the ubyssey

the Queer issue.

Friday 5 February 1994

Volume 76, Issue 31

If you allow yourself to be silent, you allow yourself to be silenced.

Silence still equals death.

CLASSIFIEDS

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05 - COMING EVENTS

THE VANCOUVER INSTITUTE
Free Public Lecture
Saturday, Feb. 5
Professor Julia Crukshank
Department of Anthropology
UBC
speaking on
THE DISCOVERY OF KLONDIKE GOLD: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FIRST NATIONS' ORAL TRADITION
Lecture Hall 2, Woodward IRC
at 8:15 p.m.

FREE LECTURE "Learning to live," John Darvill, Feb. 20th, 8 pm, Technocracy, 3542 Kingsway.

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Your ass is mine fishman, let me in. luv liz

40 - MESSAGES

LOVE FOR SALE
The Ubyssey is now accepting Valentine messages for the special Feb. 11th Valentine Issue. Deadline is Feb. 9. Avoid the rush. Book your love now!

70 - SERVICES

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'TWEEN CLASSES

Friday, February 4

Spartacus Youth Club. Black History Month Forum: "Anti-Racist Protesters Confront KKK." Noon, SUB 211 & 7:30 pm, Room L4, Britannia Comm. Ctr. (Napier & Commercial).

Nursing Undergraduate Society. "Directions in Nursing" Presentation series. Discussion forum for undergrad students with B.SN. practising nurses. Noon-1:20pm. Univ. Hosp. - UBC Site, Acute Care Pavilion T-188 (third floor).

Japan Exchange Club. Japanese food night. 6:30pm, SUB 207/209.

UBC School of Music. Janina Failkowska, piano recital. Distinguished Artists. 8pm, Music Bldg., Tix $15 adults; $10 students/seniors.

UBC Students of Objectivism. Videotaped lecture on Dr. Andrew Bernstein's talk "Rational Egoism in Ayn Rand's The Fountainhead. Noon, new room! Angus 428.

Frontier College. UBC Students for Literacy. We are looking for volunteers to conduct a literacy program. Please call 822-6502.

Saturday, February 5

UBC Law Union. Public interest law conference. Focus on children and the law. 9:45-5:00 pm, Curtis 101/102.

Monday, February 7

Student Health Outreach. Shopping the safe way — grocery shopping tours. Learn to shop for nutrition, taste and economy. Conducted by 4th year Dietician students. 7-8:30pm, Registration 228-4044 Melodie. Will take place at Safeway on 10th just off campus.

Gays, Lesbians & Bisexuals of UBC. Movie night - NFB Film: Out: Stories of Gay and Lesbian youth. 8pm, SUB Theatre.

Tuesday, February 8

Student Placement Services. Job Search Clinic. First of 3 sessions on resume preparation, marketing yourself, and interviewing skills. Must register at Brock 307. Fee: $25. Get in shape for the summer job search! Get ready for the post-graduation real world!

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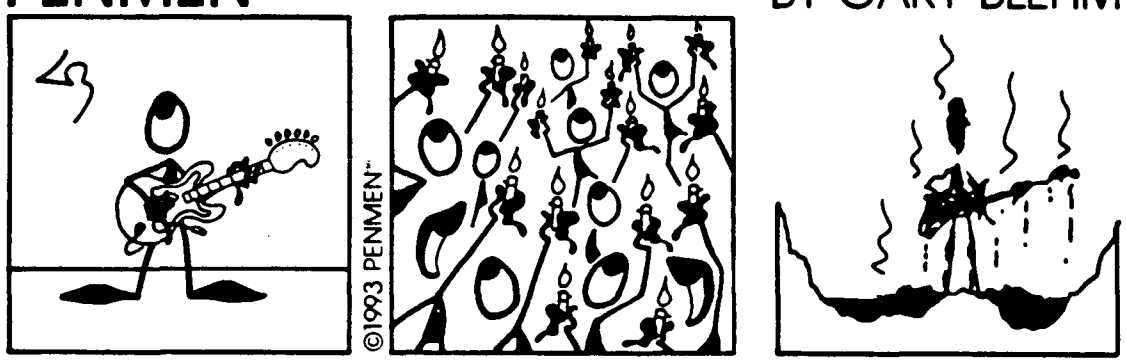

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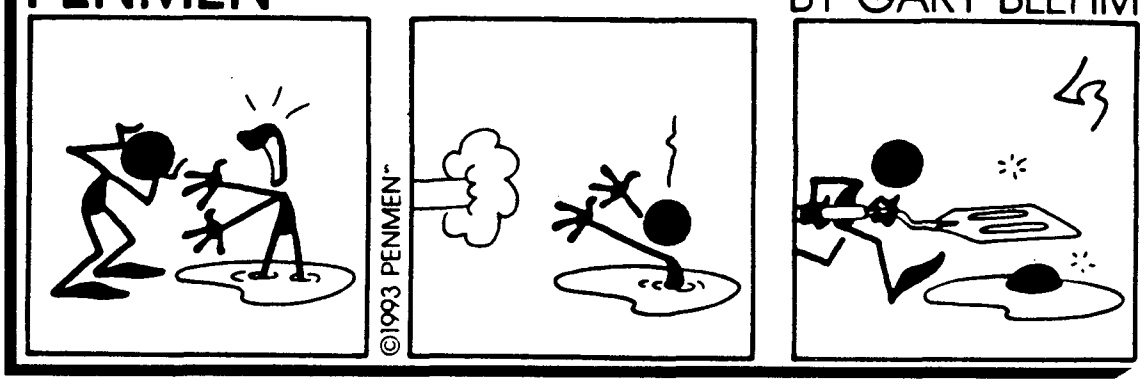

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Admin faces queer issues

by Tanya Storr

The UBC administration has been criticized in the past for espousing homophobic policies, but now it seems the President's Office is taking steps to change their approach to queer issues on campus. UBC queer activists are both sceptical and cautiously optimistic about the administration's apparent attitude change.

During the 1989-90 Gay Games controversy, president Strangway made a series of homophobic remarks objecting to holding Gay Games events at UBC. The 5 January 1990 issue of *The Ubyssey* quotes Strangway saying, "It's an issue of the community identifying (homosexuality) with the university" and "Why would one not participate in the normal men's athletics or the normal women's athletics?" Strangway's remarks were met with subsequent outrage from UBC's queer community.

Now, four years later, the administration has spent $10,000 sponsoring the ongoing President's Lecture Series in Lesbian and Gay Studies. The lecture series has generated considerable support and interest from the UBC community. Seven different speakers came to UBC last term as part of the series, addressing a range of topics, including "Early Gay Male Pornography" and "The Significance of Lesbian and Gay Studies for Transforming Education." The next event in the series, a talk and film by lesbian filmmaker Lorna Boschman, takes place on 16 February.

When contrasted with the president's past remarks regarding the Gay Games, this lecture series, which publicly associates queer issues with the president's office, seems to indicate a radical change in the administration's attitude. Queer activists on campus have differing feelings on whether the administration's turnaround is credible.

Scott Watson, co-chair of the UBC ad-hoc committee on lesbian and gay issues, believes that the administration's attitude change is genuine.

"I think it's not an about-face. Instead, it's the result of the president being educated by people around him. Guardedly, I would say that the lecture series is a serious initiative made by the administration."

Women's Studies student Tanya Battersby feels differently. She views the lecture series as largely a propaganda move on the administration's part.

"I see the lecture series as an attempt to compensate for their pathetic record with regards to queer issues, with specific reference to the way they handled the Gay Games in 1990. We have to remember that this is a very public type of event, and it looks really good for their publicity. If you look at the internal treatment of gays and lesbians at this university, the scenario is much less pretty."

Although Battersby is sceptical about the administration's motives for holding the lecture series, she is still glad that it is taking place.

"It's a really good start towards making space for gay and lesbian scholarship, and towards making the campus a place that is open to gays and lesbians, a place where they'd like to come."

Both Watson and Battersby emphasized that the lecture series is only a start, and that the administration should take many more initiatives if they are truly committed to reducing homophobia and encouraging queer scholarship on campus.

"We feel from surveying our committee members and ourselves that there's a fair amount of homophobia on the campus. For example, one student writing an essay about Walt Whitman from the point of view of his homosexuality was told by his English professor that this was irrelevant," Watson said.

Battersby echoed Watson's sentiments, saying the campus "is not a safe place to be out." She pointed out that there is a serious lack of gay and lesbian course content, and an absence of any training to educate professors on how to deal with homophobia in the classroom.

Battersby and Watson both believe queer scholarship could help eradicate homophobia on campus through education. Watson said the committee on gay and lesbian issues is currently encouraging the administration to institute an endowed chair in queer studies on campus. This chair could then act as a focal point around which queer theory courses could be organized.

"There are people in various departments who are interested and qualified and should be able to teach courses that specialize in queer theory. Students should also be able to do grad work in queer theory. Queer studies is one of many interdisciplinary studies that are shaking up academe and we don't want UBC to get left behind."

Battersby said she would also like to see "further commitment from the administration towards queer scholarship after the lecture series, including affirmative action towards hiring gays and lesbians for teaching positions."

For now, Watson is heartened by the administration's support of the gay and lesbian lecture series.

"I felt that vice-president Dan Birch offered the money for the series spontaneously and with good will. He approached our committee, we didn't approach him. The series has certainly raised interest in queer studies on campus," he said.

About the front cover...

Model: Mat X | Sewer: Ted Young-Ing | Procedure Photos: Siobhan Roantree

Yes, his lips really are sewn together. And yes, it hurts—a lot.

In order to do this, we used a sterile surgical sutur and sterile latex operating gloves. Mat rinced his mouth with Listerine, then washed his lips with Betadine Surgical Scrub.

The stiches go through the first couple of layers of skin on the lips, but not so deep as to hit the arteries that are beneath the surface.

Once the stitches were removed, he gargled again, and washed with Betadine several times.

The sewing proceedure takes about half an hour, and should leave no permanent marks (Mat had red dots which went away after a day or two).

STONEWALL '69

RIOT

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EDITORIAL

Queer is non-assimilationist. We are not here to make straight people feel good about us. We are in your face faggots and dykes. We are not here as diplomatic envoys to start peace talks with straights. Lots of us hate straights. Lots of us have fantasies of killing or beating straights. We are angry. We are here to scare you. We are here to tell you we fuck, and we fuck hard. We are a threat to family values. We do want to dismantle the patriarchal nuclear family unit. We are sexual liberationists. Oh yes, did we mention, we like to fuck?

Gay people are nice. Gay people don't talk about their sexuality so that liberal straight people can feel comfortable in their liberal boundaries and can continue to manouver comfortably within them, unchallenged and unprovoked about their "straightness".

Straight people like gay people. Lots of straight people have gay friends. Straight people like gay people because they're nice about being gay, not like those loud mouthed, politicized, militant queers—shucks, gay people are just like straight people except they're with a same-sex partner. Gender goes unchallenged and sexuality is a non-topic. Don't target us, say gay people, we are just like you so let us join you—we can work together to make things better and heck, we look just as good in an Armani suit as straight guys. Everyone is happy as long as gay people don't start talking about their "gayness," as long as they're congenial, entertaining, fun to be around and let you hang out with them at their bars.

