean Stanton as the lovebirds' best friends, the pals who sit on the sidelines *a la* Eve Arden and Gig Young. Lainie is the only real performance in the film. With her tremendous, Wagnerian superstructure and her little Jewish-girl delivery, she's the only character who seems alive, or to have something in her head besides a set of stage instructions.

After an early bit of clever staging, which places Garr's and Forrest's lonely retreats next to each other (so the camera can pan from one to the other without an intervening wall), the scenes that follow have practically no structure and no rhythm to the cutting. Coppola seems to be doing homage to Vincente Minnelli's Technicolor musicals of the 1940s like *Yolanda and the Thief* or *The Pirate*, without understanding how or why those movies worked in the first place.

Garr and Julia locked in a midnight tango, Kinski slithering in an oversized martini glass, Forrest orchestrating a junkyard of auto bodies to flash their headlights in unison: these bits

In 1972, that superbly canny craftsman, Jerome Robbins, set a ballet to Stravinsky's *Requiem for a Wicked Woman*. S.F. Ballet performs this disquieting, ritualistic work with élan.

Oddly, since it's couched in medieval conceptions of death and judgement, dancers do nouveau things like grovel on the floor, drop character to saunter into place, snap fingers ("The Jets" cool in

hell), and confront the audience. The music, with voices from the Opera Chorus, gives one shudders.

The last moments (to chimes) have a spare, frozen beauty, and leave four lead dancers petrified like monoliths, mouthing silent screams. Is this the silence of eternity? the cessation of love? the age of angst? Ask Jerry Robbins, or your ballet buddy.

are pretty visuals and nothing more. No attempt is made to integrate them into the drama. It's as if the movie were made by an art student with a billion dollars and no reason to say *no* to any of his own expensive ideas.

As fine a comedian as Teri Garr is, she can't support the weight of a musical fantasy as leaden as this one. I kept picturing Bette Midler in her role: the presence of Forrest, Stanton, all the neon from *The Rose*, and Tom Waits' gravelly voice on the soundtrack (they once dueted together) kept bringing her to mind. Midler would probably have overpowered the picture, but at least the gaudiness would have seemed to arise from some organic source. As it is, these vast sets and dazzling lights embody nobody's dream but the director's.

The film is so fragmented, the overall effect is like having a rack of those airbrushed Paper Moon greeting cards thrown at you one at a time. Nothing builds, nothing develops. When Coppola reunites his lovers without a word of logical explanation, it's because this is, after all, "only" a movie.

And when members of the audience applaud the final caveat, "Filmed in its entirety on the stages of Zoetrope Studios," you realize there's an audience out there so desperate for a "fix" of movie magic that they're willing to embrace parts of movies, no matter the importance of the omissions. If this is truly one from Coppola's heart, then *The Godfather*, *Part II* and *The Black Stallion* must have been heady, happy accidents.

## Apology

The Sentinel regrets several paste-up errors in Steve Beery's review of the film *Making Love* in our last issue. Unfortunately, these mistakes rendered a very fine review partially unreadable.

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## Television

### Julia From "Brideshead": A Thing For American Gutsiness

by Edward Guthmann

In *Brideshead Revisited*, the British miniseries that's made Monday night an unbreakable date for millions of public TV viewers, the narrator describes Julia Flyte as having "a waywardness, a willfulness, a less disciplined habit than most of her contemporaries."

As played by Diana Quick, an actress of unusual beauty and precision, Julia becomes something of a contemporary, 1980s woman trapped in the wrong decade. One wonders how she might function in a less rigid society.

On her visit to San Francisco last week, I met Diana Quick, who in person looks nothing like the character she plays on *Brideshead*, and quite a bit like actress Jacqueline Bisset.

"I had to age from 18 to 33 in the series," Quick said. "The most important thing I did to play

her at 18 was to get a lot of sleep. I also learned that you don't play youth by skipping along or acting excited or giddy. You just play it with full conviction." (Quick did not disclose her age; she seems to be in her mid-30s.)

The part of Julia, younger sister to alcoholic, teddy-bear-loving Sebastian (Anthony Andrews), is slightly peripheral in the early segments of *Brideshead*. "All of the meat comes later," Quick said, careful not to disclose too much.

Much has been made of the homosexual subtext in *Brideshead*, the highly romantic, but still undefined love between Sebastian and Charles Ryder (Jeremy Irons), the story's narrator/protagonist. "The homosexual element was discussed a lot," Quick said. "It was absolutely upfront. But we made a conscious decision to leave it as ambiguous as it was in

the book. Homosexuality was still a criminal offense at the time the book was written, so it was inevitable that Evelyn Waugh wrote it in a veiled way."

