Texas judicial panel censures Hampton

by JEFF ELLIS
Editor

Exactly one year to the day he sentenced a convicted killer to a lighter sentence because the victims were gay, Dallas Judge Jack Hampton was formally censured Tuesday, November 28, by the Texas State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

The action by the Commission was the strongest action the panel could take, short of removing Hampton from the bench. Lesbian and gay activists in Dallas have vowed to work toward Hampton's defeat at the polls when the Republican judge faces re-election next year.

John Thomas of the Dallas Gay Alliance, which has worked to oust Hampton since the controversy began, said his organization will continue efforts to have Hampton removed from the bench come election time.

Hampton has been at the center of the swirling controversy since the publication last December of Hampton's published remarks prompting an "outpouring of outrage" according to DGA's Thomas.

"I put prostitutes and gays at about the same level, and I'd be hard put to give somebody life for killing a prostitute," Hampton said. "I didn't much care for queers cruising the streets picking up teen-age boys. I've got a teenage boy."

Hampton further indicated he would have given Bednarski a harsher sentence if his victims had been "a couple of housewives out shopping, not hurting anybody."

Hampton's published remarks prompted an "outpouring of outrage" according to DGA's Thomas.

"The incident was covered extensively by all the media. Almost all call-in radio shows in the Dallas area last December dealt with it and letters to the editor filled the pages of the TIMES-HERALD and the DALLAS MORNING NEWS," he said.

Complaints filed against Hampton were first heard last January during hearings conducted by the Texas Commission on Judicial Conduct. No public announcement of any action on the part of the Commission was made until Tuesday, exactly one year after the close of the Bednarski trial.

During the ensuing weeks after his remarks were first published, Hampton issued a public apology "for [his] choice of words," but refused to apologize for the sentence given Bednarski.

Memphis unveils center

Gay & Lesbian Community Center opens

by JEFF ELLIS
Editor

Longtime Memphis civil rights activist Novella Smith-Arnold will deliver the keynote address at Sunday's gala grand opening ceremonies of the Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center (MGLCC).

Festivities are planned to start at 4 p.m., Sunday, December 3, at the newly-opened center which is located at 1291 Madison Avenue in the Midtown area. The event will begin with a ribbon cutting ceremony featuring community dignitaries and will be followed by speakers representing various lesbian and gay social and political organizations, according to Allen Cook, editor of GAZE, the organizational newsletter of the Memphis Gay Coalition.

Smith-Arnold, long noted for her involvement in the civil rights and human rights movements, will be the featured speaker at the event.

"She's a community volunteer/activist of the first order," Cook explained. "She's always been recognized as a champion of the civil rights movement and has long embraced underdog causes."

In addition, Smith-Arnold was one of three recent candidates for the Memphis City Council seat vacated by Bicky Peete. Peete was forced to resign his seat on the Council after he was found guilty of accepting a bribe in an FBI undercover sting operation.

Representatives from all lesbian and gay organizations in Memphis have been invited to take part in the event, Cook said.

The formal grand opening of the MGLCC follows more than three years of efforts to establish such a space in the Bluff City. During 1989, under the auspices of the Memphis Gay Coalition, the MGLCC board was incorporated to secure the center. In October, a lease was signed on the Midtown location.

The center has been open for about two months. During that time a number of meetings and social activities have been scheduled there.

Funding for the center will come from those groups which use it, as well as from donations, memberships and fundraisers. The center may be reserved for one day, on a first-come, first-served basis for a $35 fee. Groups interested in using the center must be approved by the MGLCC Board. Rules and applications for use of the building are available at the center.

The Memphis Gay Coalition was the first organization to commit to holding some of its meetings at the center, including its monthly Gay Rap sessions and its December 18 Christmas dinner.

450 gather for Creating Change Conference

Thirty-four states represented at second annual NGLTF confab

from STAFF REPORTS

Some 450 gay and lesbian activists from 34 states gathered in Washington in mid-November for the second annual Creating Change Conference, organized and sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).

The conference was highlighted by a special NGLTF award presented to the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus for its work to pass the state gay rights bill (signed into law by Gov. Michael Dukakis November 15); a day-long Fundraising Institute designed specifically for gay and lesbian organizations; a demonstration at the White House to protest government policies of excluding and discharging lesbians and gay men from the military; three keynote addresses and 48 workshops.

