Federal court jury views gay s/m films in Bijou obscenity trial

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Testimony continues this week in the Nashville federal court pornography trial of three Chicago businessmen charged with distributing obscene materials through the mail.

This week's proceedings follow a week of testimony and film-viewing that prompted U.S. District Judge John T. Nixon to provide air-line-type flight sickness bags for jury members.

The twelve members of the federal court jury last week viewed four films - Erotic Hands, The Final Chapter of Mistress Ann, You Said a Mouthful and Please, Sir - produced and distributed by Chicago-based Bijou Video Sales, operated by the defendants Steve Tounshin, Sean O'Connor and Randy Larsen. Jurors were questioned prior to the trial about their attitudes toward homosexuality and intercourse.

A fourth defendant, David Rosen, the New York-based director of the films, pleaded guilty to his role in distributing videocassettes of the films in the Midstate area and agreed to testify against the other defendants.

According to Rosen's testimony, homosexual activities depicted in the films are real and not simulated. Rosen, referred to as "the Alfred Hitchcock of porn," said he recruited individuals to appear in the one-hour, color films.

"Through my association with different people in the adult sado-masochistic community throughout the United States, I was able to get people to show other people what their scenes were," Rosen testified.

Rosen said distribution rights to the films, continued on page 3

Navy suggests USS Iowa blast was lover's revenge, investigates

by STUART RIVIN

Naval Investigative Service (NIS) officials leaked reports to the media last week that NIS believes the gun turret explosion that killed 47 aboard the USS Iowa was caused by a sailor trying to murder his former lover.

The reports said that gunner's mate second class Clayton Hartwig, 24, one of those killed in the blast, had named gunner's mate third class Kendall Truitt, 21, beneficiary of Hartwig's $100,000 life-insurance policy. The reports said that the policy was taken out at a time when the two were "inseparable friends."

Hartwig had told another friend, six months before the explosion, that he feared Truitt might try to kill him. The sailors' friendship had ended at about that time.

Truitt has denied the reports, and threatened to sue NIS for leaking the stories. He was transferred away from Norfolk by the Navy, which said it was doing so to protect him from sailors who blamed him for the explosion after the story leaked.

In a statement to the Newport Daily Press, Truitt said that he is not gay, that he and Hartwig were "just good friends," and that NIS had used him as a scapegoat for its failure to find the cause of the blast.

Tennessee legislature passes new ban on homosexual acts

Governor expected to sign overhaul of state criminal code

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Sweeping changes in Tennessee's criminal code will become law Nov. 1 if, as expected, Gov. Ned McWherter signs the massive package overhauling the state's sentencing standards.

Both houses of the state legislature gave their approval to the changes in the state's criminal code as proposed by members of the Tennessee Sentencing Commission (TSC). The TSC, charged with "eliminating archaic language" from the state's criminal code, issued its recommendations in a report issued last fall.

The newly-adopted statute concerning the state's "sodomy law" changes the current prohibition against "crimes against nature" to a specific ban on all homosexual acts.

Since the crimes against nature statute has rarely been invoked against heterosexual acts, TSC members said the legislature should make the law more specific if the state is attempting to enforce the ban on homosexual acts.

Tennessee's criminal code currently prescribes a sentence of not less than five years and not more than 15 years to be levied against those convicted of committing a crime against nature.

But if McWherter signs the bill into law as he has promised to do, the new statute will reduce homosexual crimes against nature to a Class C misdemeanor, carrying a sentence of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of $25.

If the bill goes into effect on Nov. 1, Tennessee will join five other states which specifically classify homosexual acts as criminal.

Homosexual acts are misdemeanors in Texas, Arkansas and Kansas, Montana and Nevada statutes classify such acts as felonies.

More than half of the United States classify sodomy or crimes against nature - either homosexual or heterosexual - as felonies.

Sources on Capitol Hill earlier had told Dare that some legislators were willing to strike the sodomy statute from the code. However, following a marathon session earlier this month to hammer out final compromises in the bill, the ban on homosexual acts remained intact.

Advance, the political action committee of the Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA) had lobbied legislators throughout their 1989 session to make changes in the proposed revisions.

Most of the attention of the public and the media focused on proposals designed to alleviate current overcrowding in Tennessee correctional facilities.

INSIDE

Dare this week

Previews and reviews of new books
Pages, page 5.

Doing something about homophobic radio,
Box 40422, page 10.

Now tell us something we didn't know, Elton.
Quotes, page 12.
**NASHVILLE**

**Mondays**
- Gay Renaissance Anonymous: Open meeting for lesbian and gay overshers. MGC, 5:30pm. Info 615-386-1515.
- Nashville CARES: Alcoholics Anonymous groups. 6pm. Info 615-386-1515.
- Lambda Group: Group meetings. MGC, 5:30pm. Info 615-386-1515.
- MATHET: Group meetings. MGC, 5:30pm. Info 615-386-1515.

**Tuesdays**
- Nashville CARES: Bible Study Group, 5:30pm. Info 615-386-1515.
- Al-Anon: Closed meeting. MGC, 5:30pm.
- P-FAB: Meeting of Parents of Friends of Lesbians and Gays. 5:30pm. Info 615-386-1515.
- NWTB Lambda: Group meetings. MGC, 5:30pm. Info 615-386-1515.
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**Wednesdays**
- Sex Addicts Anonymous: Closed meeting. MCC, 5:30pm.
- Nashville CARES: Group meeting. MGC, 5:30pm.