Queer people know they are stigmatized, despised, hated, kicked, bashed and mocked. Silence is heterosexual culture's greatest weapon against us and we rage against this silence, we rage against the forces that will put us down and we rage against all those who would prefer that we remain silent.

To become self-aware as queer means we recognize our stigmatizations are connected to gender, the family unit, the cult of the individual, the nation-state, consumerism, sexual desire, reproductive politics, racial identity, class identity, trust and truth, censorship, intimate life and social display, fear and violence, health care, and cultural norms about the essence of the body. Being queer means fighting these stigmatisations all the time, locally, bit by bit and always with consequences. Gay people do not want to face the consequences of a political revolt against the dominant ideological consciousness. Gay people do not want to dismantle heterosexuality, they do not want to ask the difficult questions, they do not want to give up the small bribes the heterosexual system offers.

Queer struggles do not aim to achieve the conditional equality which the liberal agenda has offered. It's no longer simply a struggle for civil rights especially when one hundred thousand Oregeonians signed petitions to define gay people alongside pedophiles and to legislate their basic human rights away. In Canada we have a new political party called the "Reform Party"—don't fool yourselves if you think Canada will be exempt from the backlash. It is obvious that the system will crush you and no small amends you make in that system will be safe from dismantlement by "the majority." Democracy as we know it is not queer friendly. There is a severe mental illness gripping the planet and its called "straight-mindedness." The backlash against the breach of queer thoughts and culture into the heterosexual mainstays has provoked liberal gay movements to locate the source of the backlash within the queer movement itself. If the queer shitdisturbers would stop, then the precarious position that the liberal gay agenda is lobbying for might be permitted marginal acceptance within the society. If gay people could just get married then the government could collect more tax—gay people spend money too, gay people want to raise families just like you, gay people are an exploitable population like any other minority group so we'll let you exploit us if you leave our bedrooms alone says the gay agenda.

HIV is not AIDS virus—necessarily

by Tessa Moon

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is no longer the only candidate for the position of "AIDS virus."

University of California retrovirologist Peter Duesberg has generated worldwide controversy by suggesting that a collection of known diseases were renamed "AIDS" in an attempt to revive the field of retrovirology.

Duesburg claims that the immune deficiency that characterizes AIDS is not caused by a virus, pointing out that male homosexuals make up a sizable percentage of AIDS patients. "[A] virus does not discriminate between men and women," he said.

Professor of immunology Mike Grant, a research associate at UBC, counters that the gender difference is due to the route of spread of the disease. "[AIDS] was introduced in gay populations," he said. "It's more effectively spread by their sexual practices. Unprotected anal sex is the easiest way of getting infected."

"I think it [Duesberg's claim] is nonsense," said Dr. Geoffrey Hoffmann, who is currently studying auto-immune response and AIDS at UBC. "I don't think we're clever enough or stupid enough to invent AIDS. I don't know any combination of diseases that could produce these symptoms [and] it's not possible to be fooled in a big way like that."

In 1986, Director of NIH's Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci said that 20-40 percent of people diagnosed with AIDS had no HIV antibodies in their blood.

Later, Duesberg noted that fewer than 1 in 10,000 to 100,000 T-cells in AIDS patients are shown to be infected with HIV.

Duesberg proposes that this and other evidence suggests HIV does not meet the requirements of the Koch postulates, four conditions which must be present for a micro-organism to be declared the cause a disease.

But according to UBC assistant professor of medical genetics and biotechnology Dr. Wilfred Jefferies, the low HIV-count mystery is being solved.

Improving identification techniques continually increases the percentage of positive tests. "Now, with more sensitive technology, a far greater number of cells have been shown to harbor the virus," he said. "I think it's pretty clear there's a direct relationship between HIV and AIDS."

Luc Montaigner, a co-discoverer of HIV, is now suggesting that the virus is not responsible for AIDS. In addition, an increasing group of scientists believe that the AIDS-causality mechanism is far more complex than formerly believed.

"HIV may not [be] the sole cause," said UBC professor of immunology Michael Gold. "Other viruses might be responsible, but I think HIV is the major cause."

Immunology graduate student Peter Uppal believes that HIV is at least a partial cause. "It might only be as an initial stimulus which leads to an actual breakdown of the immune response," he said.

Tax titans quash queers

by Taivo Evard

The Canadian Income Tax Act is set to be challenged by the largest trade union in the nation on the grounds that it violates the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"As it stands now, the Income Tax Act forces us, or any employer, to discriminate against lesbian and gay employees," said Canadian Union of Public Employees national secretary-treasurer Geraldine McGuire.

The Income Tax Act, which defines "spouse" as someone of the "opposite sex" for the purpose of pension plan registration, is being challenged by CUPE. The case is scheduled to begin 26 April in Ontario Court general division.

"It's time we changed an archaic out-of-date system so that it can accomodate the diverse needs of all Canadians," McGuire said. "Lesbian and gay workers are required to make the same contributions to the plan and they should no longer be denied their pension rights."

Section 52 of the Constitution Act 1982 will be used to challenge the constitutionality of sections of the income tax act which contain the definition of "spouse." CUPE posits that denying equal rights to same-sex partners violates section 15(1) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

CUPE's pension plan is registered under the Income Tax Act, providing tax deferral advantages—employer and employee contributions to the plan are deductible and income earned on the investments made by the plan are tax free.

Revenue Canada informed CUPE that if they included same-sex partners for the purpose of survivor benefits, their plan could be deregistered, which would negate tax deferral advantages for all of its 408,000 members.

Revenue Canada now says that not only pension plans but benefit plans as well do not meet the current requirements of the Income Tax Act for tax advantages if they include same-sex partners.

AMS AMS

Notice of
Annual General Meeting
of the Alma Mater Society

Wednesday, Feb. 16th, 12pm
Room 206 (Council Chambers) SUB

Pursuant to Code & Bylaws, Bylaw 3, Section One (1) the following shall be dealt with:

1. Be it resolved that the members of the Society approve the financial statements of the AMS, for the year ending April 30, 93.
2. Be it resolved that the members of the Society receive & approve the Society's interim financial statements for the period ending Dec. 31/93.
3. Be it resolved that the members of the Society appoint Dyke & Howard as the auditors of the Society for the 1994-95 fiscal year.
4. The Society will receive the Report of the President and the General Manager with respect to the activities of the Society of the present school year.

All AMS members (yes, that means you) invited & encouraged to attend.

Hatred continues on Liberty Net

by Imtiaz Popat

Canadian Liberty Net continues broadcasting hate messages towards homosexuals and other identifiable groups, despite a court ruling and community demands that they be shut down.

The Surrey-based phone line was ordered to stop broadcasting hate messages towards homosexuals by a tribunal appointed by the Canadian Human Rights Commission last week. The hearings were held because of a complaint launched last year by John Payzant who was offended by a message which said queers should be stomped into Burns Bog.

Liberty Net is still operating with a new message—mocking the tribunal as a waste of taxpayers' money— regardless of the ruling last week. "All the crown lawyers and the crown men could not stop Liberty Net from recording again."

"We are going to continue going on despite what any court or judge says," said Tony McAlear who operates Liberty Net—as well as leading a neo-nazi skinhead group—during a radio interview with CKLG last weekend. "We'll just have to be very careful about what we do say."

Payzant is disappointed that the line is still operating. "I thought that they would shut the line down," Payzant said.

Payzant is happy in a way that the issue of lesbian and gay rights was defended. "It helps to get something on the record," Payzant said. "This will help challenge the courts on the issue of what is free speech and what is hate."

Harry Grunsky, a community member of the gay and lesbian police task force and one of the witnesses at the hearings, said."Although it's slap on the wrist, its helpful to strengthen laws against hate crimes."

According to Grunsky, the ruling supports the decision of the Ontario Court of Appeal to protect lesbian and gay rights under the human rights legislation. Presently, lesbian and gay rights are not included in either the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights.

"It's part of the building block," said Grunsky of the ruling. He argues Canada must include sexual orientation in the human rights legislation and strengthen laws with regard to hate crimes.

"It's another nail in the coffin," said Betty Baxter—an NDP candidate in the last federal election—also a witness at the hearings. Baxter feels it was good the issue was challenged. "[The ruling] reinforces our concerns," said Baxter. "We have proved it one more time."

"It was an important exercise and the issues were taken seriously," said Mary Brooks of the Gay and Lesbian Centre and one of the people named in Liberty Net's hate messages against homosexuals.

"I personally would have liked the line closed, however there is the whole issue of freedom of speech. Where do we draw the line?"

This is the second time Canadian Liberty Net has gone through a human rights tribunal. The first time was two years ago for racist hate messages. In that case, the line was also told to stop broadcasting hate messages. The ruling was also ignored and is currently under appeal.

Big Brother doesn't like queer books

by Niva Chow

Like something out of Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, censorship and the destruction of books are occuring under the supervision of the federal government.

Little Sisters Book and Art Emporium has had problems with Canada customs since 1985. Little Sisters manager Janine Fuller feels that delays and seizures of their shipments, and the opening of some of their mail, have occurred because the store has been "identified as being targeted for inspection because we are a gay and lesbian bookstore."

"Other bookstores that aren't labelled gay or lesbian are not encountering problems with the same books," Fuller said, referring to books like Penguin's *Herotica*, a collection of women's erotic fiction sold at other mainland bookstores.

Books are commonly held at the border where they are inspected and reviewed by senior officials of Canada Customs. According to Fuller, she was told by a Customs official that Little Sisters receives "special treatment."

"The way that the Customs tariff act is set up, the system is such that we have to appeal each individual seizure with court dates for each individual book or magazine that is seized," Fuller said.

The result is increased economic problems for small businesses which cannot survive lengthy legal disputes.

"There is also a social stigma against exposure. We felt the real issues weren't being covered," she said.

Fuller stated that the focus on gay and lesbian bookstores is due to discrimination and homophobia.

The recent seizure of mail sent to Little Sisters from Penguin Books in Ontario last December has increased the interest in Little Sisters' story.

"Who regulates the borders of what we read?" questioned Fuller, after Canada Customs claimed the opening of the shipment was "an accident."

Little Sisters is fighting back. They took Customs to court on several occasions, and were postponed each time for several months. According to Fuller, the scope and cost of the court case escalated substantially each time the case was delayed.

"At first the case would have been $5000-10000, with one week in court," she said. "Now it would cost at least $200 000 with two months in court."

The next court date is set for 11 December 1994.

Queers stay home, says Canada immigration

by Sarah O'Donnell

If you have a spouse or lover you want to bring to Canada, you likely won't have much trouble getting a visa—unless your partner is the same sex.

Canada's immigration laws discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. There are no legal provisions in Canada's Immigration Act that allow a gay or lesbian Canadian to formally sponsor their partner.

Heterosexual Canadians can get their partner into the country under a spousal sponsorship clause if they are legally married. Lesbians and gays do not have that option open to them because Canada does not recognize marriages between same sex couples as legal.