"The most exciting part of the conference for all of us on the NGLTF staff is that it has become the annual gathering of the leading grassroots political activists in our movement nationwide," said NGLTF executive director Luvashi Vaid. "When the audience in workshops is as distinguished as the panelists, it makes for very dynamic discussions."

The 48 workshop sessions over three days focused on violence, family issues, media organizing, organizational development, privacy and sodomy law repeal, lobbying and constituent organizing.

Participants took part in a rally calling upon the government to reassess its military policies regarding lesbians and gay men. Leading the protest was Perry Watkins, the former Army officer ousted because he was gay.

Washington Mayor Marion Barry proclaimed November 12 as "Perry Watkins Day" in the nation's capital.

Next year's Creating Change Conference is set for November 9-10, 1990, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. A local host committee will be spearheaded by the Gay and Lesbian Community Action Council of Minneapolis.
**Sullivan condemns suicide report**

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan has agreed with Rep. William Dannemeyer (R-Calif.) in condemning his own department’s “Report of the Secretary’s Task Force on Youth Suicide,” which includes a section on suicide among lesbian and gay youth.

Sullivan said those portions of the report which deal with gay youth “run contrary” to the aim of “advancing traditional family values.” In a written response to Dannemeyer’s demands that Sullivan denounce the report, the HHS Secretary stated that “the views expressed in the paper entitled ‘Gay Male and Lesbian Youth Suicide’ do not in any way represent my personal beliefs or the policy of this department."

“Federal policies must be crafted with great care so as to strengthen rather than undermine the institution of the family,” wrote Sullivan. “In my opinion, the views expressed in the paper run contrary to that aim.”

**Skinheads convicted in gay beating**

WASHINGTON — Two self-proclaimed Skinhead gang members were convicted last week of charges of assault with intent to kill and armed robbery in the September, 1988, beating of a District of Columbia gay man.

The convictions of Mark Hyder and David McCall came at the end of a four-day trial in D.C. Superior Court and some two months after the victim, Rodney Johnson, filed a multi-million dollar civil lawsuit against eight members of the gang.

Members of the gang had engaged in a weekend of beatings and robberies of gay men in the Dupont Circle area of the District, including the attack on Johnson. The suit is the first of its kind ever filed by a gay person against members of the Skinheads movement.

**Wendy’s apologizes to American Family Assoc.**

NEW YORK — The Wendy’s fast food chain has apologized for advertising during a rerun of NBC’s L.A. Law which featured a lawsuit by a gay athlete. The apology came after a campaign by the American Family Association (AFA).

AFA founder Donald Wildmon asked members of the organization to send complaints to Wendy’s about its advertising on the show. Wendy’s sent a form letter to those who complained. "Obviously, the particular episode of this show was not consistent with the kind of programming we wish to be associated with. Moreover, Wendy’s tries to sponsor programs we feel have a wide appeal to the family viewing audience," states the letter.

**Gay Coast Guard officer discharged**

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Ricardo Huertas, a Petty Officer in the Coast Guard, was discharged last month after telling superiors that he is gay. Huertas plans to file suit against the Coast Guard because of the discharge.

Following the recommendation of a Coast Guard review board, Admiral Paul Yost, Jr., the Coast Guard Commandant, ordered Huertas’ discharge as a “class-three homosexual.” A class-three homosexual is anyone who admits to being gay but has not been charged with engaging in homosexual sexual activities.

Huertas acknowledged being gay last January while making a complaint to his superiors about derogatory statements made by his shipmates on the cutter Rush.

**Hungarian officials apologize for raid**

BUDAPEST, Hungary — The Hungarian government has officially apologized to Homeros Lambda, a lesbian and gay organization, for an unauthorized raid on the group’s headquarters last March.

Police entered the headquarters, knocked down the receptionist and took two gay men into custody. Police officials claim the raid was initiated by district policemen acting without authorization.

Homeros Lambda is the first Eastern European lesbian and gay group to be officially recognized by its government.

**Supporters of the Southeastern Conference for Lesbians and Gay Men take part in a march in Raleigh, N.C., site of the group’s 1990 conference. — DAREFILE PHOTO**

**Southeastern Conference plans March confab**

RALEIGH, N.C. — Plans are being finalized for the 15th Annual Southeastern Conference for Lesbians and Gay Men to be held at the Radisson Plaza Hotel on March 22-25, 1990.