Veiled or not, the gay overtones have lost the show its share of viewers. "I'd been away from home the first weeks it was broadcast in England," Quick said, "and when I came back to London the local shopkeepers would frequently say, 'Sorry, Diana, I couldn't watch your show. Don't want to see a pair of poofers prancing across the screen.'"

Quick has worked steadily at acting since leaving Oxford in 1969, where her literature studies lost out to a burgeoning passion for the stage. Beginning with "a lot of rubbishy stuff," she graduated to lead roles with the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company. On film,

she was Keith Carradine's mistress in *The Duellists* and a tart in *The Big Sleep*. Not until *Brideshead*, though, had she done anything that "really captured the public imagination."

"The making of *Brideshead Revisited* was troubled," Quick said. "It was scheduled to take

here than in England — which seemed to me quite ironical."

Quick loves American culture, particularly American film and theatre. Having just seen *Sophisticated Ladies* on the Los Angeles stage, Quick was ecstatic over the musical comedy skills "that we in England just don't have." "British actors are too mind-oriented and

Quick even admires the American way with Shakespeare. "What's great about watching Americans do Shakespeare is the gutsiness they bring to it. If a British actor is asked to do *Hamlet*, he's probably seen 20 different interpretations. An American is more likely to come to it fresh. Also, Americans tend to give full value to words while British actors tend to clip them off."

Quick's next project is a five-part TV series adapted from Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White*, the 1860 novel that established the detective story as a literary genre. "I play Marian Halcomb, a completely un-stereotypical role. She's the hero. She doesn't conform in any way to the Victorian stereotype which is blonde and demure and passive."

Apart from acting, Quick's chief focus is on England's anti-nuke lobby. At the moment, ten pressurized water reactors (PWRs) are planned for construction, the first of which is three miles from Quick's country home. "We have a year to stop it and I feel quite optimistic," Quick said. "I'm about to do a documentary on PWRs for the BBC which I'll write and narrate."



"A PAIR OF POOFERS prancing across the screen" was how actress Diana Quick's local merchants described *BRIDESHEAD REVISITED*. Quick said, "whereas American actors regard their bodies as tools of the trade. They're much more versatile."

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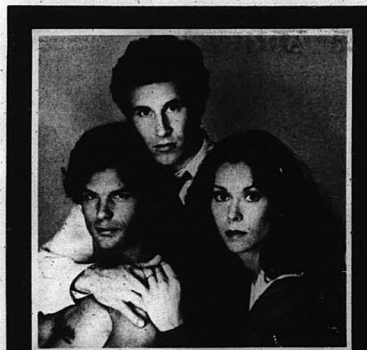
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# Theatre

## Headlines & Footlights: El Salvador Comes Out Of The Theatrical Closet

AMERICANS OR LAST TANGO IN HUAHUATENANGO.  
A play by the San Francisco Mime Troupe.

At the Victoria Theatre, 2961 16th Street, through February 28.

### DOS LESBOS.

A play conceived by Alice Thompson and Terry Baum.  
At Valencia Rose, 766 Valencia Street, through March 26.

by Stephen Nash

The San Francisco Mime Troupe, after attacking the Moral Majority last summer and the Moscone Convention Center in December, is now taking on the rulers of El Salvador. Just back from a ten-week European tour, they've set up shop at the Victoria Theatre, performing *Americans or Last Tango in Huahuatenco*.

Set in the fictional country of San Martin, *Last Tango* has several dozen characters — guerrillas, peasants, U.S. officials and soldiers — fighting for land reform in this small Central American nation. Events are split between the rural town of Huahuatenco, where peasants are struggling to take over a hacienda, and the capital where the U.S. ambassador is attempting to achieve similar ends while avoiding U.S. intervention and mass killings.

San Martin is of course a barely disguised El Salvador, and it doesn't take much effort to notice the parallels between the events in the play and today's headlines.

The S.F. Mime Troupe normally performs outdoors, but with their move indoors, they retain their *al fresco* style: simple sets, no curtain, an open backstage.

This extends to the troupe's acting and writing styles: a rapid, straight-forward, wide-angle approach.

When you put on a play with dozens of characters in a crowded park on a Saturday afternoon, subtlety and meandering developments are foolhardy. Their characters are generally instantly recognizable, with histories and personalities supplied in large part by the audience's memory. They're people we've seen caricatured many times, and within seconds we know whether to hate them, to identify with them, or just sympathize with their problems. As a result, a passerby can immediately become engrossed in the performance.

It all makes for marvelous theatre. *Last Tango* is a wonderfully engrossing evening of songs, comedy, drama, and political ideas. One is swept up by the excitement, energy, and talent of the performers. It's not subtle, but how could it be, given the Mime Troupe's usual performance conditions?