**Thursdays**
- Incant Survivors Anonymous: Closed meetings. First Church Union, Franklin Rd., 5:30pm.
- Nashville CARES: Group meetings. MGC, 5:30pm.
- Lambda Group: Group meetings. MGC, 5:30pm.
- Lambda Group: Group meetings. MGC, 5:30pm.

**Fridays**
- Sex Addicts Anonymous: Closed meeting. MCC, 5:30pm.

**Saturdays**
- Incant Survivors Anonymous: Closed meetings. First Church Union, Franklin Rd., 5:30pm.
- Mennonite Community Church: Community Dinner, all you can eat.
- Gay Cable Network: Wstation Channel 36 (Community Access Television). 6pm.

**SAKES**

**FOR PETE’S Sake**
Benefit for Nashville AIDS service organizations

6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Pre-event “Circle of Friends” reception with Janis Ian, Cakewalk Restaurant

$150 per person, $250 per couple

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Janis Ian sings, Slice of Life Restaurant

$25 minimum donation

Information and reservations: 615 269-7552

**Sunday, June 25**

**PRIDE PICNIC**

1:00 p.m. Potluck and BYOBeverage

Edwin Warner Park Site #10

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**Sundays**
- Mennonite Community Church: Worship service, 11am and 7pm.
- Incant Survivors Anonymous: Closed meetings. First Church Union, Franklin Rd., 5:30pm.
Maine just misses anti-bias bill
HIV+ immigration ban relaxed
San Francisco OKs domestic partner law

...obscenity trial

• continued from page 1
produced at a cost of $1,000 to $1,500 each, were sold to Toushin's company for $1,700 to $2,500 each. He further testified that Toushin had contributed a number of suggestions for the films.

"He (Toushin) said the films needed more sex," Rosentold. "He also told me there was a market for films that featured defecation."

Toushin, O'Connor and Larsen are accused of running one of the nation's largest mail-order pornography businesses from their Chicago theater. The men are charged in a federal indictment with aiding and abetting the national distribution of pornographic materials through the U.S. mail.

The men admit they distributed the film, but deny that they are obscene. In determining obscenity, jurors must decide if local community standards deem the films offensive, designed to arouse obscene desires and lacking artistic and scientific value.

In his opening remarks, defense attorney David Rudolph told the jurors that federal obscenity laws target offensive sexual activities and do not refer to the "whips, chains, hypodermic needles and excrement" depicted in the films.

"What you will find offensive in these films is not the sexual conduct, but the violence, brutality and degradation," Rudolph said. "But violence, no matter how brutal or disgusting, is not legally obscene."

The charges resulted from a 1985 complaint filed by the late Richard Kemp of Nashville, who told postal inspectors he had received flyers from Toushin's mail-order business on at least two occasions.

Complaints filed some time later in Salt Lake City, Utah, against Toushin's business prompted postal inspectors there to contact local authorities who, in turn, ordered videotapes from the mail-order departments of the two Chicago-based businesses, headquartered in the Bijou Theatre.

Local sources have told Dare that Kemp, who lived in the heavily-gay Edgewater neighborhood, was "extremely ill" at the time the complaints were filed. It is believed that his sister, with whom he was staying during his illness, intercepted his mail and filed the complaints on her brother's behalf.

"Apparently Kemp's name was on some sort of gay mailing list which Toushin bought to use for distributing his flyers," said Nashville attorney Don Dawson, defense counsel for Rosen.

If found guilty of violating federal obscenity laws, the defendants face a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a possible $250,000 fine on each of the counts.

BRIEFS

from STAFF REPORTS

San Francisco OKs domestic partner law

SAN FRANCISCO'S Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a law Monday that recognizes homosexual and unmarried heterosexual domestic relationships. The 10-0 vote approved an ordinance that allows unmarried couples to register as domestic partners regardless of their sexual orientation. Supervisors then urged Mayor Art Agnos to extend health benefits to city employees' domestic partners.

Hyde arrested for AIDS education

NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN TASK FORCE staffer Sue Hyde was arrested last week for taping up a city health department AIDS education poster in a Washington, D.C., bus. The poster, one of a series promoting condom use, was one of 25,000 produced at a cost of $650,000 by the D.C. health department and approved by Mayor Marion Barry.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, which operates public transit services in D.C., Maryland and Virginia, refused to display the posters because, saying that the posters were "in bad taste."

Hyde and other members of OUT!, a Washington lesbian and gay activist group, had just come from a meeting of the city council, where they had plowed down east Nashville, was "extremely ill" at the time the complaints were filed. It is believed that his sister, with whom he was staying during his illness, intercepted his mail and filed the complaints on her brother's behalf.

"Apparently Kemp's name was on some sort of gay mailing list which Toushin bought to use for distributing his flyers," said Nashville attorney Don Dawson, defense counsel for Rosen.

If found guilty of violating federal obscenity laws, the defendants face a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a possible $250,000 fine on each of the counts.

HIV+ immigration ban relaxed

IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION Service officials announced last week that HIV-positive persons will now be allowed to enter the U.S. under certain conditions.

HIV-infected foreign travelers will qualify for a waiver and be allowed to enter the U.S. for up to 30 days if they meet standards for waivers currently available to persons with "dangerous contagious" illness and are visiting "close family members," "conducting temporary business," or attending "academic or health related activities," according to the Washington Blade.

The policy statement comes after the controversy over INS officials' refusal to allow Paul Kemp, O'Connor and Larsen, refused to display the posters because, saying that the posters were "in bad taste."

Hyde told Dare that the undercover Metro police officer who arrested her said, "You just got on the wrong bus." Hyde responded with, "No, I got on the right one."