The Conference Steering Committee accepted suggestions for workshops and speakers through today. Six major speakers will be chosen on the basis of their activism in areas such as religion, legal issues, lesbian/gay history, business and the military. Workshops will reflect the conference theme of “Working to Strengthen Our Southeastern Communities.”

For more information on the conference, contact SECLGM at (919) 833-1209.

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Clarksville
Flanders resigns OSGL post
Citing "differences of opinion," Alan Flanders, co-president of the recently-organized Organization for the Support of Gays and Lesbians (OSGL) at Clarksville's Austin Peay State University, has resigned.

Flanders held Dare that he had resigned his office as well as his membership in the group because of these "differences." Flanders had been instrumental in organizing OSGL at the start of the 1989-90 school year. An organization for lesbian and gay students at APSU had not been active since 1980.

Earlier, in 1979, a case filed against the Tennessee Board of Regents by APSU lesbian and gay students had forced a federal court ruling that said state universities and colleges could not prohibit such groups.

Jackson
Pro-choice workshop next week
A pro-choice political skills workshop will be held in Jackson Saturday, December 9, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Jackson Civic Center, 400 South Highland.

Sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Tennessee and Tennesseeans Keeping Abortion Legal and Safe (TKALS), the agenda includes a review of local legislators' voting records on abortion, an overview of anti-abortion legislation in other states, and a discussion of anti-choice legislation expected to be introduced during the 1990 session of the Tennessee legislature. Local legislators have been invited to meet with participants for an informal discussion during the lunch hour, according to ACLU's Hedy Weinberg.

For more information, contact ACLU at (615) 320-7142 or TKALS at (615) 237-0821.

Knoxville
Interfaith AIDs service set
"A Service of Hope and Remembrance for Those Affected by AIDS," an interfaith service sponsored by the Knoxville Ministerial Association, is set for Sunday, December 3, at 3 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, 413 W. Cumberland Avenue. The service recognizes World AIDs Day, proclaimed December 1 by the World Health Organization.

"Through the service on December 3, our community will be provided with an opportunity to express their care and concern for those who are presently affected by and living with AIDS as well as for those who grieve for the loss of life resulting from AIDS," a spokesperson said.

Congregations participating include Baptist, Methodist, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian, Unitarian, United Church of Christ, Roman Catholic, Episcopalian and Metropolitan Community Church. Rabbi Arthur Weiner of Heska Amura will present the message.

NCSA honours Galloway
Rev. Bob Galloway, pastor of the Knoxville congregation of Metropolitan Community Church, will be among those honored Monday night, December 4, at the religious service
Sneak peek: Book previews

compiled by SHERRIE DRYDEN
Book Editor

V O L U M E 2, N U M B E R 48

Winter, 1989, Book Section

A spirited first novel

A VISITATION OF SPIRITS. Randall Kenan. New York: Grove Press, 1989. 372 pages. $17.95. reviewed by JOE MARSH. Staff Writer

Randall Kenan's A VISITATION OF SPIRITS is a seductive book in its own way. It is a mesmerizing bit of hell-raising. After summing up the forces of evil and destruction, Horace encounters Dickensian remembrance of events of his past, a death and a surprise. The hallucinogenic ride ends with a confrontation with his righteous cousin Jimmy in a schoolyard, a confrontation that is the hidden seed of the entire novel.

There are parts of this novel which outshine the whole — or, at least, leave separate impressions.

I refer particularly to a Baptist-style witches' sabbath as envisioned by a sixteen-year-old Goodman Brown. I refer also to some of the novel's realistic scenes — Kenan's sensuous evocation of hog-killing in the backwoods of North Carolina. In addition to the cleverness of the novel's premise, Kenan shows a pitch-perfect sense of the holy war experienced by young men of a conservative upbringing who happen also to be homosexual.

No less impressive is Kenan's masterful construction of the narrative. Despite complexities like shifting points of view and the anachronistic juxtaposition of the events of two long and hair-raising days seventeen months apart, the novel is charmingly straightforward, though not "artless," and unexpectedly simple.