Rob Hughes, an attorney with Smith & Hughes Law firm, said the irony of the situation here in Canada is that "the ink doesn't have to be dry on the marriage certificate before a heterosexual couple can fill an application for spousal sponsorship and we have to go through all these hoops just to show we have a established relationship."

"There is a fundamental unfairness that lesbian and gay Canadians are being treated as second class citizens and their relationships are not being recognized by immigration," he said.

"The definition of spouse simply excludes lesbian or gay partners because it refers to opposite sex couples."

Presently, to be with their partners in Canada, gays and lesbians have to file an application as an independent candidate or try to attain temporary visitor or student status. This process can be very costly and take months.

"Over the last couple of years, some progress has been made," Hughes said.

"Recognition has been given by immigration to allow applications to proceed on humanitarian and compassionate consideration for the lesbian and gay partners and that is done on a case by case basis," he said.

There are no standard procedures that program managers in the visa offices can follow, so each case is left to their discretion. The result is inconsistent decisions.

Some activists are fighting back. Court challenges have been launched against the government which argue the current regulations violate Section 15 of the charter of rights: "every individual is equal before and under the law... without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability."

But practical necessity often discourages lesbians and gays from taking the legal route.

"The problem is that nobody wants to be a test case and if you can get approved in some fashion, you choose to go that route....In a number of cases in the past, if a policy is being challenged the immigration department can simply grant the applicant status and that removes the cause of complaint," Hughes said.

The Lesbian and Gay Immigration Task Force (LEGIT) sent a report to the Minister of Immigration in May 1992 which listed six other "like minded" countries that allow same-sex spousal visas.

In its report LEGIT points out that Australia has a visa category for "non-familial relationships of emotional interdependency," which covers same-sexed couples.

New Zealand, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway also have immigration laws which allow immediate status to gay or lesbian partners.

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Reservations 822—2678
• The Empire Builders • by Boris Vian • Directed by Alison Aylward •

Xtra West back in market

Xtra West back in Granville Island Market... again

by Sara Martin

Xtra West is now officially allowed to distribute in Granville Island Market.

"We got word from them late last week. They came out with a policy on who can distribute there," said *Xtra West* publisher Fred Lee.

Xtra West is a free biweekly publication geared towards the gay and lesbian communities. It has been publishing in Vancouver since late last July and their current circulation is 17,000.

In December, *Xtra West* was told not to distribute in the Market.

The publication was on the stands at the market for six months, when Lee received a message from market coordinator Mary O'Donovan saying that *Xtra West* was not wanted at the market and would just end up in the paper recycling.

O'Donovan's message said, "we only have room for local papers in the market, we have just thrown out yours again. Part of your content not suitable for this market anyway... we don't want it here."

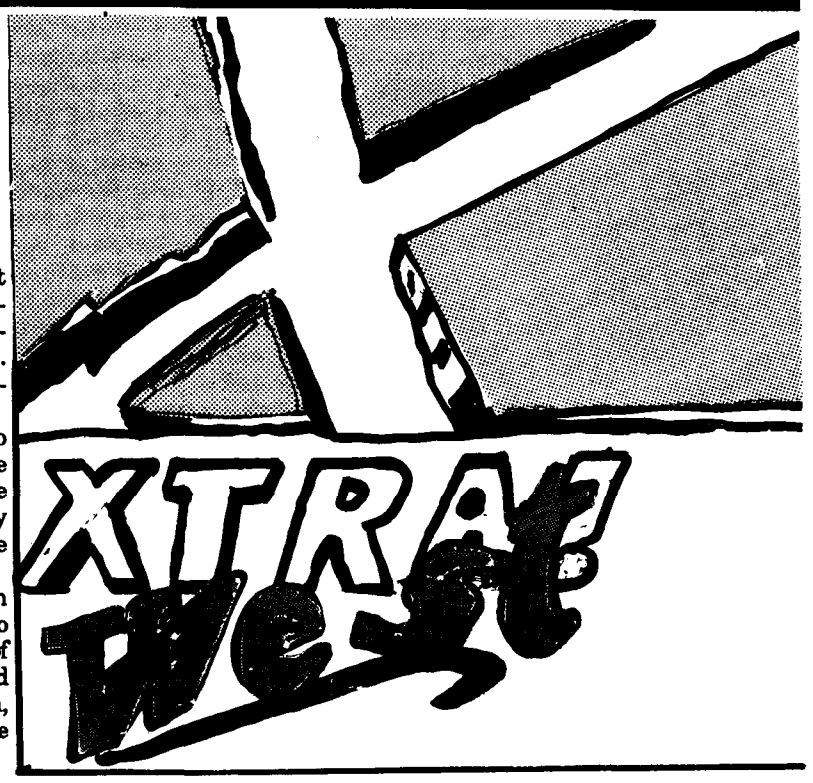
However, after a policy review, the market decided to provide space for *Xtra West* and is currently installing a rack to accommodate the many free publications distributed at the market.

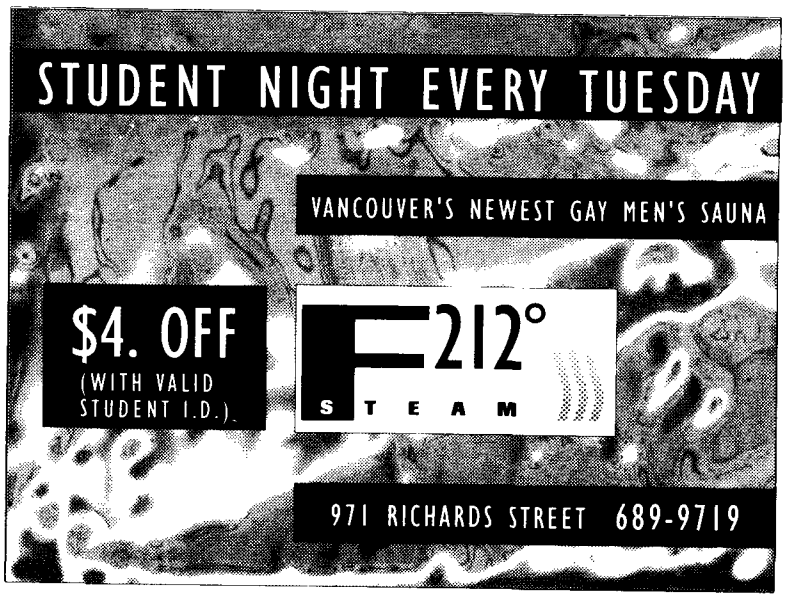
"They realized they didn't have a policy in place, and after all the media attention [over the ban on *Xtra West*] they decided they better have one," Lee said.

Their new policy states that any publication "published by Canadian residents and are not primarily concerned with advertising... will be granted fair and equal access to the public market."

Since *Xtra West* has received so much publicity over the Granville Island ban, people have been more specific when giving reasons for why they do not want to distribute the publication.

"People now know that we can create unnecessary attention to them and so they are more careful of what they say," Lee said. "They used to say we don't like your publication, now they say that they don't have enough space."





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GREENPEACE

Queers... in rez

Fairview Gage Totem Acadia Vanier

PERSPECTIVE
by Trevor Presley

Queers in residence. UBC has one of the largest university residence communities in all of Canada. The students who live in Vanier, Totem, Gage, Fairview and Acadia combine to form a community of just under 5000 residents. Residence is usually thought of as a place full of wild parties, and wild (hetero) sex... So where do gay men fit into this residence scene?

Research tells us that about ten percent of the population is gay so some quick math tells us that there are probably 500 gay people living in residence. That translates into two gay people per floor in Vanier and Gage, three gay people per floor in Totem, and one gay person for every two quads in Fairview. So do gay people see residence as a homophobic deathtrap, or do they view it as a comfortable environment to live in?

Most of the gay residents that I interviewed saw residence as a comfortable environment to live in. The more mature residence, Fairview, with its private four member quads, is seen as an ideal environment.

"Fairview is not a communal residence, it is just like living in a house" commented Tony, a Fairview resident who is openly gay.

Gage, which is a more communal residence, presents more of a challenge to gay residents.

"I told my quad mates [about my being gay] individually when the subject came up," said the treasurer of the Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Club who also lives in Gage. He stated that Gage was a good place to live and he had so far experienced no major problems living there.

However, residence has not always had such a tolerant environment. The all male floors in Totem and Vanier have been seen by some as promoting and institutionalizing homophobic behavior. A great way to sabotage a guy's reputation in residence is to accuse him of being gay, and jokes that are homophobic in nature are still the norm for many guys who live on these floors.

"There was one time when there was several homophobic messages on my door and my advisor just told me to clean them off... he didn't seem to get the bigger picture," said John, a Totem Resident who is openly gay. Since that incident two years ago housing has adopted several new policies to combat homophobic behavior.

Recently there has been a clause added to the residence contract listing homophobic behavior as an offense. If residents engage in homophobic behavior, they could receive a standards offense which could lead to an eviction from residence. The resident advisors receive sensitivity training to help them deal with gay and lesbian issues more effectively.

The housing department also publishes and distributes "The Gay Blade," an informative newsletter which Tony, John and the treasurer of the GLBC agree is an excellent newsletter.

Housing also plans to issue a survey to all residents and some of the questions will deal with gay issues. The housing department realizes that it can do more and seeks input from its resident population. "The best thing I can do is listen to what is needed," said Totem Resident Life Manager Janet Cox.

What iz it?

Required reading:

FICTION WORKS:
A Boy's Own Story, Edmund White (Alyson Books)
City of Night, John Rechy (Grove Press)
Close to the Knives, David Wojnarowicz (Vintage Books)
Closer, Dennis Cooper (Grove Press)
Doc and Fluff, Pat Califia (Alyson Books)
Faggots, Larry Krammer (Plume Books)
Frisk, Dennis Cooper (Grove Press)
Macho Sluts, Pat Califia (Alyson Books)
Mr. Benson, John Preston (Bad Boy Publishers)
Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit, by Jeanette Winterson (Pandora Press)
Querelle, Jean Genet (Grove Press)
Reflections of a Rock Lobster, Aaron Fricke (Alyson Books)
Rubyfruit Jungle, Rita Mae Brown (Bantam Books)
A Season in Hell, Arthur Rimbaud
Still Sane, by Persimmons Brockbridge & Sheila Gilhooly (Press Gang Books)
Thief's Journal, Jean Genet (Grove Press)

THEORY:
Bi Any Other Name: Bisexuals Speak Out, eds. Loraine Hutchins and Lani Kaahumanu (
Closer to Home: Bisexuality and Feminism, ed. Elizabeth Reba Weise (Seal Publishers)
Epistemology of the Closet, by Eve Kosofsky Segwick (Univ. of California Press)
Gender Trouble, by J. Butler (Routledge Press)
Inversions, ed. Betsy Warland (Press Gang Publishers)
Leatherfolk, by Mark Thompson (Alyson Books)
Queer in America, by Michael Signorile (Random House)
Trouble With Harry Hay, by Stuart Timmons (Alyson Books)
Woman Native Other, by Trih T. Mihn-ha (Indiana University Press)
Written on the Body, Jeanette Winterson (Random House)

Cool queer music:

7 Year Bitch; 1000 Homo djs; Mark Almond (Soft Cell); Daniel Ash (Bauhaus, Love & Rockets); Bomb; Kate Bush; Buzzcocks; Meyn Cadell; Tracy Chapman; John Cage; Consolidated; Ani DiFranco; Disposable Heroes of Hiphopracy; Melissa Ethridge; Ethyl Meatplow; Fifth Column; Ferron; Germs; Indigo Girls; Grace Jones; kd lang; King Missil; Kitchens of Distinction; Minor Threat; Morrissey (The Smiths); Bob Mould (Husker Du, Sugar); Alison Moyet; Peter Murphy (Bauhaus); Holly Near; Nirvana; Pansy Division; Phranc; Porno For Pyros/Janes Addiction; Psychic TV (Throbbing Grissle); Jimmy Sommerville (Bronski Beat, Communards); Lou Reed (Velvet Underground); Michelle Shocked; Thrill Kill Kult; Tickle Trunk; Tribe 8; Two Nice Girls; Wolfgang Press.