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The policy statement comes after the controversy over INS officials' refusal to allow Paul Verhoef, a Dutch AIDS-educator, to enter the U.S. to attend a conference on AIDS, until Verhoef got a court order allowing him to enter.

Maine just misses anti-bias bill

MAINE ACTIVISTS MISSED approval by only four votes this week of a measure that would prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in that state. The state's House passed the bill, for the first time since it was introduced twelve years ago, before it was defeated in the Senate.

Massachusetts activists expect that state's legislature to pass the nation's second lesbian and gay rights bill before year's end, following Wisconsin's 1982 passage of such a law.
New on Wednesdays!
from 5 pm – 8 pm
Enjoy 25¢ draft beer and let Bob cook you a hamburger or hotdog just the way you like it.

Come see our covered deck!

Juanita's
BAR
Sunday afternoon cookout
5 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Sponsored by Pride Week '89
All you can eat $3

Read all about it.

Victor/Victoria's
111 8TH AVE N, NASHVILLE / 244-7256
Thursday night
THE LADY T SHOW
with bartender Jerry
(Susie Q)

Summer Lights in the works

From STAFF REPORTS
Organizers of Nashville's Summer Lights Festival have announced new features and a star-studded lineup of entertainers for this year's event, which opened last night and continues through Sunday, June 4.

"The 1989 Festival will feature the most impressive array of performers we have ever offered Nashville," said Harry Browning, chair of the Greater Nashville Arts Foundation. "We promise the most exciting and most successful festival in the history of the event."

Now in its eighth year, Summer Lights is a celebration of art, entertainment and hospitality, attracting thousands of festival goers for a variety of music, art and events.

One of the most attractive features of Summer Lights is the variety of musical performers, which range from blues, new age, beach and jazz to gospel, pop, rock and country. Emmylou Harris will join the Nashville Symphony for the grand finale on Sunday night. Other headliners include Don Williams, New Grass Revival, Foster and Lloyd, T. Graham Brown, Passion (and this novel is about passion first and foremost) thrives on the lunatic edge of our daily lives. It cannot be shut off by just saying no or stamping its head with a warning label from the Surgeon General. The forces of nature do not conform to human standards of decency or reason. Nor are they always salubrious or safe.

In showing us that passion is nature red in tooth and claw, the protagonist's voice (which narrates) is especially compelling and authentic.

The novel demonstrates the sort of pain-taking filleting of personal experience one associates with the writings of Denton Welch and Henry Miller. Every phrase a precise cut into real life. It is particular and universal at the same time. The prose is witty and sometimes cynical. Indiana's sense of dialogue, given a sumptuous plot without the usual mechanics of direct quotation, expresses the social tensions of a love affair and delineates the quiddities of the characters. It is artful without being ponderously arty.

GARY INDIA is comfortable with his lower Manhattan setting. He presents it to us as an incoherence, which is it, like the emotions of his characters. If Tama Janowitz conceives Downtown as a microcosm of the world, Indiana conceives it as a macrocosm of the mind. The turmoil, grit, poison and quaint loveliness of genuine feeling and intellect. AIDS entered the American consciousness right at the time many Americans were turning back to so-called traditional values of health and home. After the liberationist rhetoric of the 1970s had died, the disease vindicated the cautious admonition "Better safe than sorry" — the slogan of inauthenticity. Monogamy and abstinence once again achieved the status of common sense and popular wisdom. We live immune to passion or set ourselves at risk physically and emotionally. The truth is, as Horse Crazy affirms, AIDS is only a fraction of the total risk, which is in old as passion itself.

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More Man Than You'll Ever Be


Reviewed by SHERRE DRYDEN

Book Editor

MORE MAN THAN You'll Ever Be Is, undoubtedly, one of the most problematic books in the area of gay studies to be published in a while. Even the publisher admits (revels in?) the expected controversy by including in the publicity packet the statement "This may not be an easy book for everyone to read or understand."

There seems to be a fundamental confusion about the book's mission, particularly its intended audience. In some respects, More Man seems to be an academic book, meant to be read by folklore and gay studies scholars. It is published by a university press and was, in its original form, Joseph Goodwin's doctoral dissertation. It contains notes, bibliography and some of the language characteristic of scholarly analysis.

At the same time, however, the book appears to assume (and be marketed to) quite a different audience. The bright cover features a magenta-suited super-hero bursting out of a closet, wire hangers flying. The jokes — Goodwin focuses on humor — are conveniently set in bold type. The text is quite chatty, relies little on theoretical concepts requiring more than a general understanding of gay studies literature. It retains the notes, bibliography and some of the language characteristic of scholarly analysis.

For example, personal space, an integral part of the verbal and nonverbal communication he lists as one of the four major types of gay folklore, is dealt with superficially. Gays (men, presumably) Goodwin says, allow a great deal more physical contact than heterosexuals. Assuming that we accept his assertion, for which he cites no evidence, what does this fact mean?

SOME FEMINIST SCHOLARS who look at proxemics (the study of touching and personal space) point out that proxemics plays an important role in whom we touch and who touches us. Women, seen as powerful and oppressed, are touched, particularly by men, much more often than men are touched. Touching, then, becomes an activity available to the powerful. Carried further, the act of having one's touch resisted becomes oppressive.

The pretty boy in Dennis Cooper's new novel Closer is George Miles. George is a Southern California high school beauty, with wealthy parents, and a taste for LSD and Disneyland, where his favorite attraction is the Haunted Mansion. "Dead men tell no tales." So goes the poster that accompanies one's ride through the animatronic mansion.