Kenan uses two dates during which the most dramatic events occur, December 8, 1985, and April 30, 1989, but the story spans four generations of the Cross family, the most revered black family in Tims Creek. The two dates correlate to the two central figures of the novel: Jimmy Greene, a Baptist minister and widower who sacrifices his own ambition to fulfill his family's ambition for him, and his rebellious younger cousin, Horace Cross, whose alienation from the community and himself drives him to desperate and blasphemous acts.

The Reverend James Greene lives among the dead. On December 8, 1985, he is driving his great-aunt Ruth and her great-uncle Zeke to visit a relative dying in the hospital. Their reminiscences collide and blend with Jimmy's.

He remembers his wife Anne, a beautiful northern woman, intelligent, never wholly his and dead at age 37. He struggles with his love/hate for the monolithic community, which in ensuring the survival of the family and race thus far, has grown strong and sadly intolerant of diversity within itself. Jimmy struggles more specifically with the thought of his cousin Horace, who is beyond his help — beyond the reach of Grace as he understands it.

Most of Horace Cross's adventure occurs in the early morning of April 30, the previous year. It is a mesmerizing bit of hell-raising. After summing up the forces of evil and destruction, Horace encounters Dickensian remembrance of events of his past, a death and a surprise. The hallucinogenic ride ends with a confrontation with his righteous cousin Jimmy in a schoolyard, a confrontation that is the hidden seed of the entire novel.

There are parts of this novel which outshine the whole — or, at least, leave separate impressions.

I refer particularly to a Baptist-style witches' sabbath as envisioned by a sixteen-year-old Goodman Brown. I refer also to some of the novel's realistic scenes — Kenan's sensuous evocation of hog-killing in the country, and a memorable episode in a service station wherein a little girl shows an old woman how to play Pac-Man.

It is easy to see that Kenan combines the influence of other American writers with his own voice. The stamp of American regionalism is also very evident. The beginning and the end of the novel are reminiscent of Sherwood Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio. The stream-of-consciousness ruminations on history, culture and individual worth remind me of Toni Morrison's use of the technique. The fever-pitched religious atmosphere is a perfect synthesis of James Baldwin and Flannery O'Connor.

But comparisons like these are risky, usually embarrassing, sometimes insulting, to the writer himself. A work of art is a seductive book in its own way. It is the sort of novel one would expect as a third or fourth publication. Even in a decade full of "first-novel wonders," this one is a wonderful surprise.
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Marilyn Hacker: "We are asked folks who are "in the know" — booksellers, publishers, writers, librarians, our own staff and other critics — for their personal list of the ten best gay and lesbian books of the '80s."

At the same time, we asked them to comment on what they think we can expect in the '90s, and, just for fun, what they thought the worst gay/lesbian book of the decade was.

We offered no definitions of any of our categories — best or worst, gay or lesbian. Although we did ask people to rank their choices from 1 to 10, some preferred not to, and listed their choices in alphabetical or chronological order. Some even listed books published earlier, usually protesting that the entry counted because the book was released in the '80s. A few couldn't resist throwing in an extra title or two.

To compile our list of Dar's top gay and lesbian books of the '80s, we assigned points to the books on everyone's list — 10 points for a number 1 listing, 9 points for number 2, etc. Then we added up the points.

The individual responses were impressively diverse — it was a surprise to see that so many books were published in the '80s. Each respondent's top three are listed inset.

As for the '90s, the consensus of our respondents is that there will be more: more gay and lesbian characters, more books published, more titles on the shelves of general book stores, more topics considered in nonfiction and fiction.

Barbara Grier: "There will be an increased awareness of our literature and some of the rising lights will completely bury the old records, the old names." The large commercial publishers will continue to increase their output of gay and lesbian titles, now that they know they will sell and that there is a large market for gay and lesbian books," commented Adam Schiff. "Mainstream publishers will publish more fiction with gay and gay themes than ever before."

George Graham: "I look forward to seeing more lesbian/gay characters, secondary and primary, in 'mainstream' fiction."

If our respondents are right, the books that are published will also become more readily available.

Kenneth W. Lloyd, Jr.: "More mainstream bookstores will expand their gay/lesbian sections."

