Legalization of same-sex marriages:
 Should homosexual unions be recognized in Tennessee, U.S.?

by LAURA TEK
Staff Writer

Legal recognition of same-sex relationships is a subject that seems to be generating a good deal of debate in both heterosexual and gay/lesbian circles. To have a government-sanctioned relationship is becoming more and more the desire of homosexual couples, a right still reserved for only heterosexual couples.

Just the facts:
New cases of AIDS reported in Tennessee, by year

- 1982: 1
- 1983: 4
- 1984: 4
- 1985: 5
- 1986: 22
- 1987: 85
- 1988: 160
- 1989: 252

- **25 reported cases of AIDS

Tennessee's Department of Health and Environment has released 1989 figures on the number of new cases of AIDS reported in the state. 346 new cases were reported in 1989, up from 1980's 321. — DARE STAFF

During the past few years --- perhaps starting with the mass wedding that was held during the October, 1987, March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights --- the prospect of legalizing gay and lesbian marriages is becoming a more realistic goal.

Denmark last year became the first country ever to legalize same-sex unions and Sweden may soon follow. The next country to legally affirm such relationships.

More and more cities across the United States are introducing "domestic partnership" legislation and, according to some activists, opposition is dwindling.

Thomas B. Stoddard, executive director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, supports the idea of gay men and lesbians seeking the right to marry.

"In its traditional form, marriage has been oppressive, especially to women. Indeed, until the middle of the last century, marriage was, at its legal and social essence, an extension of the husband and his paternal family," Stoddard said.

"Nevertheless," he continued. "Despite the oppressive nature of marriage historically, and in spite of the general absence of edifying examples of modern heterosexual marriage, I believe very strongly that every lesbian and gay man should have the right to marry the same-sex partner of his or her choice.

"Marriage may be unattractive and even oppressive as it is currently structured and practiced, but enlarging the concept to embrace same-sex couples would necessarily transform it into something new. If two women can marry, or two men, marriage --- even for heterosexuals --- need not be a union of a 'husband' and a 'wife.' Extending the right to marry to gay people --- that is, abolishing the traditional gender requirements for marriage --- can be one of the means, perhaps the principal one, through which the institution divests itself of the sexist trappings of the past." Paula Etterbrick, legal director for Lambda, holds an opposite view.

"It is not surprising that some lesbians and gay men would look to legal marriage for self-affirmation. After all, those who can marry can be instantaneously transformed from 'outsiders' to 'insiders,' and we have a desperate need to become insiders. It could make us feel okay about ourselves, perhaps even relieve some of the internalized homophobia that we all know so well," she said.

* continued on page 4

Warehose 28 sold
New owners take over 12-year-old
Nashville lesbian/gay nightclub

by JEFF ELLIS
Editor

After almost twelve years, ownership of Nashville's Warehouse 28 has changed hands and names --- it's now called Warehouse Two --- effective January 5.

New owners Wayne Prince and Mike Wilson, who opened the bar in April, 1978, said it was a smart business decision.

"I was able to help my business financial picture," Prince said.

"I'm real pleased that Wayne and I have the Warehouse," Smith said. "I think by selling this bar I was able to help my business financial picture."

Prince's career at Warehouse 28 began 10 years ago "working the lights," he said, and included "doing bookwork during the day, then working the door and eventually going into management part-time." Raper, a long-time patron at the club, had earlier expressed an interest in entering the business, Prince said.

"Not being in the business before has helped him to come up with some good ideas," Prince said. Plans for the business during the next six months, Prince said, include a "pain job to spruce the place up." work on the dance floor and some other structural changes.

Smith, whose almost 12 years at the club included both the high-lights and the low points of the local lesbian/gay community's history, said he will be concentrating on his other business ventures in the Nashville area.

"It was a matter of having two businesses to operate and not being able to do it properly without a clone," Smith said. "By selling the bar, we were trying to make a smart business move. We have some other business concerns that need our attention."

Smith also owns Airplay in the Berry Hill Square shopping center. Airplay, which began as Balloons II in 1979, initially specialized in balloon bouquets, greeting cards and gifts items and has since expanded to one of the city's busiest special event planners.

In recalling the past 12 years, Smith said the highlights --- including fund-raisers for various charitable organizations --- will always be "as the top of [my] list of memories." He estimated that benefits at Warehouse 28 have netted "well into the six figures for local organizations."

* continued on page 4
Saturday, January 27
Musical TEXAS TWO-STEPPING WITH THE GIRLS
Texas Two-Stepping with the Girls, benefit for GCN. At Unitarian Church, 1828 Woodmont Blvd, Nashville. 7pm. $8. Info (615) 254-9250.

Sunday, January 28
Concert WOMEN'S BENEFIT for Knoxville Pro-Choice Coalition. At Planet Earth, 121 W. Jackson Av, Knoxville. 8pm. $15. Info (615) 637-3861 or 426-2186.

Saturday, February 3
Fellowship Meeting New Memphis outdoor activities group for lesbians and gay men. At Memphis Gay & Lesbian Community Center, Madison, Memphis. 1pm. Info (901) 274-1847 or 276-0275.

Monday, February 5
Consciousness Raising Black and White Men Together / Memphis. 7:30pm. Info (901) 726-1461.

Saturday, February 10


Sunday, February 11
Covered Dish Potluck dinner. Sponsored by MCC / Tri-Cities, at Holston Valley Unitarian Church, Johnson City, 5pm. Info (903) 925-4933.