It's marvelous theatre, but I'm not so sure it's marvelous politics. Since the troupe's style justifies the stereotyping of characters and a lack of subtlety on dramatic terms, a dangerous idealism results when political problems are being solved. The Mime Troupe approach implies that no central position is valid, making it difficult to arrive at complex conclusions.

To be fair, the Mime Troupe is trying to involve us in a campaign, the protest of U.S. involvement in El Salvador. Murder by machine gun is not a subtle issue. For much of the audience, the labeling of characters as good or evil is usually clear-cut, and we sym-

thize with the cause the troupe espouses.

So why the complaints? Maybe the problems in El Salvador are already too serious to permit us the luxury of open-minded skepticism? But remember, the problems of the workers in pre-revolutionary Russia were equally serious, and their cause seemed equally just. That idealistic position led to the killings of millions. If only the issues were as simple, at least for a few hours, as the Mime Troupe can make us believe.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dos Lesbos*, another excellent play, also has its share of political ideas. It is now having a second run, Thursdays and Fridays through March, at Valencia Rose, a cabaret/restaurant in the inner Mission.

*Dos Lesbos* is a series of vignettes forming a set of self-portraits, first of the two lesbians in the cast, but also of the gradually developing women's community in San Francisco. Part I deals with coming out — especially to one's parents. The two characters (played by Alice Thompson and Sally Newstetter, but left unnamed) pretend to be mother and daughter in a variety of theatrical styles: Greek tragedy, Restoration comedy; etc.

Part II is not so single-minded. It is dominated by Thompson's powerful monologue describing how three women's lives are destroyed by a murdering rapist. Equally important are the scenes where the two women work to keep their relationship intact.

Despite its dramatic sections, *Dos Lesbos* might best be described as a comedy with music. The songs pace the evening and give it much of its form. Their satire, particularly in "The Twelve Days

Home for Christmas," is very perceptive.

As mentioned, the play is as much a portrait of a community as it is of the two women. Although lesbians have been around for a long time, historical precedents for modern, urban lives are few, and directly usable traditions are almost non-existent. As a result, getting by depends on grass-roots experimentation. A lot of people may end up playing follow-the-lifestyle or hanging out at the same bar, but to call this building a community is to confuse cause and effect.

Plays such as *Dos Lesbos* and works by groups like the Gay Theatre Collective give direction to this effort. By displaying canonical people, they allow us to see where we are and decide whether we like what we see. These plays not only ennoble our communities, and foster self-respect, but also act as a focus for anger — in this case against the urban violence which so often chooses women as its victims.

*Dos Lesbos* does all this, thanks in great part to Alice Thompson's performance. She very capably controls the many transitory moods during the evening. Sally Newstetter and the band (Nancy Kennedy, Donna Viscuso, and Anne Pope) sensibly step back and let her hold the show.

## Buckner's Video

Barbara Buckner, a New York abstract video artist, will present her tapes at Video Free America, 442 Shotwell St., on Sunday, February 21 at 8:00 P.M. Buckner's work, which utilizes assorted video synthesizers and processors, has been screened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. She is the recipient of National Endowment for the Arts and Creative Artists Public Service awards.

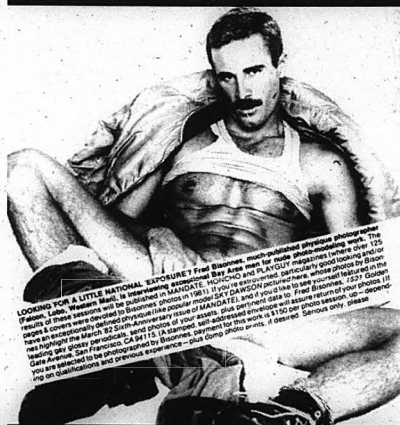
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GAY ACTIVISTS joined striking janitors in a picket line outside San Francisco's Metro Theater when MAKING LOVE opened on February 12. The janitors have been striking United Artists and Syfy Theaters since last fall.

## MARIN HRC DRAFTS GAY RIGHTS ORDINANCE

The Marin County Human Rights Commission is preparing a gay-rights ordinance, according to staff co-ordinator Barry Shapiro. The county's Commission on the Status of Women and some private citizens suggested the new law, Shapiro said.

The commission has not yet drafted the language of the law, he noted, but it will "deal with the rights of people with alternate sexual and affectional preferences," Shapiro said it would place

discrimination against gay persons in the same category as discrimination on the basis of "race, ancestry, age, sex, religion, and so forth."

Shapiro noted the proposal would be sent back to the Commission on the Status of Women before going to the Board of Supervisors for passage. He did not know if the new law would cover just county employees, facilities, and contractors, or all unincorporated areas of the county.