My initial impression of Closer was not favorable. But that changed. I read the book while at the beach, a place usually full of distractions for me. By the time I reached the third chapter, I was hooked and the book was finished before I left the beach a little less than four hours later.

Closer is similar in tone to the book (not, however, the movie) Less Than Zero and the movie River's Edge, both of which were coldly objective and dispassionate depictions of teenage death freaks. Closer goes beyond either of these. And except possibly for a final chapter that half-heartedly aims to be upbeat, the novel gives us an uncompromised picture of Teenage Hell as part pornography, part slasher film. I loved the book.

IT DOES NOT SURPRISE ME to learn that Dennis Cooper co-authored a porno screenplay. Closer's structure parodies hardcore video. Each chapter is a self-contained episode of story, involving a variety of characters, most of whom are just seventeen, who get to fuck George in a variety of positions with a variety of sex toys. The boys display a shocking interest in scat and necrophilia, which here stand for unprompted sex. Cooper treats all of this without editorializing, moralizing or flinching.

The major characters are no more differentiated than the participants in porn films, but then the power of this book is its insouciance.
A Mistress Moderately Fair
by Katherine Starutevant

Seventeenth-century London's theater district is brought to life in this richly detailed historical romance. Two women—one an actress, the other a playwright—fall in love but are forced apart by ambition and the actress's secret past.

"Elegant prose and carefully conceived characters."—Publishers Weekly

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Out of All Time
by Terry Boughner

Gertrude Stein is just one of the many fascinating people you'll find in this history of gays and lesbians from ancient Egypt to the present. Fifty vignettes of both well-known and lesser-known historical figures are handsomely illustrated by caricaturist Michael Willhoite.

$6.95 in bookstores, or clip this ad to order by mail.

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CRUSH
a novel by Jane Futcher

"A wonderful high-school lesbian romance, rich with developing sexuality and attraction, and the true pain and joys of adolescent love."
—Carol Seajay, in Feminist Bookstore News

$6.95 in bookstores, or clip this ad to order by mail.

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PREVIEW
New books or...
on the way
and uncertain, he is drawn to London in his search for love. From the moment he arrives, it’s clear that whatever happens, his life will never be the same again.
- Of Love and Glory. Evelyn Kennedy, Naiad Press.

$8.95.

It is 1943 in blitz-torn England. Lieutenant Jennifer Kincaide is on her first assignment as a U.S. Army nurse, newly married to a man she isn’t sure she loves. Then she meets journalist/adventurer Maggie Convair in a London bomb shelter. Irresistibly drawn to one another, the two women become caught in the war and in love. 

$9.95.

In this sequel to The Boy Who Picked the Bullets Up, Nelson again recounts the adventures and misadventures of Kurt Strom. Back from Vietnam, Kurt teams up with Nick, a brassy Italian state trooper who is very married but very intrigued with Kurt.
- Passion and Power: Sexuality in History. Edited by Kathy Peils and Christina Simmons, with Robert A. Padgug.

Temple University Press.

$9.50

- Men’s Press.

$9.95.

- Marge Piercy.

Villard.

$16.95, June.

For ten years Susan, a fabric designer, and her sculptor husband Willie have maintained a happy marriage while each has also been the lover of fluidic/ composer Dinah. The three have adjoining houses on Cape Cod and are visited by a series of “summer people” — a Boston doctor and his seductive wife, Willie’s son, and a celebrated flutist who wooed Dinah.

Norton.

$27.50.

Unlike earlier collections of Lawrence’s letters, this edition is unexpurgated, containing many letters previously unavailable, addressing correspondents such as E.M. Forster and Noel Coward. Also included is much previously unpublished material about Lawrence during World War I, about his sexuality and about his state of mind in the last weeks of his life.

Norton.

$15.95, $7.95 paper.

- To Boys Unknown. E.E. Bradford.

Gay Men’s Press.

$7.95.

Part of GMP’s Gay Verse series. The Rev. Edwin Emmanuel Bradford was part of a movement of gay poets from the 1890s to the 1930s who called themselves the Uranians. His poems were popular, and not just among gay followers. Bradford’s admirers included John Boyfman and W.H. Auden.
- A Turn of the Wheel. Oliver Friggieri.

Translated by Grazie Falloon.

Wilnot Books.

$12.95.

A Turn of the Wheel tells the story of Baruch Sammut, a young university student, whose idealistic pursuit of desire — in an obsession with a philosophy professor, an affair with a young seminarian and a frustrating liaison with a prostitute — eventually leads him to attempt suicide. His attempt fails and he awakens to the realization that even this act of desperation was just another ironic twist of his fate. Walking After Midnight. Richard Nusser. Villard.

$16.95, June.

This first mystery novel by a New York reporter features Max Darenov. When Denise Overton is murdered, Max suspects her sex work on a book about Latin toy transgenderism somehow involved her in a drug war. Denise’s friend, a female impersonator named Dixie Cupps, helps Max search for the killer drug dealer Esmeralda, whose brother was killed at the same time as Denise.

$18.95.


$16.95.

Note: Name of publisher and month of publication are listed where available, along with hardcover price, except where noted.
For a
Pride Week
gift that'll do you
proud:

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☐ Give 'em what they want.
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..."More Man" reviewed

• continued from page 5
acceptance and close friends; one way
the gay subculture meets this need is by eliminat­
ing the barriers normally associated with per­
sonal space.

Goodwin, evidently unwittingly, places this
shrinking of personal space in the context of
power by describing it with words like "abanan-
donment" and "violation," but he is oblivious to
anything possibly more complex than his own analysis.