Fundraiser Valentine's show benefits Music City Sports Association. At The Chute, 2535 Franklin Rd, Nashville. 10:30pm and 12pm. Info (615) 365-9689.

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Big events

TENNESSEE: Two-stepping with the girls

Saturday, January 27
Musical TEXAS TWO-STEP WITH THE GIRLS
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Dole signs on as Hate Crimes bill co-sponsor

WASHINGTON — Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) earlier this month signed on as a co-sponsor of the federal Hate Crimes Statistics Act, bringing the total number of supporters of the bill to 58 in the U.S. Senate.

"Dole's support is an important step forward for the Hate Crimes bill," said Peri Jude Radecic, legislative director and lobbyist for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). "As leader of Republicans in the Senate he carries formidable power for moving legislation. His co-sponsorship sends the clear message that this law has strong bipartisan support."

Radecic, who has lobbied extensively for the bill since its original introduction in the previous Congress, said the goal is to reach 60 co-sponsors or more.

"Sixty supporters equals 'cloture' in the Senate, which means we would have enough votes to block an anti-gay filibuster by Senator Jesse Helms," Radecic said. •

Baptists Concerned set national retreat dates

OAKLAND, Calif. — American Baptists Concerned, a lesbian/gay caucus, will hold their national retreat June 25-27 at Westbecke Ranch in Northern California's Sonoma Valley.

ABC members in the San Francisco area will help with transportation to and from the retreat, which will begin the day following the Gay and Lesbian Freedom Day parade.

The retreat will include fellowship, worship, support, strategy and organization. Registration is $495 until March 30, after which the fee is $505.

For details, write ABC National Retreat, 686 Waller, San Francisco, California 94117. •

Anti-gay violence topic of Seattle conference

SEATTLE — Anti-lesbian/gay violence and harassment will be the topic of an all-day conference in Seattle, Saturday, January 27, sponsored by the Center for Democratic Renewal.

"Attacks of bigoted violence directed at gays and lesbians have reached epidemic levels," according to Kevin Berrill, director of the Anti-Violence Project of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).

NGLTF recorded 7,248 incidents in 38 states in 1988.

"While this represents a significant portion of all bigoted hate crimes, the problem of harassment of gays and lesbians has been largely ignored," Berrill, keynote speaker of the conference, said.

The Center for Democratic Renewal is a non-profit, non-partisan organization with offices in Kansas City, Seattle and Atlanta. The CDR implements programs of research, training, public education, community organizing and technical assistance to counter white supremacy, religious intolerance and homo-
...same sex marriages

• continued from page 1

So why does this unlikely event deeply disturb me? she asked. "For two major reasons: First, marriage will not liberate us as lesbians and gay men. In fact, it will constrain us, make us more invisible, force our assimilation into the mainstream, and undermine the goals of gay liberation.

Second, attaining the right to marry will not transform our society from one that makes narrow, but dramatic, distinctions between those who are married and those who are not to one that respects and encourages choice of relationships and family diversity. Marriage runs contrary to two of the primary goals of the lesbian and gay movement: the affirmation of gay identity and culture; and the validation of many forms of relationships."

How do gay and lesbian Tennesseans feel?

"I generally support one's right to get married if they want to but in my opinion a marriage soon after the entry into existence of the relationship will fail apart," said Wanda Horton.

"Marriage takes away from the individual and creates one dominant 'partner.' It is not something I would personally do, but it does respect one's right to do so if they so choose.

"We support it," said Steve Davidson and Jim Aldredge, both of Nashville. "We have been together for over six years and had a holy union four years ago. We are very committed to each other. To have our union legally recognized would just be a convenience for us now because we wouldn't have to worry about securing living wills and getting powers of attorney. To have the right to legally marry does away with all that hassle."
Memphis
GWSP to host Valentine's dance
Memphis' Gay Women's Social Group (GWSP) will host a Valentine's Dance on Saturday, February 10, from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Admission is $5 per person and there will be a cash bar and light refreshments. Non-alcoholic drinks will be available.

For the location of the dance or details about becoming involved in GWSP, call (901) 327-5165.

Murfreesboro
MTSU Lambda to host statewide lesbian/gay gathering
The Lambda Association of Middle Tennessee State University will host Tennessee's first statewide gay and lesbian picnic weekend, April 7-8 at Cedars of Lebanon State Park in Lebanon.

"The gay '90s are here and we look forward to uniting in April to advance our cause," said Dan Webster, the group's secretary.

The two-day event will be held at the Group Lodge of the park, located just off Interstate 40 in Lebanon. The event will include overnight accommodations, dinner and breakfast, hiking, softball, volleyball, campfire, after-dinner entertainment and a late-night dance. On Sunday morning, a seminar will be held to discuss the goals and issues affecting the Tennessee lesbian and gay community.

Cost is $12 per person or $20 per couple. Those attending are asked to bring their own bed linens and towels and wash cloths.

Representatives and members of all lesbian and gay groups and organizations throughout the state are invited to take part in the two-day conference.

Advance registrations should be mailed by March 24 to: The Lambda Association of MTSU, P.O. Box 624, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132. For more information, call Webster at (615) 896-9941.

Nashville
Computer network opens lines to lesbian/gay community
"Execs and Secs," a computer bulletin board service (BBS) serving the Nashville area since September, 1989, has extended an official invitation to the lesbian, gay and bisexual community to join others already on board and to express themselves freely.