Both Schiff and Polly Thistlewaite saw a connection between an increase in gay/lesbian books and publishing, and academic curricula: "Gay/lesbian studies and the companion academic library market will support more anthropological/academic studies, independent gay/preses will strengthen," Thistlewaite said.

Luz María Umphrie wrote of her experiences at a Hispanic literature conference, where she witnessed both the mainstream interest in gay and lesbian writers, and the increased academic importance of gay studies. "It was fascinating to see straight people being interested in gay and lesbian books, and in the development of a gay and lesbian theory of reading. I expect this trend of reading gay/lesbian literature by straightists interested in Hispanic literature to continue, since some of the major Hispanic writers in the U.S.A. are gay or lesbian."

Even though the mainstream press seems ready to jump on the gay/lesbian bandwagon, accessibility and community support will continue to be an important factor for gay and lesbian writers, publishers, and booksellers.

Category Six Books: "With the formation of the 'publishing triangle' and the institution of the Lambda Literary Awards the '90s will see many more quality works being published and read." Ed Hermance: "The print media will continue to be the best, most honest method for lesbians and gay men to communicate among ourselves. Print is not so heavily censored, and is cheap enough for broad use in a minority community."

Many respondents anticipate changes in content to accompany the increase in numbers of gay and lesbian books.

Katherine V. Forrest called this a golden age of gay and lesbian writing and publishing: "In contrast to earlier books which were almost exclusively about the discovery of our sexuality, we will see more and more fiction and nonfiction with relevance to those vast other areas.
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book previews

continued from page 5
caregivers.

REPORT FOR MURDER. Val McDermid. NY: St. Martin's, January 1990. $15.95.
The debut of Lindsay Gordon, who describes herself as a "cynical socialist lesbian feminist journalist." Commissioned to write a story on an English girls' school, Lindsay finds herself caught up in the murder of Lorna Smith-Couper, celebrated cellist and alumna of the school. Lindsay sets out to solve the crime with the help of playwright Cordelia Brown, also an alumna of the school.

Rose and Adelle have shared an untroubled, if quirky, eight-year relationship. When doctors find a lump in Adelle's breast, both women do what they can to cope.


Gorgeous Tallulah Mimosa slides in the window and roughs up private eye Sue Slate accepts The Case of the Kidnapped Kittens. Soon, though, the two feelines discover a murdered People and are on the trail of a human criminal.

UNNATURAL RELATIONS. Mike Seabrook. London: GMP, 1989. $10.95 paper.
His love for Christopher brings 15-year-old Jamie Potten close to a boy who is different in every way until Christopher is prosecuted for "buggery with a minor." In England an offense that can still result in life imprisonment.


WHITE BOOK/LE LIVRE BLANC. Jean Cocteau. San Francisco: City Lights, 1989. $5.95 paper.
When first published anonymously in 1928 LE LIVRE BLANC was attacked as obscene. This semi-autobiographical narrative describes the love affairs and attempts to find fulfillment of a young man, ending with a cynical socialist lesbian feminist journalist.

Lorca's family and friends were unwilling to acknowledge his homosexuality, leaving Gibson to rely heavily on speculation in this exploration of the Spanish writer's "hidden, tormented" side.


First-person narratives by women and men in religious life who have come to terms with their own homosexuality. The anthology is edited by Jeannine Gramick, a nun and co-editor of THE VATICAN AND HOMOSEXUALITY.


NICE JEWISH GIRLS: A LESBIAN ANTHOLOGY. Edited by Sue Slate. Santa Fe: Naiad, 1989. $16.95, $9.95 paper.
42 articles originally published in New York newspapers between 1913 and 1919, including Barnes' controversial piece written after she was forced to flee in order to accurately describe the ordeals of suffragists.


REPORT FOR MURDER. Val McDermid. NY: St. Martin's, January 1990. $15.95.

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**THE NAUGHTY BUT NICE REVUE**

Benefit for Nashville Hospice House for AIDS

$5 Donation

Sunday, December 3

Shows 9:30 P.M. & 11 P.M.

She's No Lady

The Queen of Sickness

Febe Khoale

The Blonde Bombshell Body Beautiful

34-C's Straight from Sally Jessy Raphael

Shelley Nicole

With Rhett and the Girls

Puppet Revue

Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 4:30 p.m. – 1:30 a.m.