It is a shame that More Man is not more chal­
enging. Its offensiveness — and here I'm
opening myself to charges of prudery or not "un­
derstanding" folklore studies — is inextinguishable.
For no discernible reason, no legitimate
one at any rate, Goodwin reproduces some of
the most disgusting sexist, racist and homo­
phobic jokes known.

At least 20 of the 92 pages of text are
taken up with over 100 jokes (not counting legends and amusing stories) about oral and
anal sex, drag queens, AIDS, lesbians, women,
ethnic groups and Tallulah Bankhead. Humor is one of Goodwin's four major types of gay
folklore and, for him, humor equals jokes.

Although the jokes take up a proportionate
part of the text (he even quotes one par­
tially in the original German), Goodwin pro­
vides little background or any theory on the humor
and does almost nothing in the way of analysis.

Explications like "This joke draws its humor from a number of stereotypes: the Italian's
friendliness of pasta, the Jew's thriftiness (or even miserliness), and the Greek's predilection for
anal intercourse" are most common though he
does make occasional forays into more in­
depth analysis: "Beneath the implied stupidity
of one of the men lies another implication: "We
will fight oppression and seek our freedom at
all costs."

If this "analysis" is weak, it becomes even
weaker in Goodwin's most offensive chapter,
"Better Blatant than Latent: Conflict and the
Gay Subculture." In the space of six pages
Goodwin lists 25 (one quarter the total) ex­
tremely anti-woman and/or anti-lesbian jokes
with the justification that "gay men are men
and we are a subculture; therefore the jokes traditionally al­
lowed men in most cultures. Many of the jokes
told in our society, including a large number of
those told by gay men, are misogynistic. In these
jokes (told by gay and straight men alike) we see a set of shared attitudes: women are seen as
ignorant, useless (except for sex), and incom­
plete without a man."

It hardly seems necessary to comment. Per­
haps within the context of a complex discus­
sion of the relationship among male homo­
sexuality, homophobia and misogyny it would
be acceptable to use the examples Goodwin
does. But the passage I have quoted is, basic­
ally, his entire discussion. He supplements it
only with joke explications like "These two
jokes imply that women need penises and the
theory, stated by the former Miss Gay Ohio
Valley, U.S.A., that "women pose a threat." He
does not even offer a defense for his sudden
decision to veer away from the topic of gay
male folklore; "gay men are men."

That brings us to my final question. Who is
Goodwin talking about? Even though he says
in the introduction "I believe it is appropriate
to use the terms gay and homosexual in the
way that they are used by most gay people" it is
often unclear just who Goodwin has in mind
when he refers to "gay people."

"Gay" sometimes refers to women and men:
"Although the gay subculture by no means
includes all homosexual men and women, it
does embrace a large number of them." Some­
times, though, it means only men: "Drawing
upon this ability, gays take note of many cues emitted by other men...

To add to the confusion, he also uses "les­
bians" (there is some indication that "gay
women" are different from "lesbians"). In this
study I have limited my comments to the folk­
lore of gay men. There are several reasons
for excluding lesbian material from considera­
tion.

More Man will not, I suppose, actually do
any great harm. But I fear that its primary use
will be to provide some ignorant, immature
gays — gay ones, I guess, because the book
will be shelved with other "gay"
books and
guarded, immature heterosexuals wouldn't be
caught there — with a source for some new
offensive jokes.

In this way, and by being one of the few (purportedly) academic studies of gay male
folklore, it will perpetuate and legitimate the
idea that women are objects, a little like sex­
packs, a little like slugs.

..."Closer" reviewed

• continued from page 5
tone, and not just the dramatic persona of none of
whom are, of themselves, interesting. The
result is metapornography. Terrifying and
exhilarating. If they ever make a movie of
this book (doubtful, that), I expect Matt Ster­
lings and David Cronen­
berg would have to co­
direct it.

In fact, there are some elements in the
book which invite cinematic treatment. A boy
fails to notice his mother's death, which
happens right in front of his eyes, because
he is strung out on acid. Later, when his father
asks him how his mother is doing, the boy
answers simply, "Dead."

Another boy thinks he's George Michael and
worries that his classmates envy his super­
stardom.

An overweight pedophile procures his
boyfriends' asses so he can pretend they're screw­
ing them after they're dead. Stuff like that.

There's probably going to be some talk
about this novel. People are going to call it
irresponsible in its depiction of unsafe sex
(unsafe, in this con­
text, is an understate­
ment). People are going to accuse it of
being homophobic. People are going to say
that it promotes halluci­
cinogenic drugs and
suicide for young
people. But almost no one's going to put this baby
down after the first fifty pages.
...a promise to keep

- continued from page 10

Lot of advice, but by offering their support and declaring their trust in me, they helped to put the story in perspective.

If I was to do a credible job in reporting on Promise, I would have to be fair and just. I was not there to take names and ruin people’s lives. I was not there to pass judgment on the program’s validity. I was not there to cast guilt on those people who administer the program.

Rather, I was there to learn about the workings of change therapy and to learn about the ideologies of the people who promote it. My assignment, as I saw it, was to present my findings in such a way that my readers could make their own judgments.

That’s what journalism — ethical journalism — is all about.

The reactions to my three-week long series have been interesting. On one hand, I have been criticized for being too even-handed in my approach. One person even said he was uncertain if I was for change therapy or against it.

On the other hand, I have been criticized for being grossly unfair to the men of Promise: “I hope none of the men in that program try to kill themselves when they read your story,” someone charged.

But a third person told me she was glad I had done the story because, she said, it was a story worth telling. “It’s time people are made to think about it,” she said. “You should be proud of the even-handed way you handled it.”