The system is growing with many new features to be added in the near future. In addition to the existing Alternative Lifestyles conference, there are plans to create areas of exclusive access for lesbians and gay men and a computerized matchmaker dating service.

To gain access, users should configure their computer modem settings to word size of 8 bits, no parity, and stop bit of 1. The computer phone line is (615) 331-1054. Baud rates of 2400, 1200 and 300 are supported 24 hours per day. New registrations can usually be confirmed within 24 hours.

There is no charge for using the service and the use of a pseudonym assures anonymity to those who wish it. Execs and Secs is an adult-exclusive BBS; minors are not allowed on the system.

Pulaski
KKK tries to ensnare gay groups
Nashville's morning newspaper, the TENNESSEAN, last week reported that Ku Klux Klan organizers have attempted to link lesbian and gay rights groups to a brotherhood march held in Pulaski earlier this month.

"The KKK was going to let AIDS-infested faggots and queers march, but not white Christians," said Klan organizer Scott Shepard. "We wanted to use that against them.

He said that another Klan member contacted the organizers of Pulaski's brotherhood march last November, claiming to represent three lesbian/gay groups wanting to take part in the march.

The TENNESSEAN also reported that a message left on the answering machine of Nashville's Gay Cable Network (GCN), inviting the group to participate in the march was also the work of Klan sympathizers.

Sewanee
Noël Coward's 'Private Lives' to open at University of the South
Noël Coward's classic comedy, PRIVATE LIVES, will be presented by the theatre department at the University of the South, February 1-3 at 8 p.m. in Guerry Auditorium on campus.

The Seemanese production of the comedy, which premiered in 1930, will feature Peter Smith as Elyot and Karen Pelfrey as Amanda. Smith, chair of the theatre department, appeared last season as Sparger in KENNEDY'S CHILDREN. Before moving to Sewanee, Smith worked as a professional actor, director and designer in theatre and film. Pelfrey also appeared in KENNEDY'S CHILDREN, playing the role of the Marilyn Monroe character, Carla.

Directed by senior theatre major Laura Lancaster Hill, admission is free. For further information, phone (615) 598-1226.

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How to survive winter.

January is the perfect time to drop in and browse for a good book, like Franny, the Queen of Provincetown, the classic novel by John Preston (paperback, $4.95) or Robbi Summers' Pleasures (paperback, $8.95). While you're in, pick up the latest of the greatest: New York's Outweek or The Village Voice, Boston's Gay Community News, Los Angeles' The Advocate, and of course, Tennessee's own Dare. Visit our resource room, and relax with a complimentary cup of brew. We now have lots of lesbian and gay books — more titles every day — to choose from, so come on in and check out the selection.

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On Stage

Recalling the past

OLD TIMES. By Harold Pinter. Directed by Lane Wright, Actor's Playhouse of Nashville. Through February 3 reviewed by JEFF ELLIS

Harold Pinter’s plays are an acquired taste, what with their pregnant pauses and dramatic symbolism. Often, audiences leave the theatre with a look of bemused disenchantment (or enchantment, whichever the case may be) as they struggle to find the real and imagined meanings of Pinter’s characters and situations.

Such is the aftermath of Pinter's OLD TIMES, currently on the boards at Actor's Playhouse of Nashville. Performed by a talented cast (Jenny Wallace, Robert Hier and Arias Trahan) under the capable direction of Lane Wright, old times presents in its own odd fashion a theatrical conundrum: what is this all about? Obviously, it’s about failed dreams and the recollections of younger days. But presented by the playwright as if it is, old times seems to be a protracted Obsession commercial, the characters posed in the stylized manner of a Calvin Klein ad campaign. It’s all terribly affected and more than a little contrived, perhaps more like a Saturday night live takeoff on an Obsession ad.

Ostensibly, the plot concerns three people gathered at a farmhouse on the English coast in September, 1971. Kate and Deeley (Wallace and Hiers, married for several years, are anticipating the arrival of Kate's old roommate Anna (Trahan), also married and living in Sicily. Anna's visit and the accompanying reminiscences bring forth all manner of side-long glances and meaningful pauses as only Pinter can write them.

Throughout, there are unanswered questions: were Kate and Anna once lovers? Were Deeley and Anna lovers? Is Anna dead? Is Kate dead? Is this all a dream?

Frankly, I don't know and don't much care. I think Pinter is ridiculous, a sort of intellectual's intellectual who writes difficult to understand plays as a sort of mental exercise. But if you don't really know what a play's about, what good does it do? Sure, it is a superb acting exercise, and Wallace, Hier and Trahan are compelling performers who do wonders with their characters, but it's not really entertaining.

The play's opening is so Pinteresque — its pauses so typical of his work — that it's funny for reasons I'm sure the playwright didn't mean.

Wright's direction is very even-handed, perhaps even lyrical, with an eye toward visual composition. WALLACE AND TRAHA give riveting, richly drawn performances and Hiers' somewhat tentative beginning evolves into an effective display of talent.

Set Design by Wright and Rick Harrell is understated and evocative, while Bryan Binckley's costumes and hair design are perfect for the play's time frame and setting. But I think I'd rather stay home and watch a few commercials.

Upcoming at the Looby

ARTISTS’ Cooperative Theatre 1 (ACT I) will present THE LION IN WINTER, February 1-10 at Nashville's Z. Alexander Looby Theatre on MetroCenter Boulevard, across from Fountain Square.