Sunday, Noon – Midnight

Dinner served 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. daily

Steven Russell at the piano 9:00 p.m. – Midnight nightly

Sunday Brunch Noon – 3:00 p.m.
BETWEEN
THE LINES

Remembering

WITH THE END of a decade fast approaching, you tend to find yourself reminiscing a good deal of the time, remembering things you haven’t thought about in ages.

Often during these past few weeks as we’ve been planning our “eightsomthing” series, my mind has been filled with any number of ideas and thoughts — some disjointed and abstract, others clear and connected. It’s frightening how much of those thoughts are connected in some way to AIDS.

At the beginning of this decade little was known about AIDS. Few people talked about it. You didn’t know many people, if any at all, who had experienced it personally. You probably had no idea what HIV meant.

As a result, you did foolish things. You had unsafe sex. You slept with too many people. You did drugs and drank too much liquor. You didn’t have a good time. Dance the torpedoes. Full steam ahead.

Gradually, however, you began to read about AIDS, to hear it mentioned on TV talk shows. The litany of names and numbers began. At first you didn’t know anyone who had been affected. But as the days passed, you began to hear stories about old friends, people with slightly familiar names, total strangers who had AIDS.

Like the guy in Memphis who committed suicide. His name was Mark. He was a couple of years younger than me and he was a police officer. Imagine that? A gay cop.

He had dated my nephew Jamie for several months. If they went out to dinner it was always to the Gaslight Dinner Theatre on Brooks Road, a place I’d always imagined cops would go on a good time. I didn’t really know Mark very well, but we were friends I guess. Not long after he and my nephew stopped seeing each other he called to ask if he could borrow something to wear to a pink-and-green party (those preppie grosgrain belt in the official party colors.

We laughed about him trying to look preppe. We flirted with each other. And if he hadn’t already dated my nephew, the odds were we would have gone out together. As it was, we never did.

A couple of years later, someone asked if I knew Mark had killed himself.

“He had been in trouble with the police force. He thought they were gonna kick him off because he was gay,” someone said.

“Yes,” another offered. “He was afraid his family would find out.”

Gradually, the real reason came out. He had been diagnosed as being HIV-positive. To him — as well as to a lot of people in 1982, I suppose — an HIV-positive blood test was a death sentence.

Mark decided to cheat death at its own game. So he threw in the towel.

He was the first person I knew whose death could be attributed in some manner to AIDS.

When I heard that news, the disease suddenly ‘80s. —

I never knew the courage to admit it. I no longer can accept the public’s assumption that just because I am a lesbian, I must be for abortion. What’s prevented me, I think, from “coming out” as a pro-lifer sooner was probably my fear of being further marginalized.

I’ve waited too long to voice my opposition to the pro-choice movement, a movement that the gay press (including Dare) has for too long, and unrightly so, associated with the gay and lesbian rights movement.

There is no other issue today that divides us so clearly as the abortion issue. It is unique from other civil rights matters because it’s a classic example of conflicting civil rights: the right of a woman to control her own body and the right of an unborn child to survive.

In my opinion, it is the only civil rights struggle that involves the exercise of one’s “rights” at the expense of other human lives. I am all for the right for one to do with one’s body as he or she wishes, but that should not include the right to willfully destroy human life for the sake of convenience or for the right to willfully transmit AIDS.

I believe that if abortion-on-demand is permitted to continue, it will gradually erode respect for the sanctity of human life. If society continues to permit the destruction of a fetus for purposes of convenience, it can easily apply the same utilitarian approach to a senior citizen, a physically challenged child, a gay man, a lesbian woman or a person with AIDS.

Aborts are already performed on the basis of gender selection which, in the case of some straight couples, is genocide against female fetuses, and in cases of some extreme lesbian separatists, is genocide against male fetuses.

This means that if homosexuality were discovered to be indeed a genetic trait, many gay and lesbian fetuses will end up being aborted because they would be considered “handicapped” children in the eyes of their right-wing, ignorant and hysterical mothers. I’d hate to have our brother- and sisterhood, or any community for that matter, systematically undermined and destroyed simply because of irrational homophobia.

I first became aware of my decision not to support abortion back in 1974, one year after Roe v. Wade. I was in college, sitting in a bar with my roommate, listening to her recount the bitter relationship she’d had with her mother.