Good films:

Apartment Zero, *dir. Martin Donovan*
Being at Home With Claude, *dir. Jean Baudin*
Desert Hearts, *dir. Donna Deitch*
Edward II, *dir. Derek Jarman*
Even Cowgirls Get the Blues, *dir. Gus van Sant*
Fellini's Satyricon, *dir. Frederico Fellini*
Forbidden Love, *dir. Marge Pettigrew & Jinny Stikeman*
I've Heard the Mermaids Singing, *dir. Patricia Rozema*
Law of Desire, *dir. Pedro Almadovar*
Looking for Langston, *dir. Isaac Julian*
Mala Noche, *dir. Gus van Sant*
My Beautiful Laundrette, *dir. Stephen Frears*
My Own Private Idaho, *dir. Gus van Sant*
Out: the lives of gay and lesbian youth, *dir. David Adkin*
Paris is Burning, *dir. Jenny Livingston*
Passion Fish, *dir. John Sayles*
Poison, *dir Todd Haynes*
Querelle, *dir. Jean Genet*
Savage Nights, *dir. Cyril Collard*
Swoon, *dir. Tom Kalin*
Thank God I'm a Lesbian, *N.F.B.*
Torch Song Trilogy, *dir. Paul Bogard*
Young Soul Rebels, *dir. Isaac Julian*

Out and Loud

Film Review

OUT: Stories of lesbiana and gay youth
dir. David Adkin, N.F.B.

by Jen Gilbert and Tanya Battersby

After watching this film we headed out to Denman Street looking for a place to sit and write this review over a couple of beers. Upon entering a pub which shall remain nameless, we were greeted with the comment, "Fucking queers! Buy your beers and get the fuck out!"

(Enter dream sequence.) *But we are OUT!" we scream as we rip off our shirts to expose our pink triangle tattoos and multiple body piercings. The obnoxious straight man keels over in a fit of cardiac arrest.* (Back to reality.)
Jen: Can we leave? My last bashing wound hasn't healed yet.

Not wanting to defend ourselves in yet another rumble, we exit and head up Davie to find refuge under a giant rainbow flag. Having settled down with our over-priced coffee, we begin our review of the film *Out: Stories of Gay and Lesbian Youth* :

Tanya: It had a good balance between the struggles and obstacles queer youth face, and the triumphs and strengths of individuals and communities.
J: Yeah, I liked the different cuts that contrasted the threatening atmosphere of homophobic straight society with the pure campiness and flamboyance of gay and lesbian existence. Like the scene with Justus in Thunder Bay where they filmed a "real man" throwing a case of beer into the back of his pickup and the cut to Justus dressed in black and chains riding public transit.
T: There wasn't a fear of showing the distinct elements of queer culture—like drag queens, pride day celebrations and the Queer Nation halloween march. Things that mainstream culture would like to make disappear. By showing them, the film actively opposes the supposedly liberal stance that it's okay to be gay as long as you don't flaunt it. Well, we're gonna flaunt it. We are different! The mainstream mindset can't comprehend that queers might not want to assimilate.

J: True, but at the same time I could really sense the deparation some of the teens in the film felt about not fitting in and not being accepted. I was reminded that high school is a wretched institution with its strict enforcement of normalness and conformity. I can't imagine the courage it would take to come out in high school. The panel discussion really highlighted some of the prejudicial attitudes a gay or lesbian would have to face in high school.
T: It was really important that the effects of that kind of conformist environment, from dropping out to suicide to substance abuse, were explored. It made me realize how much more in the way of support systems for queer youth are needed, especially in rural areas where a young person might have no idea that other queers exist, let alone form communities.
J: Conrad touched on that—the lack of support and services for native gay youth in Winnipeg. In his case he was afraid that if he accessed any services he would be sent back to the reserve.
T: Yet at the same time, it was clear that the traditional acceptance of different expressions of sexuality in native communities had been destroyed by the process of colonization. The revival of these traditions in some native communities could be a subject for an entire film. Conrad's support of Dionne, the transvestite who was constantly being arrested for prostitution, demonstrated the reconstruction of support networks among native people a little bit.
J: Yeah, this film wasn't shy, it tackled some difficult and complex issues. Still it was safe, proclaiming the "we were born this way so don't hate us" line. Although I myself have difficulties with biological determinism I can see how such a claim would be useful to gain parents' and peer's approval.
T: It's a justification of lesbians and gays for civil rights purposes, but I think ultimately it's very dangerous when you consider the genetic engineering that's going on these days, the isolation of the gay gene or whatever. Not to mention the fact that it totally excludes lesbians and gays who have chosen to be this way or don't know if it's biology of choice. AND it excludes bisexuals. This was most explicit in the film when that guy in the beginning said, "I firmly believe you're born straight or you're born gay."
J: But he was in an asshole.
T: Queers can be assholes too! Oh my god, it's a revelation.
J: I heard queers like assholes.
T: And pussy holes.
J: While you're on the topic—did you see the back of my girlfriend's head?
T: Yes everybody, Jen's girlfriend was in the flick I can't top that.
J: You can't "top" anything.
T: Maybe not anything, but how about anyone.
J: Tanya, your recent sexual escapades have contributed to the degradation of your mind. I suggest you go home and wash your pussy out with soap.
T: But my girlfriend doesn't like the taste of soap.
J: My suggestion then would be a water based lube. Wet has a pleasant citrus flavor and Probe is virtually tasteless.
T: Speaking of sex, the film was a little shy on the topic.
J: You're right, but at least it's fit for my mother. By the way, do you think I could get an extra copy to send to her?
T: Sure, copies are available for rental ($3/day) or purchase at the NFB on Howe Street.
J: You're such a smart cookie.

Making hets queer(?

Book review

If You Seduce a Straight Person Can You Make Them Gay?
by John DeCocco

by Heather.

When John DeCecco compiled his book, *If You Seduce a Straight Person Can You Make Them Gay?* he wasn't writing an instruction manual for lesbians and gays looking for a challenge. DeCecco's book is actually some pretty heavy reading all about our views on sexuality and the title is a tongue in cheek stab at the question of what a gay PERSON or straight PERSON really is. In DeCecco's mind, neither really exist.

John DeCocco is the editor of the *Journal of Homosexuality* and an avid promoter of social constructionalist thinking—that is, the study of homosexuality in its historical context. To social constructionalists, the question is not what causes homosexuality, but what causes homophobia. Not "Why are some people gay?" but "Why does anybody care?"

It's a far cry from the "sexual orientation is something you're born with" stance that many gays have taken in the struggle for equal rights, and most don't understand the heterosexist connotations of such a statement.

Biological essentialism, according to DeCecco, is based on the idea that sex is for procreation and that normal sexual attraction goes hand in hand with a person's physical gender. In other words, a baby forming in the womb is being chemically, neurologically, or hormonally programmed to desire the opposite sex for mating purposes.

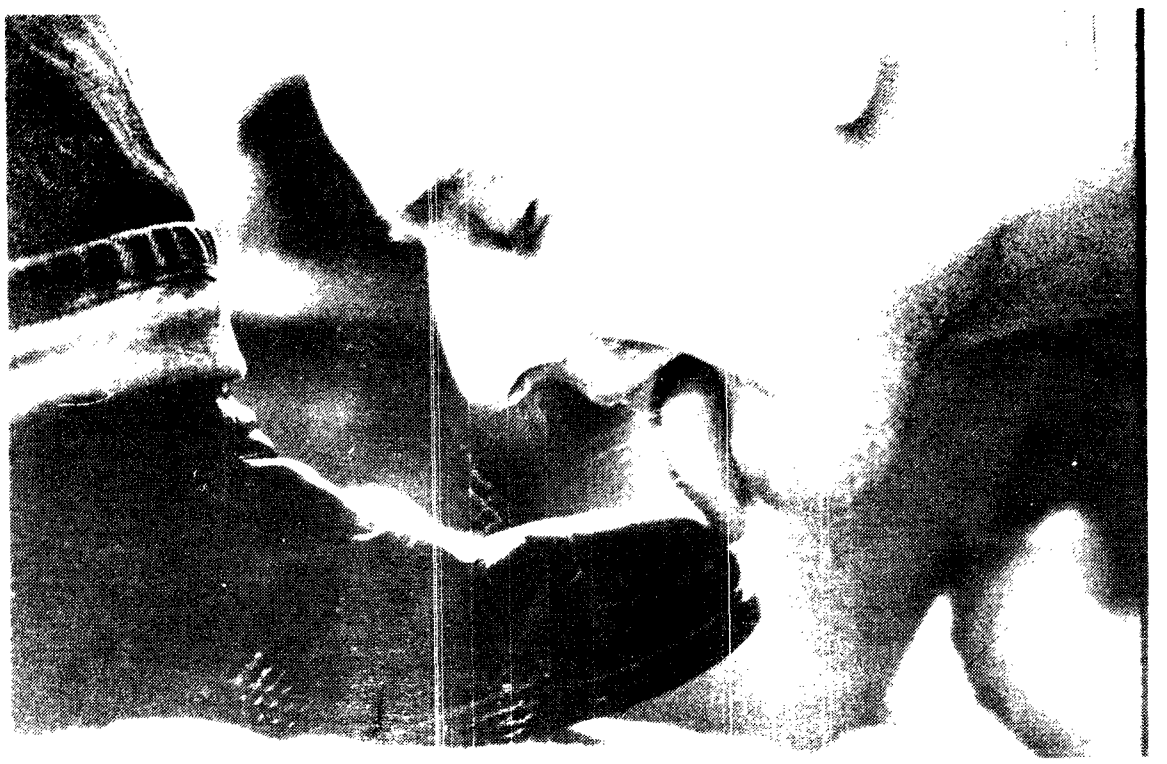
To explain homosexuality, biological essentialists coined the term "sexual orientation," suggesting that "if something went wrong" a person could end up being "driven" towards their own gender instead. The problem is, science has spent a lot of money trying to find out what that "something" is, and a lot of babies have been aborted over speculation.