In its successful premiere production of T.S. Eliot's MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL, ACT I last year presented the story of Henry II, King of England and Sir Thomas Beckett. The LION IN WINTER gives further dramatic credence to the story of Henry II and his marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine and the battles for land acquisitions which continued for generations.

Henry and Eleanor will be played by Bob Daniel and Peg Allen, who played opposite each other in last year's Nashville Public Theatre production of THE CASKETMAKERS.

Tickets to are $7, with group rates available, and parking in the Looby Theatre lot is attended. For reservations, call (615) 885-8921.

Following THE LION IN WINTER on the Looby stage will be the Nashville Shakespeare Festival production of Charles Copenhaver's KNOT LAND, February 15-24.

KNOT LAND is a multi-media production starring Denice Hicks and Mark Cabus. Christopher Knowles will create the elaborate soundscape for the production, with the set designed by Rhode Island-based sculptor and performance artist Bob Rizzo.

KNOT LAND was first produced in 1976 in Strasbourg, France, with an all American cast. The Nashville Shakespeare Festival production will be the American premiere of the work.

THE WORK'S major theme is regeneration: of the individual, of society and the environment. Much of KNOT LAND is visual images created by the interaction of the actors with the set, projections and lighting.

Tickets are $5 and will be available at the door. For reservations, call (615) 758-7559.
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Long ago I made a rule not to return to finished work, communion with what was ended seemed to me unhealthy,” Lillian Hellman wrote in January, 1942, almost eight years after the production of her first play that established her reputation and led to her later theatrical success.

Hellman’s first play to be produced on Broadway was THE CHILDREN’S HOUR, a controversial drama in three acts, which dealt in frank terms, given the mores of 1934, with a subject long considered taboo in the theatre—lesbianism. In today’s climate, Hellman’s treatment of her characters’ sexuality is considered tame and somewhat stilted. After all, the word “lesbian” is never uttered. Rather, the characters discuss rather obliquely one woman’s affection for another, endowing the work with language that borders on the stilted.

“There are, of course, many things wrong with the character’s hour,” Hellman wrote in 1942, in the introduction to a collection of four of her plays, published by The Modern Library.

But Hellman admitted in that introduction that, prior to reading the proofs for that book, she had never read the plays before, “nor, beyond the rehearsal period, have I ever seen them played through. I had, of course, read parts of the plays—always the parts I liked, and I have seen parts of the plays once they had opened—always the part I liked.”

Hellman, who died in 1984 at the age of 79, also wrote THE LITTLE FOXES, THE AUTUMN GARDEN and TOYS IN THE ATTIC.

Since the furor caused on Broadway by Hellman’s play in 1934 (starring future Oscar winner Ann Revere, Katherine Emery and Robert Keith and directed by longtime Hellman associate Herman Shumlin), it has been adapted for film twice. The first film version, called THE THREE TRESSES, was directed by William Wyler and starred Merle Oberon, Miriam Hopkins and Joel McCrea.

From a screenplay written by Hellman herself, director Wyler and photographer Gregg Toland crafted an effective film despite censorship which demanded that no mention be made of a lesbian relationship between the two women.

The second movie version—called THE CHILDREN’S HOUR—also directed by Wyler, was made in 1963, with a cast that included Shirley MacLaine, Audrey Hepburn and James Garner. While it retained faithful to Hellman’s original work, it was a flop at the box office and was sniped at by critics for the moralistic tone of its conclusion.

The play’s conclusion—as well as that of the 1963 film version—brings about the suicide of one character, not because she is a lesbian, but because she realizes she had lesbian thoughts for another woman.

“Lillian had written a slow examination of one woman’s personal growth in the area of falling in love with another woman,” MacLaine told a reporter. “But Willie Wyler didn’t want that, and that’s why the story didn’t work on film.”

“It took a year and a half of stumbling stubbornness to do the play,” Hellman said. “I remembered, in the hodge-podge that came back... how many times I tore it up, how many characters I took out and put back and took out again; how I reached back into my own childhood and found the day I finished writing.”

I thought again of the world of the half-remembered, the half-observed, the half-understood which you need so much as you begin to write.”

The plot of Hellman’s play concerns two women—Martha Dobie and Karen Wright—who run a boarding school for girls in a small New England village. One of the girls, Mary Tilford, in a spiteful rage tells her grandmother the two women are lovers. What ensues represents the far-reaching effects of gossip and innuendo, ultimately ending with the women’s financial and social ruin and one’s death.

“One of the girls, Mary Tilford, in a spiteful rage, tells her grandmother the two women are lovers. What ensues represents the far-reaching effects of gossip and innuendo, ultimately ending with the women’s financial and social ruin and one’s death.
and I would rather make the attempt, and fail, that fail to make the attempt."

Subsequent stage adaptations of Hellman's first success have generally fallen to small professional companies and the occasional production by community theatres, much like the production which opens tonight at Lakewood Community Theatre in Lakewood.

UNDER THE DIRECTION of Genia Shipman, the community theatre group will, for the next three weekends, give their own interpretation of Hellman's play.

The cast includes Tracy Morell, Teresa Nelson, Keith Beagan, Jesse Raye, Helen Atkins and a cast of seven adolescents including Molly McCann as Mary and Leslie Holmes as Rosalie. Whether the show will be accepted by local audiences remains to be seen.