Obviously, I preferred the last comment, because I am proud of the story. But not because of the reasons you might think: increased circulation, more people talking about the paper, the idea that the story could lead to a better-paying job with a bigger newspaper.

Instead, I am proud of the story because of the diverse opinions expressed by people as a result of reading it. The most any reporter can hope for is writing something that will make people think. If they agree, that’s great. If they disagree, that’s wonderful. You see, if I can make one person think about something, if I can challenge the conventional wisdom, then I’ve succeeded.

And that’s a promise.

Theatres to open new shows

by JEFF ELIS
Managing Editor

MID-SOUTH theatregoers will enjoy a wide variety of productions this summer: burlesque, drama, musicals and vintage comedy.

Tennessee Repertory Theatre (TRT), TPAC’s resident professional theater company, will launch its new, more intimate Second Stage theatre Thursday, June 8, in the performance space at West End United Methodist Church.

TRT’s Second Stage productions will offer Nashville audiences an off-Broadway-type theatrical experience in the space, which seats only 100 people.

Marsha Norman’s “Night Mother,” the Pulitzer Prize-winning story of a woman who holds her mother physically and emotionally hostage, opens on June 8 and plays for eight performances through June 18.

BLOOD Knot, South African playwright Athol Fugard’s two-character play set in a squalid section of Johannesburg, examines the lives of two black brothers — one dark-skinned and one light-skinned. It will be staged June 22 through July 2.

“Our new Second Stage offerings will expand both our creative and performance capabilities and is the next step in the continued development of a sophisticated regional theater company based in Nashville,” said TRT artistic director Mac Pickle. “The program will allow us to stage plays on a smaller scale, while at the same time, we can consider a wider variety of contemporary plays, classical plays and original pieces without the economic and artistic constraints which accompany our larger productions at TPAC.”

Tickets for both “Night Mother” and “Blood Knot” are now on sale at all CentraTik locations, Sound Shop Record stores and Tower Records and Books. All tickers are $10 and seating is general admission. Tickets can also be obtained by calling (615) 320-7172.

MEMPHIS’ PROFESSIONAL theatre troupe, Playhouse on the Square, will premiere its production of Sugar Babies on Friday, June 9. Set to run through July 23, the show brings back the time when chorus girls and comics ruled the stage, when audiences were treated to a sensory smorgasbord of spectacular dance numbers, hilarious satiric sketches, rapid-fire one-liners, novelty acts, gags, gimmicks and the inevitable schtick.

Sugar Babies features such Jimmy McHugh songs as “I Can’t Give You Anything But Love, Baby,” “Don’t Blame Me” and “The When You and I Were Young Maggie Blues.” The show is also spiced with songs created for it by Arthur Malvin, Jay Livingston and Ray Evans.

Gene Katz and Julie Ann DiPetro headline the cast, with Rebecca Klinger, Peter Colburn, Kelly Clinton, Jeff Huffman, Gabrielle Mason, Kerri Rivers, Kim Sanders and Colleen Suduth.

Tickets are $14 for Friday and Saturday night performances and $12 for Thursday and Sunday. Reservations may be made by calling the Playhouse on the Square/Circuit Playhouse box office at (901) 726-4056.

NASHVILLE’S Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) will present the world premiere of a new musical written by Nashville playwright/composer Jan Scarchour. A Rock Wedding will be produced by TPAC, sponsored by AT&T, and will run August 18-27.

Mark Redford, author of Children of a Lesser God, will act as artistic consultant for the production and is involved with the play’s development for several years.

The summer production of A Rock Wedding is the first time that TPAC has served as both producer and presenter of an original work.

“We believe that TPAC and all arts organizations should encourage artistic growth and development,” says TPAC’s Managing Director Warren Sumners. “It is out here in the heart of the country that many of our Broadway shows are born. Shows don’t just open on Broadway any more. They’re given readings and developmental production first. Because of this, we felt that producing A Rock Wedding was right for TPAC and Nashville.”

OTHER UPCOMING SHOWS in the Nashville area include the Circle Players’ production of The King and I, to be presented at St. Cecilia Academy next month.

Lakewood Community Theatre, located on Old Hickory Boulevard in Lakewood (near the Hermitage Golf Course) will premiere Garsen Karin’s Born Yesterday on Friday, July 7.
Celebrate Pride

THIS YEAR marks the twentieth anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. It is a time to celebrate our accomplishments, to reflect on our defeats, a time to renewed commitment.

One of the most important things we can do is to support the efforts of those organizing Pride Week celebrations. Phone (901) 524-4297 in Memphis, or (615) 297-4293 in Nashville. And get involved.

BOX 40422

Angry with station

Dear Dare,

Too often, it is all too easy to sit back and do nothing when something is wrong; do nothing and nothing gets done! I have seen this happen so very often in the gay community and was once one who was less motivated.

I was really incensed after reading the article that appeared in last week's "Waves" regarding the homophobic broadcasts of WKDF-FM 103.3's parody of the Angels' song "My Boyfriend's Back." I was so pissed off that I acted on my feelings and wrote a letter to their program director. My intentions are also to send a copy of my letter and a letter of complaint to each level in the hierarchy of the FCC [Federal Communications Commission].

WKDF is bound by the FCC's licensing requirements, in which community service is giving them to me. If you have any of the addresses for these FCC offices, I would greatly appreciate your providing them to me.

Thank you for your continued support of the local gay community and the encouragement to fight homophobia in all quarters.