Fortunately, biological essentialist thinking is gradually being dismissed by scholars for a number of reasons. First of all, only half of the human brain is formed at birth and our chemical and hormone levels fluctuate throughout our lives. Thus it is unlikely that a pre-programmed on us in the womb could still affect us the same way in adulthood.

Secondly, when examining other cultures like Samba or ancient Greece, one sees that sex has not always been viewed first and foremost as a means of procreation. In both civilizations, older men had sex with

Your closet is your coffin.

Heterosexuality isnt normal; it's just common.



younger boys to initiate them into adulthood and there have been numerous similar examples throughout history.

Social constructionism looks at cultures like ancient Greece and asks "If homosexuality was considered normal in that society, why is it considered abnormal by this one?" After all, a homosexual preference is likely no different from a preference for a certain type of food or music and no one's ever launched a genetic study into why some people LOVE rap or brocolli. Nobody cares.

Social constructionists believe that we get our ideas about life from our culture and if a person was raised in a bubble, so to speak, they'd be completely unaware of having a "sexual orientation." To them, the gay [illegible] mental program but rather a reaction to societal stigma. [illegible] person with an overwhelming preference for the same [illegible] feel alienated growing up in an anti-gay society. To them, it's [illegible] like being the only techno fan in a country bar or the only animal rights activist on a game hunt.

It's such a relief to find someone else who thinks the same way, and when you do, you always become so much more vocal about your views. As for the actual existence of a gay person or straight person though, the social constructionist viewpoint is the way they are, well, socially constructed.

Some gays and lesbians feel threatened by social constructionist thinking and John DeCecco has recieved a lot of flack for his book from the homosexual community. However, in a world where science is continuing its search for a "gay gene" and possibly a cure for homosexuality, *If You Seduce a Straight Person, Can You Make Them Gay?* is essential reading for all gays and lesbians... or shall we say, "people who happen to prefer same sex love."

Making our planet queer

Book Review

Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory
Edited by Michael Warner
University of Minnesota Press

by Elisabeth van Assum

If you're into heavy theory and a good read, take this book. It's like plowing through wet snow but you feel so fucking good after you're through. Lots of exciting perspectives on heterosexual culture, the development of the queer movement, analysis of racism, sexism and classism in the queer movement, and my favourite chapter, "How to raise your kids gay" make this an anthology worth purchasing.

For baby queers who are just starting to get a feel for the intricate and complicated realm of queer theory, this book is an accessible starting point and departure point. Another chapter was like a wet dream for me (I'm a sociology student, you see) since nothing makes me happier than a good, healthy deconstruction of those sacred cows of sociology, Marx and Engls.

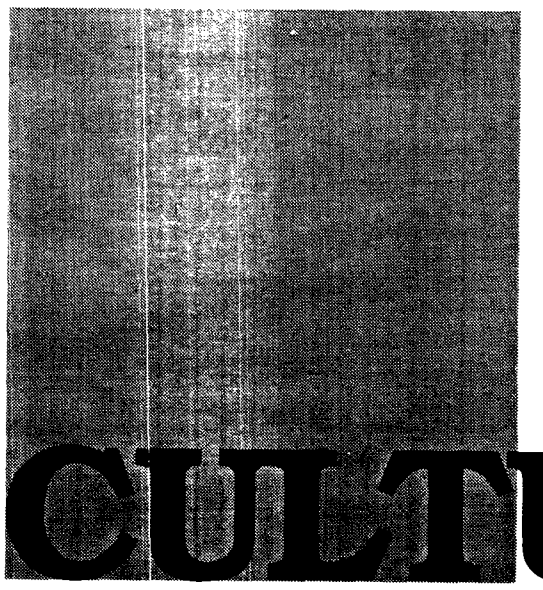
Freud is not exempt from queer analysis either, as he provides valuable insight into the workings of the heterosexual mind. Poor Freud, little did he know he would be such useful fodder for queer theorists.

Another chapter discuses our favourite astronomer Carl Sagan (you know, Mr."Billyuns and Billyuns of Stawrs"). The author deconstructs the apparently benign image of the man and woman on Voyager II that NASA launched into that place "where no man has gone before" some fifteen years ago.

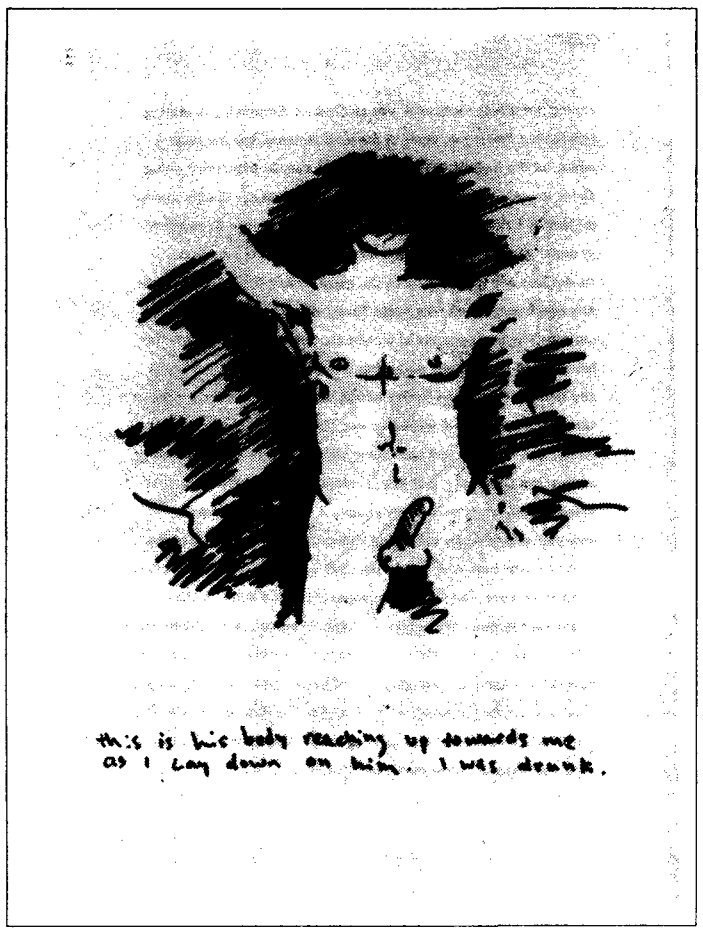
The picture of the man and the woman is overtly straight, white, male and middle class. The man is standing square with his arm raised in goodwill. The woman is shorter, and leaning provocatively on one hip, her hair well coiffed. Hmmmmm, but wait, no pubic hair. Where that lovely female fissure should be is a blank space and the man, well his dick looks vaguely cherub like. Kind of like those baby carrots you can buy at safeway. Apparently Carl Sagan never saw a nice big cock in his day. Oh ya, for many years, his wife drew the picture. Gee, maybe she never seen a big cock....

If there is any criticism of this book it will be that there is no Canadian content. As far as I know there is no Canadian anthology of queer writings in wide distribution. Heck, I guess I can do someting after I graduate now—I'll write a book. Buy it, you'll like it.

Real men take it up the ass.



QUEER CULTURE



drawing from Memories That Smell Like Gasoline by David Wojnarowicz. Art Space Books: 1992

to those who hate

I sit here, pen in hand
Wondering what I can write
To those who hate.

I know that someone once said,
probably wrote,
"The pen is mightier than the sword!"
Or some similar words
That really mean subjection and
defeat.

But pens and words
Are all I have.
I can not use a sword.
I have seen too much blood already.

I bleed daily from wounds
That will not heal.
Others bleed more than I,
Others less; these are the fortunate
ones.

We bleed on the streets.
Punctured lungs, ruptured hearts,
Slashed wrists, severed heads,
All this gore, all this blood
(Do you want it to remain invisible?)
Sickens me, too.
Do you think I want to write these
things?
Live them?

We bleed in our homes.
But this blood is less messy.
It's figurative blood; black and white
(and red and blue) Blood
Drawn by words and other lesser
swords;
Newspaper blood, magazine blood,
television blood,
The blood of our souls.
The blood that is spilled each time a
"fag" or "dyke"
Receives a stroke,
There, in the media.
This blood does not have to be removed
From the streets, from the sidewalks.
If it did, more attention
Would be paid to it.
It might be made real, too,
To those who hate.

But blood and swords
Are not what I want to write about.
(What do I want? What do I write
about?)
I'd rather write of love,
Of life,
But these are not allowed me,
They are not allowed us.
We bleed for these. We die and bleed,
And that blood is here
In these words, in this text.
It will not remain invisible
To those who hate.

If We Love

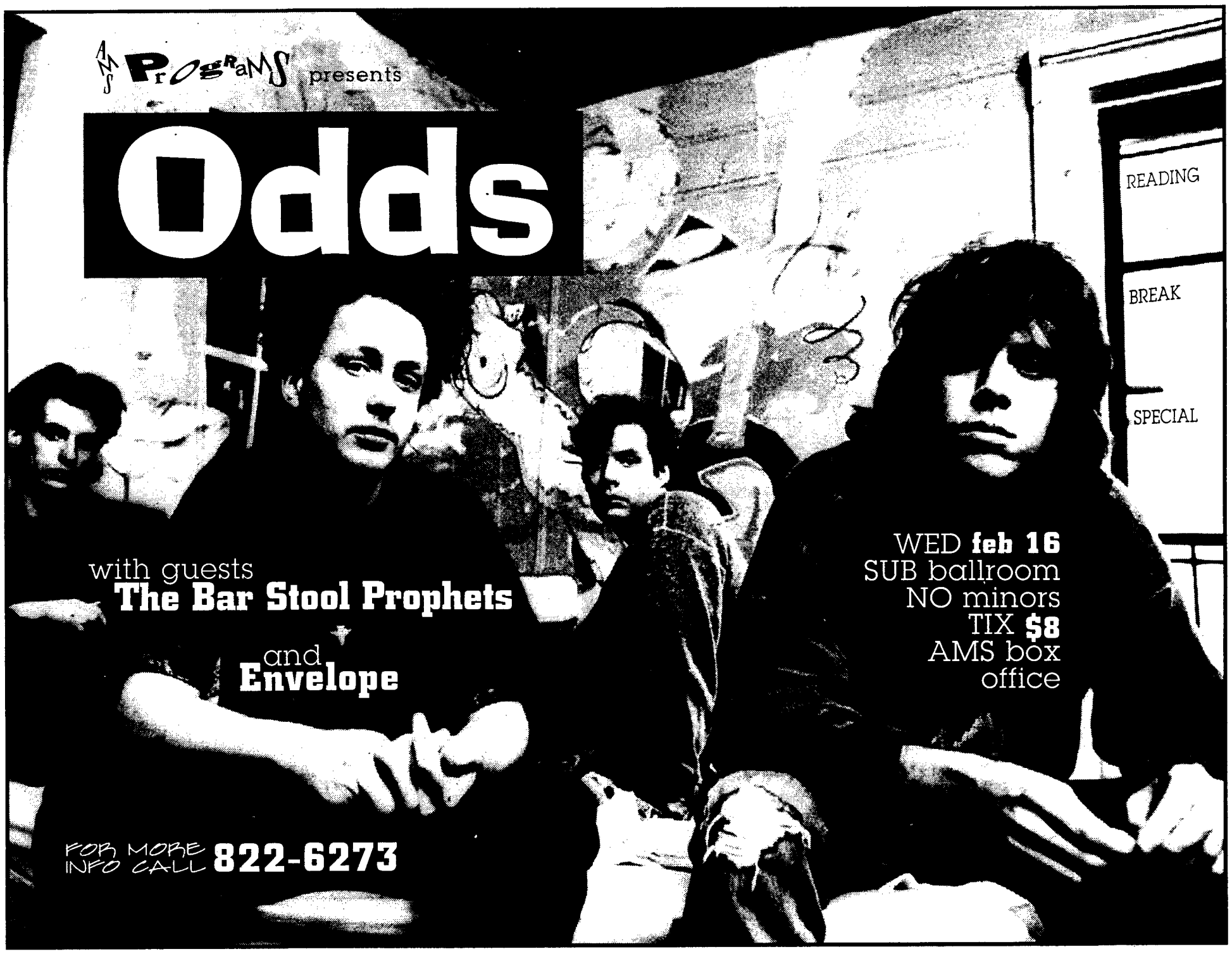
It's been months
Since our mouths
First met,
Our first meeting.
In the dark,
Through the park,
We walked
Slow,
Slow,
Getting to know
Each other.
At least this,
Before that kiss,
We believed.