"I think it's great that they (the Lakewood Theatre board of directors) are letting us do it such a dramatic work with such a controversial subject."

Despite the play's age, first produced on Broadway as it was in 1934, Shipman and her cast feel the plot and characterizations more than compensate for Hellman's somewhat dated language.

"I think it's very relevant to today's audiences," Shipman said. "Just last week a Fox TV series, 21 Jump Street, which has always been on the cutting edge of what is timely and topical, did an episode that dealt with a character's confusion with her sexuality. What that character went through is similar to what the characters in The Children's Hour go through. Even though the show is almost 60 years old, it's still relevant, especially here in the South."

"That's because there are people, perhaps more in the South, who think certain things are bad simply because they've been taught they are bad and don't consider the consequences of their actions when they judge someone."

Beagan agreed: "There seems to be more awareness of lesbian and gay issues among the public and because of that the play's theme is relevant.

"I hope that people won't look at it as a story about lesbians, because it's much more than that. It's not really a story of good versus evil, as Hellman suggested, because evil ultimately wins out. I think it's a story of how ill-founded, and unfounded, gossip can really destroy someone's life."

IN LATER YEARS, HELLMAN, talking about the play, said it isn't about lesbianism at all: rather, it is about a lie.

"I think it's very exciting we're doing this in a theatre that is more accustomed to doing fluff, comedies," Beagan said.

"I think it's very relevant to today's audiences," Shipman said. "Just last week a Fox TV series, 21 Jump Street, which has always been on the cutting edge of what is timely and topical, did an episode that dealt with a character's confusion with her sexuality."

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"It is about a lie, spread for vicious reasons," Shipman said. "The play does deal with the question of good versus evil and the dangers of making unfounded accusations."

"Often it seems that people who are wrongly accused in this country have a more difficult time proving their innocence. We're taught that people are innocent until proven guilty.

"But, unfortunately, it doesn't always work that way."

The Lakewood Theatre production of The Children's Hour runs January 26-February 9, with curtain at 8 p.m. for evening performances, 2:30 p.m. for Sunday matinees.

For reservations, call the theatre, located at 2211 Hadley Avenue in Lakewood, at (615) 847-0934.
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Considering Mishima


reviewed by JOE MARREL

IT WAS ALMOST 20 years ago that Yukio Mishima, the famed Japanese novelist, committed seppuku in formal protest of the increasing democratization of Japan. In accordance with tradition, his samurai lover decapitated him to complete the gesture. The gesture, incomprehensible to most Westerners, was simultaneously political and personal in nature and ended a nearly 25 year career as his nation's most famous writer.

Mishima did more than write fiction. He was chief member of a right-wing political group which demanded the reinstatement of traditional Japanese feudalism. He wrote, acted in and directed films and plays, and conducted a symphony. His collaboration (as nude model) with photographer Eikoh Hosoe, ORDEAL BY BOXES (1965), is a masterpiece of visual eros. It is written in the twentieth century. His interest in physicality led to further accomplishments in body-building and kendo, samurai-style swordplay.

For readers not already familiar with Mishima through his novels — the more well-known being FORBIDDEN COLOURS, CONFESSIONS OF A MASk AND THE DECAY OF THE ANGEL — comes this volume of seven short stories written between 1946 and 1965, translated and introduced by John Bester.

Mishima's stories seem to be primarily concerned with the opposition of brute physicality ("that darkness of blind strength which is essentially what muscles are all about") and ineffable intellect which tends to be passive and voyeuristic ("the darkness in which he walked immersed was gradually pervading him").

His focus is strictly on the masculine temperament, which is universally dark and philosophical. The meeting of these two opposites occurs in the act of cruelty. Cruelty, in particular, is the antidote to unfeelingness, the poison of modern existence, according to Mishima.

In effect, then, cruelty may be considered an act of love and worship, as when the schoolboys reverently disembowel the handsome sailor in THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA.

The longest stories in this collection, "Sword" and "Act of Worship," each one a novella divided into chapters, bear these ideas out. "Sword" is a morality tale concerning physical and emotional discipline and two kinds of devotion.

The central figures are Jiro, Kagawa and Mibu, three members of a college fencing team. Jiro is the highly disciplined, stoical leader, and Kagawa and Mibu are his admiring subordinates, rivals for his respect. Kagawa, however, hides his respect beneath a mask of effrontery, hoping to become the beloved enemy of the handsome Jiro. Jiro believes that beneath Jiro's perfection and moral uprightness is a "need to be startled and threatened by something."

Mishima, however, is adept in his art of the other youth, wanting not only to please him but to flatter him by becoming a reflection of his excellence. The two boys' unspoken rivalry for Jiro's attention becomes the impetus for the story's ironically tragic conclusion.

Though this story concerns philosophical bonds, Mishima's language discloses a continuous subscript of eros: "Everywhere, the subtle play of light on young skin revealed undulations in the smooth flesh like the exposed roots of a tree.

"Act of Worship," the last story in the collection, details a unique but not altogether different relationship, between an effeminate poet named about sixty and his student, a dowdy woman of about forty, who, while attending the professor's class to learn more about writing poetry, was induced into becoming his housekeeper.