She told me with tears in her eyes that her mother had told her, more than once, that “if abortions were around in 1955, you wouldn’t be here.”

I couldn’t imagine at the time a more horrifying thing for a mother to tell her child than that. I still can’t. If her mother, who I later came to know as a very sick and selfish woman, had abortion as an option available to her and did indeed have one, my life would never have been touched by this woman, my roommate, who later became my closest friend and confidant.

I wish more gay men and lesbians would voice their support for and become active in the pro-life movement. The unborn, like us, are an oppressed minority. And oppressed minorities should support one another, especially one that has no voice or representation at all.

The 9cn letter mentioned two organizations that merit our support: Feminists for Life, 811 E. 47th Street, Kansas City, MO, 64110; and National Pro-Life Democrats, P.O. Box 23467, Minneapolis, MN, 55423.

Pro-life gay men and lesbians, let’s keep silent no longer.
Valuable steel magnolias

STEEL MAGNOLIAS. Directed by Herbert Ross. Screenplay by Robert Harling. reviewed by F. LYNNE BACHLEDA Staff Writer

THE VIRTUE of STEEL MAGNOLIAS is its values. It will, however, be widely seen, talked and written about because of its cast.

The magnetic assemblage of personas Dolly Parton, Olympia Dukakis, Sally Field, Julia Roberts, Daryl Hannah and Shirley MacLaine will attract people to this film that has a sincerity and decency that push past its flaws.

With such a lineup, this is, more than usual, an actor's film and Robert Harling's script has got the goods for them. Filmed in his hometown — Natchitoches, Louisiana — Harling wrote the play (upon which the movie is based) in a very few days as a personal exorcism of his feelings about his sister. He appears briefly in the film as the minister who marries Julia Roberts off in a swirling overdone aura of "Pepto Bismol pink."

Basic novice Harling's script has some real shine and snap to it. Without a doubt, it's Shirley MacLaine's Quiser (pronounced "wiser") character who has the most fun, the best lines ("You're a pig from hell!") and the best performance.

Julia Roberts runs a close second. She imbues what might be another vacuous Southern ingénue with backbone and depth. Her diabetic convulsion scene is riveting.

Sally Field might get an Academy Award nomination if only for a grave side performance where she spins out emotions faster than a kaleidoscope in an amusement park, each one locking into place as though on a turret.

Daryl Hannah's charge was to give three distinct phases to her character Annelle, and Olympia Dukakis' was to cultivate a Southern accent. Both pass for good.

Lovable Dolly Parton's Truvy, however, whose beauty shop and spirit are at the core, has trouble. I always want to see her succeed because I respect her so much, but her performance here is stilted, wooden. Truvy is the ultimate, genuine insider who knows the heart, business and wisdom of living. Yet Dolly seems best when she's playing the outsider (as in 9 to 5) or past urine whores.

Perhaps her heritage of determination to dig inside from the outside is at work here. Perhaps trying to hold the screen with all these other pros is a difficult proposition at best.

Herbert Ross' experienced direction (CALIFORNIA SIELE, PLAY IT AGAIN SAM and THE TURNING POINT, to name a few of his films) doesn't get in the way of the story with showy cinematography or gimmicky editing. The best scene for the camera is the slightly tipsy, dizzying wedding reception that feels just right.

The criticism that the film does not hold to the play that takes place entirely in Truvy's beauty shop with only the female characters is a weak one. Why represent it when you can show it? That's what movies do best.

Harling's hometown shows a quaint, comfortable Southern familiarity. The score by Georges Delerue (QUIZST) has a big strings theme reminiscent of Max Steiner's score for Gone With the Wind, and a homespun harmonica just to make doubly sure you know you're in a rural, easy place.

At two hours, the film runs a little long and is flawed in its character connections. Truvy is not really believable; Sally Field as a grandmother is a reach in concept, and there do exist those Southern stereotypes of quaint, sun-baked wackos, like those characters played by Shirley MacLaine and Tom Skerritt.

BUT FOR ALL these flaws, I liked it. It's still an essentially true story about friendships that last a lifetime, about the strong pull for family, about female steel, dammit, and about the fact that life rolls on — with us, over us — with its relentless self-replacement.