Deceived of course,
But for cause.
Neither willing to admit
He was lonely, needy.
Greedy for touch,
Going much
Too long,
Too long,
Without love.
Without life.
These denied to
Men like us who
Need each other.

But another greed,
Some deeper need,
Drew us together,
Whether we knew it, or not:
Craving connection,
Consummation, confirmation
That we, too, were, are
Real,
Real,
That what we feel
Is not sinful,
Nor shameful.
We are not blameful
For needing love.

Above that same park
Where we walked in the dark
We now live;
Despite prohibitions,
Definitions,
Legislations,
Registrations of what
They deem real unions.
Our unification shakes
Their fortification.
If we live, if we love,
It will fall
After all.

—Chris K. Evers



Out, proud, and loud as an Asian lesbian in Vancouver

by Denise Tang

I am talking about being an Asian lesbian in Vancouver. I do not speak for all Asian lesbians. I lived in Hong Kong for most of my life and I was not out to anyone. I lived in Vancouver for four and a half years and I am still not as out as I want to be. I have learned a lot about what it means to be a lesbian of colour and I have learned it through white lesbians here.

I am not politically active in the Asian lesbian community. A part of me says that I am still turning a blind eye towards racism because sometimes it just hurts too much to talk about it. A part of me says that I am not a Chinese Canadian, and I do not think I have much in common with other Asian lesbians in Vancouver.

But the truth is racism affects all lesbians of colour. I stand out in a bar full of white lesbians, yet I am fully aware that the colour of my skin contributes to my invisibility in the lesbian community. I see images of white women in posters for women-identified events. I find writings by lesbians of colour marginalised in anthologies of lesbian theory and criticism.

I find a woman of colour feminist writer, such as bell hooks, is singled out to speak for all women of colour. She is the token black feminist. A book or an essay by her signifies the women of colour content in a full year course. I find my behaviour being judged by white lesbians on the basis of their perceptions of my cultural upbringing; not the way I feel, but the way I am supposed to act as an Asian lesbian.

Recently, it has become a priority for lesbian and feminist organizations to have the representation of women of colour. In my experience, I find that we are discussed in collective meetings and rescued by including us in committees. We feel like we can be a part of the decision-making process, only to find ourselves being ignored and treated as ornaments, trimmings to an inner circle of "real" decision makers.

We are in a permanent peripheral position, since what else can we ask for? We are included although when we speak up nobody wants to listen. We are present although we are not asked about what we think on issues concerning us.

It is definitely hard for lesbians to come out, but for an Asian lesbian, I am blessed with the additional burden of dispelling myths about Asian women as heterosexual, exotic and passive. I am oppressed racially in white society as well as within the lesbian community. It feels like being trapped in a cage within a cage.

This means that I also have a smaller community to expect support from. It is dangerous for me to risk my connections with the Asian community because if I can only count on the lesbian community, I am in big trouble. For I know no matter how many lesbians would like to believe otherwise, the lesbian community is still a representation of the larger society, with the same sorts of "-isms," such as racism, classism and ableism.

I would like to challenge the narrow western notion of lesbianism which is that lesbians are largely white women with short hair and combat boots. It is much easier for a white lesbian to be a visible part of the lesbian community even if she has long hair and wears a traditional feminine outfit. I cut my hair short to be recognized as an Asian lesbian in the lesbian community. This is my way of first becoming visible as an Asian lesbian.

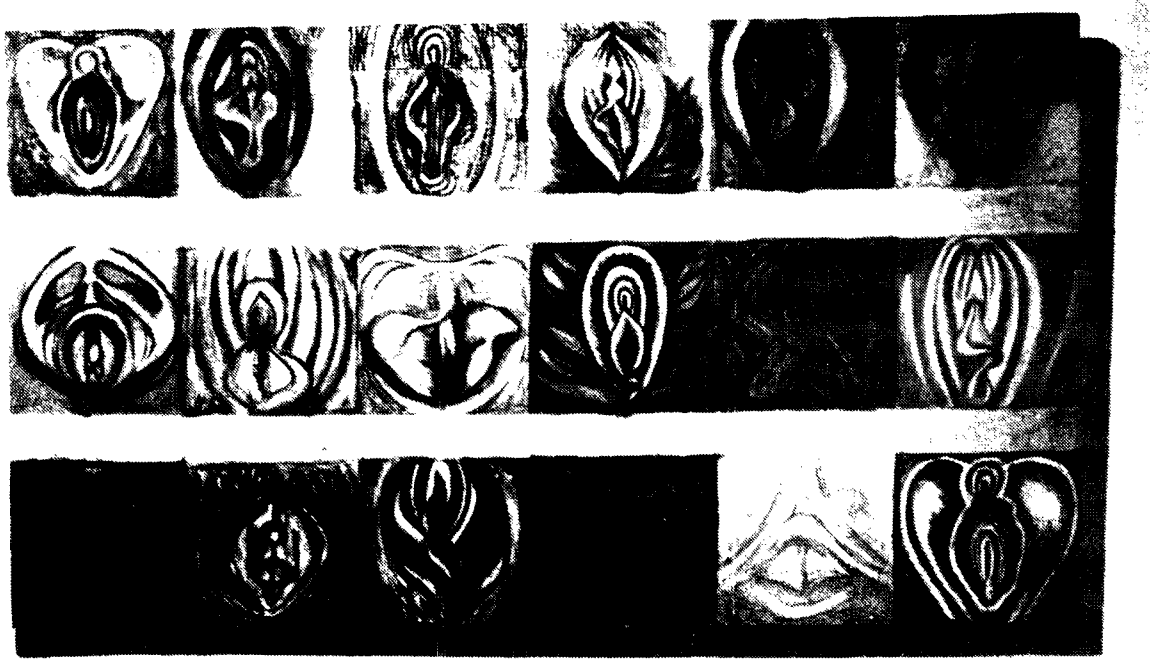
I would like to see the expansion of lesbianism in Vancouver to include Asian lesbians and the differences within the Asian lesbian community. It is not alright to just accept the existence of Asian lesbians, but at the same time refuse to acknowledge the fact that we do not all speak the same language and share the same beliefs.

Through getting more involved with the Asian lesbian community in Vancouver, I want to unite with other Asian lesbians and make myself more visible in the lesbian community. I will refuse to be Canadianized. I will continue to speak out against racism in the lesbian community. I am very lucky to have a good support network of lesbian and bisexual friends who embrace my differences. After all, all differences are as important as similarities.

A social discussion group called Dykes Unlimited meets every Wednesday at 12:30pm in the Women Centre (SUB 130). It is basically a chit-chat group talking about events coming up in the lesbian community. It would be very nice to see more lesbians of colour joining us.

Groups like Asian Lesbians of Vancouver, Gay Asians of Vancouver Area and Asian Support—AIDS Project are bridging gaps between the Asian community and the Asian lesbian and gay communities.

A benefit "Fun & Fund-Raiser" for the Asian Support—AIDS Project will be held on Saturday 5 February at the Odyssey (1251 Howe) from 7-9:30pm. This is a Lunar New Year Celebration for the Year of the Dog. There will be folk dance performances and readings, as well as palm readings and Chinese Calligraphy and Astrology. Performances will start at 8:00pm sharp. Tickets are available at Little Sisters Art and Book Emporium (1221 Thurlow) and AIDS Vancouver (1107 Seymour). Tickets will also be available at the door until performance time.



Outing is not a dead issue

by Joseph Callaghan

Five men are arrested in Stanley Park for performing "lewd acts" and newspapers across the country print the story. A student at the University of Saskatchewan includes a reference to the lesbianism of Saskatchewan's lieutenant governor in his artwork and is expelled from school.

Why is the former printable and the latter unmentionable? Why is it "simply reporting the news" to print stories that put lesbigay people in a bad light but an invasion of privacy to acknowledge the homosexuality of women and men in the corridors of power?

The straight media continues to portray queers as the sick (AIDS), the bashed, the "perverts," and the discriminated. Yet they remain silent when it comes to reporting on a lesbian politician, a bisexual singer, or a gay former prime minister. How can we achieve true liberation when we are always portrayed as the victim and never the heroine or hero?

The breeder press justifies its silence on queer public figures using the privacy argument: "The media has no right to invade the private lives of public people." Yeah, right.

When has the press ever used this rationale in their dealings with straight people? Indeed, the opposite is true when a public person is heterosexual. (See the CBC's fireside chat with Presto and his wife at Christmastime if you need an example.)

However, no questions are asked and nothing is said about the private lives of public queers. Even when reporters know that a certain Vancouver senator is a lesbian or a former BC NDP member of parliament is gay, they refuse to print this information. The public knows all about the spouses of heterosexuals in the public eye yet the partners of queers disappear when the "news" is reported.

As long as the media continues to rigidly enforce this double standard, our struggle to be seen and heard will be most difficult. As long as our lives are deemed unprintable, unspeakable, unthinkable, our demands for full and equal participation in society will remain unfulfilled.

An interview with the boy next door

Interview by Niva Chow

10:37 p.m. We're stoned, listening to the Eurythmics "Jennifer" and talking about the Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan chronicles. We've just finished the Province quiz and we've all been declared members of the Harding fan club.

April 7th 1992. I was tired, I thought I had a tumour in the back of my neck but they were lymphnodes. So he took a blood test and he told me.

When I found out I cried. Then I went over to [his best friend's] house and I told him. I didn't think about how he would react because I knew. There was never an issue there.

Then I started telling people and it just sorta got out of hand because people who I didn't even know knew. I wanted to tell them. Then I didn't want anyone to know and how it just doesn't matter.