The story takes place after the two have been together for ten years, when the professor unexpectedly commands the woman to accompany him on a trip to his boyhood home. Tsuneko, the woman, takes the opportunity to probe the mystery of her employer and mentor, for whom she devotedly keeps herself unattractive (lest onlookers infer that their relationship is erotic) and in whose reprimands the takes inexplicable delight. Of all the stories, this one is the least overtly erotic. Much of its imagery derives from landscape and literary allusion.

But it achieves a weird brilliance by combining romanticism and cynicism. The cruelty of these two principal characters is less brutish, not physical at all, but emotional. The two attempt to dominate each other mentally. The style of the story is more typical of E.M. Forster's writing than that of Jean Genet, with whom Mishima is often (rightly) compared.

THE REMAINING stories, no less marvellous for being brief, are charged with color and sensuality. Mishima's unabashed phallic-centrism may put off feminists — especially since women are usually treated at best marginally, though with surprising reversals in the opening and closing stories — and his pro-fascist politics, mutely evident here, is difficult for the thinking person to swallow.

Masochism and cruelty are other possibly alienating effects in these tales. I would hesitate to add, though, that you won't easily find erotic writing as mysterious, mildly perverse and brilliant as this anywhere this side of Oscar Wilde's SALON.
GET READY FOR A SUPER SUNDAY!

Join us January 28, beginning at 5:00 p.m.,
when we crank up the big screen TV
for some Super Bowl action. Help yourself to free popcorn while
you enjoy 50¢ draft beer and our 2-for-1 Happy Hour.

THEN YOU’LL LEARN THE
TRUE MEANING OF “SUPER”
when we present the Super Hot
Men of the Hollandales, direct
from Florida.
The show starts at 11:00 p.m.
Afterwards, the Hollandales will
join the audience for side-stage
dancing.
I can't remember the last time I had to look away from the screen to keep my balance, but I did more than once while watching Born on the Fourth of July.

Usually I can tell myself that it's just a movie, while analyzing the film techniques that are effectively working to make me uncomfortable, but Born on the Fourth of July is different. Looking away doesn't help much.

The war footage is difficult enough. Director Oliver Stone (Platoon, Salvador, Wall Street, Talk Radio) has his movie making down right. Blood packs are bitten and spurt on cue. Slow motion camera affords every detail of near-death, even turning the world upside down as Ron Kovic is carried wounded off the battlefield.

Or often the camera subjectively searches in battle confusion. Jutting here and there, trying to get a grip on the lethal chaos that is war.

Here is the worst of Vietnam: the killing of women, children, fellow American soldiers, and the resultant moral decay that corrodes body and soul. The cries of the orphaned Vietnamese babies haunt Kovic as a crime against humanity, a parody of the voices of the children that he will never have because he will never make love to a woman.

These are the interior wounds that refuse to heal. They are evidenced by the exterior wounds of a 20-year-old boy paralyzed from the chest down.

But the VA hospital is worse still: neglect, rats, vomit, urine, excrement, malfunctioning equipment, used bodies warehoused because they aren't useful anymore.

Ron Kovic, played by Tom Cruise (Risky Business, Top Gun, The Color of Money, Top Gun) emerges from all this horror, simplistically, patriotically as he was as the manchild of 18 who enlisted in the Marines right out of high school with the certain knowledge of at least one tour of duty in Vietnam. This movie is about his depths and the illustrated ability of a human being to change when confronted with the evidence of a life, his own, that does not make sense.

The film tours us through an overbuilt opening July 4th parade in the placed '50s, a high school prom of the '60s with "Moon River" music, through the war (shot in the Philippines), and into the patriotic war protest of civilians, and finally veterans, of the 70's. The art direction spanning these 20 years is unfailing in period conviction and detail, while the sound track recalls the eras in ways that nothing else can. John Williams' original score doesn't haunt as did the theme for Stone's Platoon, but it works well in counterpoint to the pop period offerings.

Cruise gives a daring, guts out performance that reminds me of the tormented rage of Jessica Lange playing Frances Farmer. He should at least be nominated for an Oscar, if not win one. His clean good looks as a high school graduate are perfectly suited to the simplicity of belief that unquestioningly sent Kovic blindly to his hellish fate, the flames of which reached far beyond Southeast Asia.

Yet as Cruise riots against rotting in the VA hospital and then comes to comprehend the depth of protest against the war that cost him at least his legs and family, he is transformed. Through wigs and searing contempt, he takes on the demeanor of a fried wizard on acid. His rage at the sacrifice of his vitality overtakes him in Mexico in some truly insane scenes with a deeply crazed fringe character played by Willem Dafoe. Mexico's tequila and bought, beautiful women provide no solace.

Slowly, Kovic finds his way to a meaning through war protests that are shot in the same disorienting style as the foreign combat footage.

The end, when he is numbed with emotion by then anyway.
**MARKET**

**Announcements**

- Attention lesbians and gay women: A nite to unite. Finding it difficult to meet others? Interested in forming a social group for support, discussion & social activities? Write Dare DRAWER 48. For info write to Dare DRAWER 43.accepting applications from writers in Chattanooga, expanding. Looking for creative career-minded individuals to grow with us. Commission plus incentives. Tasteful flair a plus. Call Tues.-Fri. (615) 662-2666.

- Harvey's Cleaning Service. Dependable, affordable. Cease only. 

- Gay Pentecostal Group forming. Nashville. For info write to Dare DRAWER 43.

- Dyket-shirts Show your true colors. Send check or money order for $15.95 to Dykes Are Us, 151 Tandy Ln, Oak Grove, KY 42262.