ALAN HERBERS
Nashville

Editor's note: The Federal Communications Commission receives citizen complaints at the following address:

Dennis R. Patrick, Chair
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20554

ANGER WITH STATION

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ALAN HERBERS
Nashville

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LETTERS

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

ARCHIVES

Dare is available on microfilm at the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Dare thanks and wishes good luck to Anne Taylor former advertising sales manager. Taylor is coordinating the display in Nashville of the NAMES Project National AIDS Quilt later this month. — DARE STAFF PHOTO
Miss Firecracker

reviewed by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Y'ALL HAVE got to go see Miss Firecracker. You'll just love it!

Miss Firecracker, the new film comedy starring Holly Hunter and Mary Steenburgen, is yet another touching, funny, slightly skewed look at the American family from Beth Henley.

Henley, who based the screenplay on her off-Broadway hit, looks at the South differently from most playwrights and screenwriters. Hers is a decidedly native perspective, while everyone else seems to look at us with a certain level of bemused condescension.

It's to be expected. Henley is, after all, from Jackson, Mississippi (and this friend of mine Tamale anymore, I go to church on Sunday when she was nine years old, when Camelle was a child, and I try to have an orphan over for dinner at least once a week.

Camelle's cousin, who's just out of a sanitarium and hair redder than Wanda Miller's.

Many of Henley's characters are never one-note caricatures, but are real human beings. Like Eudora Welty and Flannery O'Connor before her, Henley is not afraid to show her characters — warts and all — for the general public to see, examine and dissect.

Like Welty, Flannery and company, Henley's works are loyal to the recurring themes of Southern literature: family, honor, pride.

And when her characters are at their most despicable and questionable, Henley manages to put them in such a sweet little package that you wouldn't mind taking them home to meet your mama.

The heroine of Miss Firecracker, who aspires to winning the annual Yazoo City Fourth of July celebration, is Camelle Scott, a 26-year-old orphan with a heart as big as the Pearl River and hair redder than Wanda Miller's.

Wanda Miller is my Mama's beautician. I refer to Wanda, you see, because the characters of Miss Firecracker are so real, so richly drawn, that you just can't help comparing them to people you've known since way back when from back home.

WHEN WE FIRST MEET Camelle she's flushing the guts out of a Mississippi pond-risen catfish. Hoping to get out of catfish and go to Memphis and "become a model or somethin'," she dreams of being Miss Firecracker.

Her dream of winning the title goes back to when she was nine years old, when Camelle was a child, and I try to have an orphan over for dinner at least once a week.

She has died her hair a bright red to match the pageant — a super-patriotic, military toe tap to "The Star Spangled Banner" — for five years. Her costume is being created by a woman who started sewing at the age of four, making clothes for the bullfrogs that lived in her front yard.

Camelle's talent isn't as offbeat as you might suspect. One contestant does an act with hula hoops, another plays the piano rather badly and a third does the famous Scarlett O'Hara "I'll never go hungry again" speech from Gone With the Wind (just like Carol Perkins, Miss McNairy County 1972, did in the Miss Tennessee pageant).

AFTER THE FILM, someone remarked, "That movie was right about one thing: about how serious people take those pageants down in Mississippi!"

My reply: "No, it wasn't. They take pageants much more seriously than that. Nobody I know in Mississippi would have worn such ugly evening gowns, thank you very much!"

Although in the hands of someone else, Miss Firecracker could be written off as just another movie about a bunch of dumb Southerners acting crazy, in Henley's able hands — and with a wonderful cast — it's pretty much on target. From the frezzy surrounding pageant preparations to the hot, sticky, sultry weather that is summer in Yazoo City, it paints an amazingly good likeness of Southern people.

There's Camelle (played engagingly by the always delightful Holly Hunter, born in Georgia), the woman who refuses to let circumstances limit her ambitions.

Elain (Mary Steenburgen, a native Arkansan, in a role that is at once both sympathetic and unlikeable), the fading beauty queen, grasping desperately at her past glory days in an effort to fend off time.

Popeye (the superb Alfre Woodard in one of her best roles to date; and a big old thank-you to whoever returned Steenburgen and Woodard, both of whom were so wonderful in Cross Creek): the woman struggling to free herself from the constraints that come with being a black woman in Mississippi.

Delmont (Tim Robbins, fresh from last summer's Bull Durham): Elain's brother and Camelle's cousin, who's just out of a sanitarium and determined to exact his revenge on Elain and Yazoo City society.

These are people that you're likely to meet in any Mississippi town or any Tennessee town or any Southern town, for that matter.

And while Miss Firecracker is about a beauty pageant — and a lot of people really hate beauty pageants — it's about so much more than that.

It's about refusing to let life get you down whenever you know you're better than people say you are.

It's about having a dream and working for it despite the smell left on your hands from doing a job you hate.

It's about hanging onto memories — and about letting them go when you don't need them any more.
M A R K E T

Announcements
* Remember their names. Help bring part of NAMES Project AIDS quilt to Nashville for Pride Week. Donations to PRIDE (Quilt), Box 24181, Nashville, TN 37202.
* T-GALA yard sale 1401 Cedar, Nashville. Saturday, June 3, Sunday, June 4, 8am-5pm. Donations accepted. Info 615-297-4259.
* Ya snooze, ya lose. Waterbed wheeler and drawers. Good condition. $170. 615-352-5823.

WANTED: Reliable, hardworking self-starters in Knoxville and Memphis for commissioned ad sales. Great part-time, high-pay work for students, etc. 615-327-Dare.

WANTED: Reliable and energetic people to help deliver Dare in Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville. Write Dare, Box 40422, Nashville, 37204 or phone 615-327-DARE.