Since I have found out I have changed in lots and lots and lots of ways. Everything is just different. It has only been two years—how that's affected me is just through people's ignorance. I don't want to say people's ignorance though—it's just what people fear.

Has my life changed? No—yeah, it changes things. I don't have to worry about retirement so any money that I make I spend for me. I don't have to worry about retirement because I won't retire.

The talk goes on, but it pauses because we have all forgotten what we have talked about. Madonnas's Justify my Love is filtering in the background. He is stoned... Explanation diatribe.

I imagine that I got it through sex. I don't know who, when, or where because I don't know how many thousands of things—or how many men. But I don't want to know. At first I thought about it but now it's like it doesn't matter. That was yesterday, this is today.

Now I'm numb. It's hard for me to make decisions about long term things. You want to make sure but you're never sure. Long term things you know? I don't know if it has changed the way people percieve me. I think it does but just because it's such a media-hype. There's so much confusion in the media that it confuses everyone else. The people aren't getting the proper message. They're getting scared and that changes the way people look at me.

Verve's Slide Away is playing on the cd player. The room is an interesting dichotomy—four plants and two sets of dried roses.

I'm not an angry young man. There's a lot of things I've changed—I can't just go with it. I relate to this to being gay first of all. It's like the same thing because it is just another thing for people to discriminate against.

I've been gay for 23 years so I'm used to it. You don't get angry but at the same time you just go on because that's what you are and that's what you do.

But I don't recommend staying in the closet. That's screwed.

When you first asked me, I said yes because it's going somewhere where a lot of people are going to read it. It was sorta an opportunity to open eyes and make people talk about it—or gain some knowledge. Some real stuff, not tv stuff.

A lot of info out there that people get is distorted, not the complete truth. They're trying to get this message out—it's sorta working but not really. I'm getting fucked up—I want people to talk to people that know. They can't expect someone who needs ratings to go with the plain and simple truth. They want people to watch so they spice everything. I just don't want people to be afraid.

I still have sex. At first it was difficult, to say the least. It was very hard—actually it wasn't hard at all if you know what I mean.

Seriously, there were times when I would lose my erection because I'd start thinking about it. It would be so bad—I was so afraid.

I would tell some people before, if it was just going to be a one night stand then I wouldn't say anything. Unless they would ask, but it was always safe.

A condom broke once but because of that I'll never start anything with anybody before telling them. I will never ever act again without telling people I'm HIV first. It'll still be safe—safer.

We love k.d.lang.

The point is that yes, we still have sex and yes it's possible to have safe sex with us. You just have to be really careful. You have to double bag.

In terms of reception, the gay community has accepted me more, but it's because they're educated more.

There is a distinction between HIV and AIDS. When you have AIDS you usually get an opportunistic infection and your immune system screws up, but before that you're just like everyone else.

Except for fatigue—I don't have as much energy as I used to have.

If I had to go back, would I change anything? No, because I have learned alot from everything that I have done. I wouldn't want to not learn the stuff I have learned. And that was all yesterday, this is today.

ALL PEOPLE WITH AIDS ARE INNOCENT

Bisexuality is not a fantasy

by Tania Trepanier

I identify myself as a bisexual. Not because it's trendy. Not to shock. Not to place myself higher on the hierarchy of oppression. Not because it's intirguing. But because it describes my reality and because I don't want people to be afraid of bisexuality, both in themselves and in others.

BISEXUALS ARE NOT PROMISCUOUS COMPROMISING FENCESITTERS

Many heterosexuals have had at least one homosexual experience in their lifetime. These kinds of experiences are usually dismissed as a phase, an exception or some kind of perverse experimentation. Many try to deny that such an experience has taken place at all.

Likewise, some lesbians have been known to fall in love with a man, or wind up having sex with a man. Some men who identify themselves as homosexual decide to get married to a woman.

People from both the heterosexual world and the homosexual world seem to have reservations about bisexuals. The typical responses from the heterosexual community are that bisexuals must be promiscuous or confused. Typical responses from the homosexual community are that bisexuals are simply heterosexuals who are curious and who don't have the guts to let go of their heterosexual conditioning.

Yet, coming out as a bisexual is just as difficult as coming out as a gay person. The response is pretty much the same; polite silence and change of subject, or blantant homophobia.

There is evidence that bisexuality has existed and has been acceptable in different societies at different times. The bisexuality that existed in classical Athens was one in which older male citizens could choose as the object of their love a boy, slave or woman. There is also evidence of a more equitable kind of bisexuality in Lesbos and Sparta, in which women had relationships with women as well as being married. In India, many examples have survived of women, who would have been married to men, celebrating lesbian love in their poems.

Some friends and I were discussing the merits of bisexualtiy on a global scale in terms of population control. We envisioned a world in which it would be assumed that everyone started out bisexual. Assuming that half the population ended up with same sex partners, we could curb the world's population explosion and we might have a chance of surviving on this planet for a little longer.

All this to say that both homosexuality and heterosexuality are natural, normal kinds of sexuality; one or the other or both may exist in one person. As Deneuve, a lesbian magazine states "love transcends gender".

The stigma attached to bisexuality in women is particularly acute as a result of what Adrienne Rich calls "compulsory heterosexuality". In her essay by the same title she states,

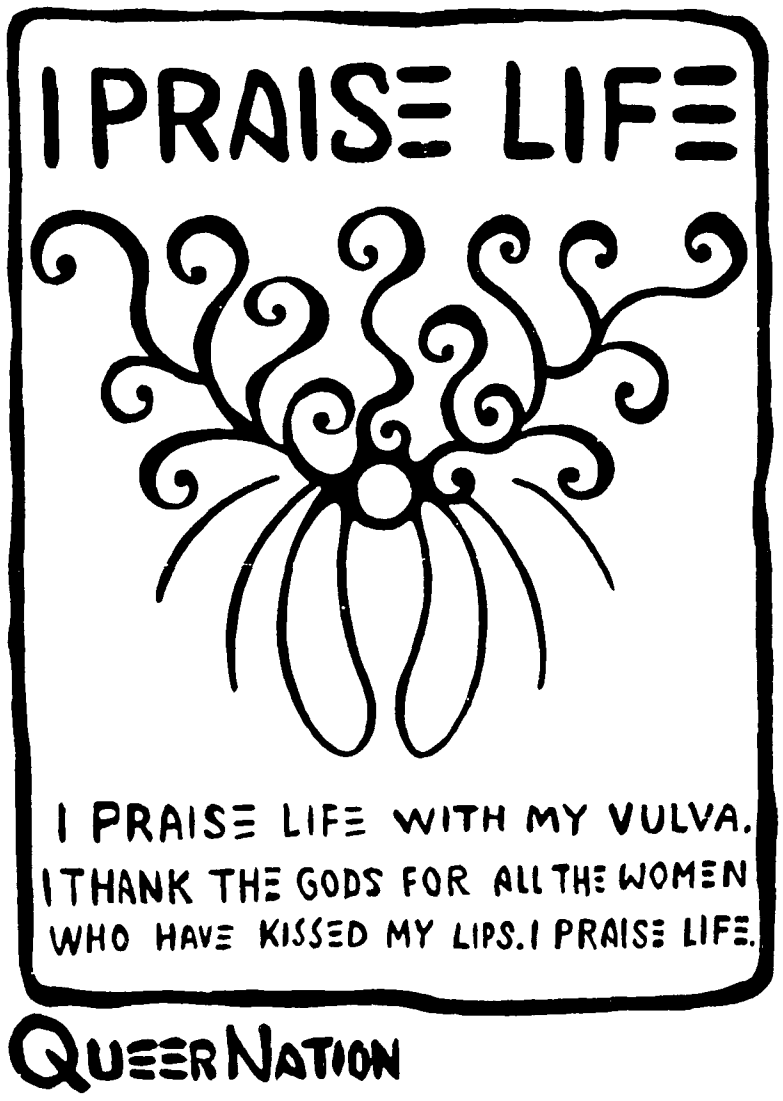
"The lie of compulsory female heterosexuality today afflicts not just feminist scholarship, but every profession, every reference work, every curriculum, every organizing attempt, every relationship or conversation over which it hovers. It creates, specifically, a profound falseness, hypocrisy, and hysteria in the heterosexual dialogue, for every heterosexual relationship is lived in the queasy strobelight of that lie. However we choose to identify ourselves, however we find ourselves labeled, it flickers across and distorts our lives."

I hope to see a break down in compulsory heterosexuality and a legitimization of bisexuality as an identity that is not a compromise, that is not a betrayal, and that does not stem out of confusion.

open your mind

open your mind

Queer is a state of mind



by Kent Hurl

This is about being queer. When I was asked to write an article for this issue, I took a long time deciding on how to approach it. I wondered if I should take a political angle on a specific issue that is close to gay hearts. I also wondered if maybe I could discuss the dynamics of same-sex sex (for those of you who still cannot fathom two women or two men giving each other indescribable pleasure, among other things).

I even wondered about simply the idea of exposing some of my thoughts on paper on anything that has to with gay life to an audience that may skip over this article, or read it and then mock it, or even maybe just burn the paper out of fear of learning about something that is not depraved or twisted in any way.

This is just the way I am. I mean, it all goes back to that "nature vs. nurture" thing again, right? There can be an internal struggle for a lot of homosexuals over the uncertainty of whether or not they were born that way, or whether they were perhaps neglected or ridiculed and just plain forced into it. Who knows?

I wondered the same things about myself. A typical example of the above train of thought might go something like this:

Gee, there seems to be hair growing out of different parts of my body all of a sudden. And am I ever horny all the time too. But isn't this crazy, I just don't seem to be thinking of (the opposite sex) when I touch myself

This may enter the mind of a pubescent (and homosexual) twelve year old. After that might come:

Is this normal? Am I a freak in a suburban variety show? Is anyone else feeling this way? I know I played in the nude for a long time and had a high level of curiousity with my best friends when I was in elementary school, but that doesn't mean I'm gay does it?

I am sure you can start to see the almost unbearable anxiety building in a young person's already fucked up head. I am also sure you can try to believe the truth behind a statistic which tells us that one-third to one-half of all teenage suicides are committed because they can do nothing about themselves; nor is there anything they can do to prevent a life of hideous exploitation and discrimination, except just to end it.

It doesn't have to be like that though. If people managed to seek out just one iota of individuality from themselves, they wouldn't blindly play follow-the-leader and allow their minds to be manipulated by small-minded ignorant fucks who have nothing better to do than spend time with each other concerned with everyone's business except their own.

I think organized religion plays a key role here. I respect the importance of one's own spiritual awareness, and if that spills over into fellowship then that's fine too. However, when I see people gathering to listen to "the word" and demonstrating their faith in front of each other, and it involves blatant infringement on my HUMAN rights as a gay person or a women's HUMAN rights (noticed I have not used the word SPECIAL rights) or anyone's rights as a fucking human being, that's when a problem develops for me.

Honestly, I don't want to believe that all religions are patriarchal, hate-fostering institutions that teach criminal ideas, but I can't help it when I hear pathetic jokes like, "I thought it was Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve."