- Help! Let me breathe again. I'm allergic to my beautiful, orange, long-haired, male, 6-month-old cat. He's very sweet and lovable. Please give him a home. Call Laura at (615) 831-2941 and leave message. Nashville.

- Nashville CARES is seeking a full-time AIDS Educator. Person selected for position needs strong background and education, good writing and speaking skills, and the ability to communicate with a variety of groups. Phone Peggy at Nashville CARES (615) 385-1510 for complete job description. Send resume and salary requirements to Sandee Potter, Nashville CARES, Box 25107, Nashville, TN 37202, EOE.

- Tomy "Cool Beans," Happy Birthday, with all my love. —Jewel

- To my 'cool Beans," Happy Birthday, with all my love.

- *Happy, hairy, handsome, hunky, horny GWM, 6'1", 180lbs. Not sure what I'm looking for. Partial to teddy bears. Phone & photo. Discretion assured.* Dare DRAWER 45.

- Lee, our birthdays are near. May your 25th year mark the beginning of a new era for you, and may the world's gifts be yours to find. And, God willing, I can discover them with you. I love you. Michael.

- To our nephews in Sunny South Florida: Keep making everyone and everything look more beautiful! We hope to see you soon. Lord Gargantua & Mr. Fatty.

- GWF, 34, 6'0" prof. Sports minded. I like scary movies, Foreign, Stephen King & travel. You: GWF w/ sense of humor, animal lover, likes 2 sleep late wksnds & has it all together. Sights set on lasting friendship w/ possibility of 50/50 relationship. Dare DRAWER 46.

- 2BR, 1 BA brick home. Great assumption. $55,000.

- 3BR, 1.5 BA brick bldg. Nashville Central Business Dist. $80,000. Kathy Douglas, TEAM Realty & Auction, Nashville. (615) 228-2189 or 333-3330.

- **DIRECTIONS TO DARE**

  - Nashville Central Business Dist. $80,000. Kathy Douglas, TEAM Realty & Auction, Nashville. (615) 228-2189 or 333-3330.

- **PERSONAL**

  - Barn Owl, 34, 6'0" prof. Sports minded. I like scary movies, Foreign, Stephen King & travel. You: GWF w/ sense of humor, animal lover, likes 2 sleep late wksnds & has it all together. Sights set on lasting friendship w/ possibility of 50/50 relationship. Dare DRAWER 46.

- **RESTAURANT**

  - **Support the AIDS vaccine effort.**

  - **Volunteers needed for AIDS vaccine evaluations**

  - Volunteers must not have had a smallpox vaccination. Nashville.

  - For more information call (615) 343-AIDS

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    - 75c All Cans of Beer, 1-7 PM

  - **Shows**

    - Fri & Sat

    - And The Talent Night

  - **Kitchen Always Open**

    - Snacks to Complete Meals

    - New Soup & Salad Bar Coming Soon

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    - Kanessa, 1990 Miss Davidson County

    - Cj Dunne, 1St Runner-up And Best Talent
On oppression and being a minority

by RYAN SHELEY
Contributing Writer

The backbone of prejudice is ignorance. What we do not understand, we despise... Two beings are capable of sharing a bond that far surpasses mortal comprehension.

Verse: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind it is abomination." Notice, if you will, the masculine reference, none is made to the feminine gender. Perhaps this is due to the commonly held belief — prior to the 20th century — that women were not sexual beings, but rather just vessels for the perpetuation of the species. This particular passage was taken from a specific group of directives called the Holiness Code. Also included in these forbidden acts are the consumption of pork and shellfish; this can be found in Leviticus 11:7-10.

In the chapter that follows, we are commanded not to have intercourse with a woman during menstruation and for certain periods post-partum. These verses clearly express the misconceptions that were widely accepted during the period the scriptures were being transcribed. I find it peculiar that modern theologians ignore the passages on the eating of pork and intercourse during menstruation, yet so adamantly adhere to the written word in regards to homosexuality. Modern medicine has shown us the reasons for the establishment of the laws described previously. However, with the invention of refrigeration and adequate cooking techniques, these laws regarding food consumption are obsolete. Also, we now understand that the period of menstruation that a woman must endure is indeed not a curse, but simply the shedding off of the uterine lining due to an unfertilized ovum.

Why is it that we cannot recognize that the scriptures written about homosexuality are also no longer applicable? The example most frequently used to support the stance that homosexuality is a sin is the Sodom and Gomorrah story in Genesis 19:1-13. There is actually nothing to indicate sexuality in these passages, except when Lot offers unto the men of the city, his virgin daughters and even this is unclear, because then Lot goes unto his son-in-laws. So this leads us to believe that Lot either had other married daughters or his daughters were married virgins. The passage really is not very clear.

Other scriptures in the Bible refer to these two cities as proud, rude and inhospitable, examples of which can be found in Luke 10:10-12 and Ezekiel 16:48-59. There is nothing whatsoever to indicate that the annihilation of these cities was a result of sexual perversion.

A final verse commonly used to oppress the gay world is found in Romans 1:21-32. Here we find a group of idolaters that God has given "up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves." This passage really does not even deal with homosexuality, at least not as we understand it.

Two verses less commonly addressed are found in I Timothy 1:10 and 1 Corinthians 6:9.