## AGNOS/GAYER

(Continued from front page.)

On January 27, Agnos wrote to Gayer that although his idea had "considerable merit," there was little support for such legislation. Agnos cited the feelings of his legislative colleagues that the defeats in Santa Clara County, San Jose, and Palo Alto make gay rights a "dead issue."

Agnos also noted that California Human Rights Advocates, the gay lobby in Sacramento, has folded. He wrote, "The gay and

lesbian communities of California do not appear able, at this time, to mount an effective campaign in support of legislative action."

Agnos is the sponsor of Assembly Bill 1, which would add sexual orientation to the state's Fair Employment Practices Act. He said that when it was defeated last year, "not one member of the gay press was there to cover it."

Gayer issued a press release alleging that Agnos "is simply weak regarding the promotion of gay rights legislation." Agnos aide Jones responded

## D.A. Drops Sex Charges

The S.F. district attorney's office has dropped prosecutions of "most" of January's Golden Gate Park sex-arrest cases, D.A.'s investigator Ron Huberman said. He emphasized D.A. Arlo Smith's policy for his assistants is to "review each case individually and see if it comes under the state Supreme Court's 1979 Pryor decision. If it does, it will most likely be dismissed."

The court ruled in Pryor that even if sexual "conduct occurs in a location that is technically a public place...the state has little interest in prohibiting that conduct if there are no persons present who may be offended."

The issue at hand, S.F. attorney Matt Coles noted, is whether someone who committed such an act should have known an undercover officer who solicited or consented to it would be offended.

Huberman said police made 72 arrests in January for violation of Penal Code Section 647(a) - 32 of these in Golden Gate Park and the rest in the Tenderloin-Lower Polk area. In December, the city-

wide total was 16, he said.

Huberman, who is vice-president of the Harvey Milk Gay Democratic Club, said he is now officially monitoring all 647(a) cases for Smith.

Coles said he and other attorneys had used "the pressure of law and reason, not political muscle" to ease the D.A.'s office away from prosecuting Pryor-type cases.

"I think their policy is now a pretty sensible one," he said. "Questions need to be asked of the police department and mayor's office why they use five undercover cops to accomplish what one uniformed officer can do."

"There's a potential for a lot of human carnage. The court has no discretion on 647(a) convictions. You have to register as a sex offender wherever you go for the rest of your life."

"Never plead guilty and pay a fine. Get a lawyer who knows Pryor," Coles concluded.

## FAG-BASHING

(Continued from front page.)

Shallal said police managed to arrest the trio "maybe a half-block from the bus" on Market Street somewhere between Van Ness and Church.

Shallal reported ambulance paramedics treated him for an injured eye and then drove him home. The eye was closed from swelling for the whole next day.

Shallal said he has "a pretty good idea" which of the three assailants started the slugging, but he wants to wait until the trail to say it.

Assistant D.A. Cady heads the street-crimes-prosecution unit. "We are handling it like any similar case," he said. "We oppose any motion for pre-trial diversion."

Pre-trial diversion allows a defendant to serve time in a community-service program without pleading guilty or establishing a record of criminal conviction.

Shallal noted, "I intend to push

this as far as I can." The penalty for misdemeanor battery ranges up to six months in jail and a \$500 fine.

Deputy Mayor Roff is an appointee of Mayor Dianne Feinstein. He has been sitting in on her discussions of anti-gay violence with gay community leaders. He expressed hope this incident would not affect his ability to work with the gay community.

He said his son "hasn't remotely been involved or charged with anything like this before. I hope the gay community wouldn't presume to assign guilt before a trial. My own concern for rights is well known."

Shallal said, "You can't really blame the father for what he did. But the publicity involved could help make people aware of the problem."

Pre-trial conferences are slated next week for Timothy Roff and one co-defendant. The other alleged assailant was not arraigned until February 17, and his case will lag behind several weeks.

## Poppers Put Off

Hank Wilson of the Committee to Monitor the Cumulative Effects of Poppers has asked the Board of Supervisors' Health and Environment Committee once again to postpone its inquiry into the safety of isobutyl nitrite inhalants. Wilson said he has not yet been able to schedule the witnesses he wants the supervisors to hear.

Earliest possible date for the hearings is now March 23.

that A.B. 1 is important. Agnos, he said, would introduce "a privacy bill to prohibit employers from asking any non-job-related question of any job applicant."

Shortly after issuing his press release, Gayer took another "approach to the problem of anti-gay violence. He mailed an application to the Department of Motor Vehicles for personalized license plates marked "GAY GUNS." Gayer said he is planning to form a group of gay people to train with guns as defensive weapons.

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