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**Announcements**

- The Chute is accepting applications for assistant chef & wait staff. Phone for information. Nashville, (615) 297-4571.
- Harvey’s House Cleaners: Affordable, reliable. Serving the community. Nashville. Call (615) 228-3060.
- Pride jewelry awaits. Pink triangle lapel pins and earrings — and more. It’s A Scrum! 168 2nd Avenue North, Nashville.
- If you’re reliable and conscientious, we’re looking for you for commissioned ad sales in Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville. We’re also looking for someone to deliver Dare in the Tri-Cities, our newest delivery area. Great part-time pay. Perfect for students, 2nd job, etc. Dare, Box 4922, Nashville, 37204 or phone (615) 387-11.
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- Commercial bldg over 1800 sq. ft, lot size 32‘ x 85‘. Central Business District. $80,000. Kathy Douglas, TEAM Realty & Auction. Nashville, (615) 228-2189 or 333-3330.
- Photogapher sks WMAs 19-29 with athletic bodies for nude photo study. Confidential. Jackson, Phone Chris, (901) 423-1609.

**Real Estate**

- 26th home assumable loan 9% nonqualifying. BR, LR, kitchen, Util room, fireplace. $4500 + assume. Lockeland Springs, Nashville. (615) 244-4570.

**Personal**

- M. XXXXXXX I love our XXXXXXX Tuesday XXXXXXX and Saturday XXXXXXX nights XXXXXXX I.
- Photographer sks WMAs 19-29 with athletic bodies for nude photo study. Confidential. Jackson, Phone Chris, (901) 423-1609.

**CLASSIFIED ADS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS**

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**LOOSE LIPS**

**Dear Ann Landers...**

“"My first impression of the Old Lady is disap­pointment in the low moral standards seem­ingly put forth by the paper. I am referring to the sexist picture and comment on page two, and the inclusion of the homosexual and bisexual community in The Paper Chase.

"I am surprised that a progressive newspaper would make remarks about a woman’s body parts. You should graduate from the woman-equals-sex-object mentality. The picture wasn’t obscene, but it and the comment ‘nice tail’ were vulgar.

"Concerning ‘The Paper Chase,’ with all the pain, heartache and disease that aberrant sexual lifestyles eventually causes, it seems very irresponsible for you to encourage homosexual and bisexual encounters in our city. Homosexual and bisexual behavior is the leading cause of AIDS in the land. Perhaps next you will include ‘I for intravenous drug users.'”

— Bryan D. Joyce, in a letter to the editor, a Chattanooga-based “alternative” newspaper.

"Big news on the condom front. Take, for instance, Carter-Wallace Inc., which is now marketing condoms that are 20 percent larger than your standard latex Trojan. Time was, condoms came in a tidy ‘one size fits all’ mold. But that was before the brawny Magnum Condom, which may just be the best marketing play ever: after all, who in his right mind would ask for the smaller styles?

"Over 70 percent of men could be more comfortable with a larger-sized condom,’ explains Carter Products marketing director Scott Hoyt.”

— From NEWSWEEK’S “Periscope” section.

"We are...opposed to all forms of birth control with the exception of natural family planning [the rhythm method].”

— Judie Brown, president of the American Life Lobby.

"There you go with that fucking hand again. You look like a fucking pansy.”

— Political media consultant Roger Alies, responsible for this kinder and gentler nation that claims to believe in freedom, equality and liberty.

"I told [him] I doubted that we would see our country’s largest cities?”

— From Santa Rosa, Calif.

"I vote no. Now there is only one question that remains to be answered. How long did same-sex marriages go on in Sodom and Gomorrah until the Lord told Lot and his family to get out of town?”

— A reader from Saginaw, Mich.

"I am the father of two sons. One is gay. I want equal rights for both boys. Put me in the for column.”

— A Philadelphia reader.

"I vote no. Now there is only one question that remains to be answered. How long did same-sex marriages go on in Sodom and Gomorrah until the Lord told Lot and his family to get out of town?”

— From an Ann Landers reader in Lima, Ohio.

"I work in a hospice and never cease to be moved by the unselfish love and devotion these males have for one another. Such beautiful relationships ought to have the dignity of legal recognition.”

— A Chicago reader, responding to Landers’ request for opinions on same-sex marriages.