The first of these two deals with acts of violence and criminal misconduct, while the second makes brief mention of effeminate nature, but this is not a clear passage as to what was truly meant. Neither of these passages even apply to the gay lifestyle we know today.

The backbone of prejudice is ignorance. What we do not understand, we despise. The homosexual lifestyle actually varies little from that of a heterosexual.

Two beings, regardless of their external genitalia, are capable of sharing a bond that far surpasses mortal comprehension.

The Bible is one of the tools that has been used to support these transgressions. The scriptures contained in his highly revered document were not intended to be used to oppress anyone. To do so, completely devalues the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is one built on a foundation of love and freedom and oppression.

Certainly, God does not condemn someone for loving another. In the New Testament there is no scripture to show us that Jesus said anything at all about homosexuality. It is misleading for homophobes to randomly select passages from the Bible without a complete understanding of what is indeed being expressed. A slightly brief look at several divinely inspired prophets who actually wrote the documents that later became what we know as the Bible, did not fully understand homosexuality.

In Leviticus 18:22, we find the following verse: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind it is abomination." Notice, if you will, the masculine reference, none is made to the feminine gender. Perhaps this is due to the commonly held belief — prior to the 20th century — that women were not sexual beings, but rather just vessels for the perpetuation of the species. This particular passage was taken from a specific group of directives called the Holiness Code. Also included in these forbidden acts are the consumption of pork and shellfish; this can be found in Leviticus 11:7-10.

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Two beings, regardless of their external genitalia, are capable of sharing a bond that far surpasses mortal comprehension.
Loose Lips

Playing cops and robbers

Sylvester Stallone — DANE FILE PHOTO

"It's two modern-day gladiators whipping their chaffin into a frenzy."
— Sylvester Stallone, describing the plot of his movie TANGO AND CASH, co-starring Kurt Russell.

"TANGO AND CASH closes out a decade of cinema as 1989's most insensitive and homophobic film."

"This film were better titled XXXX and TRASH. And if you stumble into the theatre and are grossly repelled by the sick 'fag' and 'dyke' jokes drop a line to Warner Brothers head of publicity Stu Gottesman. His address is: Warner Brothers Inc., 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, California 91522. Make a difference in 1990. And let that be your New Year's resolution. No stunt!"
— More from Jack Sturday.

"Question: My husband persists in walking around the house naked. He will stand in the bathroom with no clothes on and shave, brush his teeth, and comb his hair with absolutely no modesty. I have discussed this with my family, and we are fearful that he is homosexual. What should I do?"
"Answer: You and your family need counseling!"
— From the legal advice column appearing in a consumer magazine to be published in 1990.

"It was started during World War II by the Nazis, who forced homosexual inmates in German prisons to wear pink triangles on their uniforms. The ACLU recently discovered a revival of the practice by jailers in Polk County, Florida, who 'pink tag' (their term, not ours) inmates revealed as gay in the course of entry interviews. The measure has been in force for ten years."

"Several female inmates wrote to the ACLU, protesting that 'pink taggers' are discriminated against: deprived of such privileges as equal recreation time and trustee status, harassed by guards, and some are heterosexuals who have been 'tagged' as a form of punishment."
— Robyn E. Blummer, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, writing in his syndicated column.

"If it's not that we weren't an appreciative audience, but it struck us as an unusual underwear choice for an otherwise conservative cop."
— A premiere magazine commentary about the black bikini briefs worn by Tom Hanks in the film comedy TURNER AND HOOCH.

"Cher's gay daughter hit by new heartache — parents cut lesbian lover off without a cent."
— The latest on Chastity Bono from the supermarket tabloid, THE STAR.

"I was upset with Cher's reaction to her daughter Chastity's being a lesbian. It's terribly important for Cher to be understanding at this time."
— "When my own beautiful daughter told me the same news, I was stunned. But I will always love her always stand by her."
— A Loving Mom in Minnesota" writing to THE STAR.

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WAREHOUSE TWO HAS NEW HOURS!
Tuesday — Sunday, 7:00 p.m. — 3:00 a.m.
Happy Hour 7:00 p.m. — 10:00 p.m. nightly
There will be no cover charge before 9:00 p.m. weekdays, so be here early.

TUESDAYS
Join our regular cast: DIANA HUTTON, MONICA MUNRO, RITA ROSS, BIANCA PAGE AND DANA ALEXANDER for 2 shows, at 11:00 p.m. and 12:30 a.m.

WEDNESDAYS
Join DIANA HUTTON and the NIGHT RIDERS, Warehouse Two's own male strippers, for 2 shows, at 11:00 p.m. and 12:30 a.m.

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Again, join our regular cast for 2 different shows, at 11 p.m. and 12:30 a.m.

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Dance to the top hits with our award-winning DJ, Ed Denson, on Nashville's hottest dance floor.

SUNDAY
Tea Dance Revisited
Happy Hour 7:00 p.m. — 10:00 p.m. Buffet

THIS SUNDAY, JANUARY 28
MISS GAY TENNESSEE-USA AT LARGE PAGEANT
with CARMELLA MARCELLA GARCIA, reigning Miss Gay USA at Large
DIANA HUTTON, Miss Gay USA 1987
RITA ROSS, Miss Gay Tennessee USA 1988
and MONICA MUNRO, Miss Gay Tennessee USA 1989
Several states will be represented at this contest.
It's an official preliminary to Miss Gay USA at Large.
Contest begins at 10pm.

COMING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4
COCO VEGA