Decorated Cakes, Weddings, Birthdays, etc. 615-269-2026. 9 years of professional experience.

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

LONG HOURS. HARD WORK. NO PAY. Good condition. $170. 615-352-5823.

• LONG HOURS. HARD WORK. NO PAY.

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

• J.S., 32-year-old professional GWM new to Nashville and looking for stable relationship.

• 36-year-old professional GWM new to Nashville and gay life. Enjoys dining out, theater, reading, quiet time, sharing. Seeks friendship, possible relationship with sensitive and caring man. DARE DRAWER 37.

• Dear Lord Gargantus: I love you, for sentimental reasons. And, you can always guest star on my game show anytime. Mr. Fatty.

• You shake anybody's family tree hard enough and a couple of homos are gonna come out.

• Sign carried by author Larry Kramer, in response to New York Newsday's headline "(New York mayor Ed Koch: I'm Heterosexual.)"

• I have to admit that basically, I am gay. Homosexuals may go through a lot of pain, and I would support anyone who is totally frank, because it's not ever easy. My mother was the first person I told that I was gay. She was understanding, and still is. That made it easier for me. I've always had a good relationship with her. Entertainer Ellen John, as quoted in "Natural Quotations, edited by Leigh W. Rutledge.

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QUOTES

You tell 'em, Steve

"A new organization, the Tennessee Coalition for Traditional Values, has been created. "Organizers claim their mission is to restore morals to American society. They plan to do this by encouraging lawmakers to legislate against gay and lesbian individuals as well as opposing a woman's right to an abortion. "I personally find nothing moral about an organization that desires to dictate who we are allowed to love or what we are allowed to do with our bodies. One thing we do not need is another hate-group opposed to freedom and equality." -Steve Davidson, in a letter to the editor of the Nashville Tennessean.

"Captain, I see from your report that Flevius died. I am sorry. I liked that huge sun worshipper." -Dr. "Bones" McCoy (DeForest Kelly), chief medical officer of the starship Enterprise, in an episode of the 50s television series Star Trek.

"It is embarrassing that Tennessee has a law on its books that blatantly permits an employer to fire someone, demote someone, or deny someone job benefits just because the employee carries a virus. The law, as written, does not reflect this state's compassion.

- The Nashville Tennessean, in an editorial on the exclusion of AIDS from the state's handicap-discrimination law.

"I know lots of people who are gay. It's natural to me... They're the most receptive of any audience I've ever had. They just always seem to have a good time. They seem to be free spirits." - Entertainer Dolly Parton.

"We find it repugnant." - Michael Wayne, son of film star John (the Duke) Wayne, in testimony before the New York state legislature. Wayne was complaining about a greeting card depicting his father with bright red lips, and containing a "homosexual message." The legislature is considering a proposal to require permission from the estates of dead celebrities to use the stars' likenesses in artworks and advertising. Ten other states, including Tennessee and California, now have such laws.

"I'd have those damn libbers all over me.* - Representative Frank Buck (D-Dowdelltown), chair of the Tennessee House Judiciary Committee, on why he admitted to the Knoxville Journal that he opposed criminalizing spouse rape, while not telling papers elsewhere in the state.

"These guys aren't here to picket! Their wives are so ugly, they come to cruise the gays!" - Graffitii on a sign in front of a construction site in Boston's heavily-gay South End, as quoted in Boston's Gay Community News. The non-union site is being picked by unionized workers.

*I wanted an out-of-the-closet gay person to play Arnold. That left me and about three British actors.

- Playwright Harvey Fierstein, on the suggestion that a big-name star would have improved Torch Song Trilogy's Oscar potential and commercial success.

"I never hugged or kissed my dad. If I did, he'd think I was a sissy. You know, gay." - Pete Rose Jr., on his relationship with Cincinnati Reds player/manager Pete Rose, as quoted in Gentlemen's Quarterly.

"You shake anybody's family tree hard enough and a couple of homos are gonna come out.

- B.L., a character played by Brian Keith in the CBS-TV series Heartland.

"...And I'm Marilyn Monroe."

- Sign carried by author Larry Kramer, in response to New York Newsday's headline ("(New York mayor Ed Koch: I'm Heterosexual.)"

"I have to admit that basically, I am gay. Homosexuals may go through a lot of pain, and I would support anyone who is totally frank, because it's not ever easy. My mother was the first person I told that I was gay. She was understanding, and still is. That made it easier for me. I've always had a good relationship with her. Entertainer Ellen John, as quoted in "Natural Quotations, edited by Leigh W. Rutledge.

"I never in my life had a gay man make a pass at me. I sometimes wonder what the hell's wrong with me!"

- Science fiction author Harlan Ellison.

"Seems sort of weird to identify someone solely by their sexuality. I know sex is a big motivator, a hot commodity, a way to spend your free time, but, c'mon, are we so semantically petty to stricken that this is the best we can do when we talk about each other? I'm 'straight' and you're 'gay.'"

- Atlantans Mike Malloy, "token heterosexual columnist" for Atlanta's The News.

"My lover and I have been using latex condoms for over four years — and in conjunction with peanut oil, almond oil, vitamin E oil and even alcohol. We had suspected a chemical reaction between the lubes and the rubbers for quite some time, especially when a certain lube reduced one condom to a steaming blob of jelly. Others choked the chicken till it nearly died... We thought the condom companies were playing a cruel joke on us."

- Letter to the San Diego Gay Times' advice columnist from a reader who was surprised to read a news story on the danger of using oil-based lubricants with latex condoms.