Go fuck yourself if you think that's funny because it's not. All it does is waste time—mine and yours. I don't want to appear bitter and nothing but a whiner, but if we all paid more attention to matters that truly threaten us all—like war and starvation and AIDS and corrupt governments—we would channel our energy where it's really needed. We make wide-open spaces for hate to play in yet we can hardly squeeze love in.

If there really is a god who is all-loving, I have a hard time believing he/she/it would want us acting like that. But whatever; I don't ignore progress either. Colorado passes anti-gay state laws and an all-gay programming radio station is on the air in Denver—KGAY.

AIDS funding is allocated through a red-tape strainer, but every day we're learning how to live longer and longer with it. People with AIDS are just that—people. Don't ever call them victims of AIDS. That makes you sound really sad, believe me.

There's so much work for everyone to do, but I just don't think everyone has been trained right for the job, you know what I mean? I'm still reasonably happy though. But how could I not be—my family means everything to me and all of my excellent friends get me through everything. And that makes it all worth it.

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HOMOPHOBIA IS ALIVE AND WELL

PERSPECTIVE
Rodney Snooks

Many people will state that they are sick and tired of hearing about homophobia, claiming that anti-gay discrimination in our society does not exist, and that homosexuals and bisexuals just shouldn't "flaunt it" anyway.

It would be nice if discrimination ended, but thousands of Canadians each year—for no other reason than their sexual orientation—are beaten up, fired, or kicked out of their homes. While, in recent years, society has become more accepting of homosexuality (and less so of bisexuality), it still has a long way to go in recognizing homosexual rights. The ever-present possibiltiy of a "rights rollback" faces everyone in society.

A vocal minority still claims that homosexuality is either morally wrong, or a sickness, or both, despite overwhelming scientific and social-scientific evidence to the contrary. They also think they have a right to have their bizarre beliefs reflected in the law, often claiming that bilesgays want some kind of "special privilege." These "privileges" are nothing less than that which is guaranteed for heterosexuals: protection from employment discrimination, school curricula which reflect the reality of the possible range of family types, and spousal rights for long-standing cohabitive relationships.

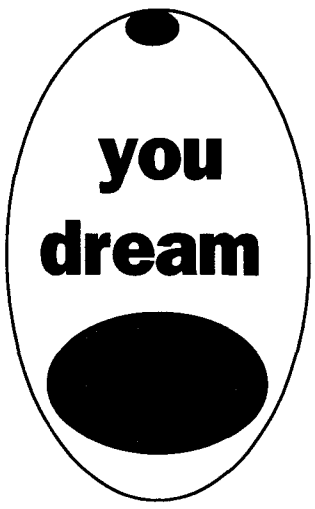
Many in this group have gone to the point of claiming the existence of some kind of gay conspiracy to corrupt society. It may be said that there is a conspiracy theory for everything, but this one is believed not by a small group of fanatics, but by many ordinary folks, some in positions of power, both in Canada and the US. This is clearly shown in recent anti-gay measures in several American states, and by the anti-intellectual positions taken by members of the executive of the Canadian women's group Real Women, who have much influence within the Reform party.

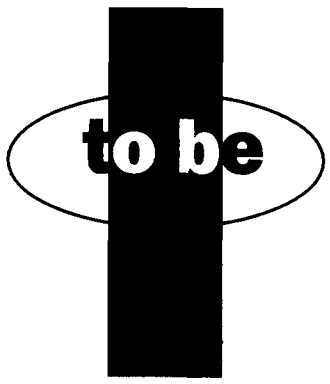
Others who claim to take a more "reasonable" view against homosexuality should not be taken seriously. A "rational" position stating that homosexuality is wrong or sick *does not exist*. If one looks at any credible medical journals after, say, 1975, one will not find any convincing evidence for these. Why? Because *none exists*.

Furthermore, every society throughout history has had a queer minority. Historically, there is every reason to believe that queer impulses are permanently embedded within the minds of a certain percentage of the population, which is much larger than most people think. Many, perhaps most, people occasionally experience homosexual impulses.

The "flaunting" argument reminds us that the most well-meaning people can still maintain their prejudices despite all good efforts. Contrary to common belief, the vast majority of bilesgays have sexual habits that do not differ from those of most heterosexuals in terms of frequency, intensity, etc.

While, as noted earlier, bilesgays have experienced a recent increase in support from the mainstream community, we must never forget the softness of this support—let no one think that somehow the "battle is over." It's just beginning.





Canadians often believe themselves to exist in a society of equality and tolerance. Surprisingly, we continue to ignore or excuse bigotry on the part of our politicians and public leaders. I speak here of the homophobia—ranging from mild to rabid—exhibited clearly, yet euphemistically, by leading federal politicians.

Let's make no mistake here. The "arguments" advanced to justify prejudice against gays, lesbians, and homosexuals are of such a flimsy and obviously prejudiced nature as to reflect comically on those who believe them. Given this and the reality of discrimination, anyone who won't take a stand in favour of full equality rights, including spousal benefits, lacks the maturity, moral strength, and power of reason to function as a normal adult, let alone as a responsible public servant.

Because the political selection procedure cannot prevent the participation of such individuals, those who truly care must take a stand. This means pointing out and trying to correct prejudice wherever it is found. This also means refusing to vote for a member of any political party that won't take an explicit stand for full equality rights. For, while a particular individual may not spout anti-gay rhetoric, association with those who do reflects poorly (I say fatally) on that person's moral convictions.

In particular, western Canada has seen the rise of a new federal party whose leaders are not expressing "rational" opinions for "family values." The leaders of the Reform party have publicly expressed opinions which are bigoted in the most literal sense. Most other mainstream parties, while taking a milder or even softly gay-positive stand, refuse to enact gay-positive policy.

Many western Canadians have chosen to ignore these messages, hungry for a change, thinking, perhaps, that "they don't really mean it." Wake up, wake up, WAKE UP! When voters approve such politicians, licence is given to the less articulate bigots, the ones who think they have reason, or even a duty, to beat up homosexuals. For this reason, homophobic leaders are responsible in a very literal sense for anti-gay violence.

PERSPECTIVE
Rodney Snooks

There is some hope for the present, much of it owing to the general growing acceptance of homosexuality in Canada, and the American public's rejection of Pat Buchannan's famous family values speech at the Republican party convention of 1992. But for those who see great importance in ending the culture of bigotry, it is imperative that in our voting habits, at the very least, we place this value at a higher level of priority than deciding between vague and basically identical economic proposals.

THE UBYSSEY 5 February 1994
The Ubyssey is a founding member of Canadian University Press
The Ubyssey is published Tuesdays and Fridays by the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia. Editorial opinions are those of the staff and not necessarily those of the university administration, or of the publisher. The editorial office is Room 241K of the Student Union Building. Editorial Department, phone 822-2301; advertising, 822-3977; FAX 822-9279 **circulation 12,000**

The lights dimmed. By the window overlooking the mud-slewn tragedy sat Tessa Moon, Gerry Straathofq and Trevor Presley. Beside them, Paul Dayson and Siobhan Roantree lamented the loss of dignity that seemed so apparent. Ted Young-Ing and Christine Reynard thought different however. They, along with Sarah O'Donell and Rodney Snooks didn't believe the libelous rumours that had been infiltrating the citizenry. Joseph Callaghan amd Christine Price plotted with their leader Heather—just Heather to seek revenge on those who had spread the vicious lies. Niva Chow sat with Kent Hurl in the corner and dropped a ton of 'cid and flew into oblivion together. Taivo Evard, on his own narcotics, marched up and down, constantly repeating the same thing: It is medically uncorrect to oppose The Ubyssey. Liz van Assum sat on the bank fishing while Gregg McNally cleaned his gun, muttering, "Laugh at me will they?" Tanya Battersby and Graham Cook and Steve Chow prepared a noxious mixture of poison dart serum while Tania Trepanier and Sara Martin painted coal on each other's faces and donned their balaclavas. Denise Tang and Kristian Armstrong and Gary Francesini fleed in a panic to the surplus store for more supplies. Scott Hayward laughed and laughed and laughed. And Mat X sat watching everything, not saying a whole lot.

Editors
Coordinating Editor: Douglas "strange"Ferris
News Coordinator: Graham "uncertain" Cook
News Editors: Sara "out there" Martin, Taivo "outlandish" Evard
Culture Coordinator: Steve "lost" Chow
Culture Editor: Ted "queer" Young-Ing
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Room #213 March 15th

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Room #215 Feb. 20th (Sunday)
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Letters to the staff...

Stop Clearcutting Binkley

As Dean of Forestry Clark Binkley claims (*The Ubyssey*, Jan 28), the Faculty of Forestry curriculum at UBC has been revised to some extent to the sensitivites of the environment. However, being in the position of power and influence such as Dean of Forestry and a Director at West Fraser Timber Company, has Clark Binkley made any changes to the destructive clearcut practices that are continuing in the pristine forests of BC? I think not. As recent as last fall, the BC Government was still *permitting clearcut practices* in old growth forests in this province, much of which are exported as raw logs or used as pulp for phone books and toilet paper. If only Mr. Binkley were as outspoken about ending clearcut practices in BC as he is in defending his department! Ah... never, its just too sensible!...it would never happen.

F.C.S. Tsai
Graduate Studies

Looking for a Helpful Hand

To whomever may receive this letter and be so kind to read and understand, I am a Black, Indian American prisoner serving time within an American prison within the United States. I lack access to a typewriter at the present time, so I hope you will excuse the condition of this letter.

I am a writer and I frequently write about topics of substance abuse and the oppressive nature of my peoples existence in this country under the control and ultimate exploitation of our peoples by a corrupt government for several hundred years. I am currently writing a book in non-fiction form portraying the experiences of negro Indian peoples whom I've had the opportunity to have known in this lifetime, like myself, people who have persevered much racial injustice, often surviving under very wretched living conditions at wits end in this so called land of "milk and honey."

I am writing to you mostly in hopes that the reader of this letter may post a notice or request for me to locate someone around your campus there who may take interest in advising me in the preparation and publication end of my writing endeavor. I would be willing to correspond with anyone also and share my writing, embracing various topics including poetry and I would certainly be sure to answer all letters. Anyone can also feel free to ask any questions. Please respond.

Antoinne Eugene Evans
P.O. Box 5000, #138870
Carson City, MI 48811

"political correctness" on the defence

It seems that not an issue of *The Ubyssey* can go by without some confused person decrying how white men are being oppressed by the "forces of the politically correct." The "political correctness" argument is nothing less than an attack on affirmative action, multiculturalism and the ability to criticize.

Those who oppose "PC" posit that anti-racists, feminists and lesbian and gay rights activists have taken control of the University. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact women and people of colour generally make up less than 10% of Boards of Governors and top-level administration posts. In most faculties white men still take up about 80% of tenured positions.

Despite the vast cries of "censorship" by the anti-PC campaigners, they have been unable to point to a single firing or expulsion for racism, sexism or homophobia. The most they have come up with are a few resignations and temporary suspensions, such as that of Professor Yaqzun at UNB, following a high degree of criticism. Should the result of this be, however, that those people who oppose racism, sexism and homophobia stop criticizing?

A closer look at the evidence reveals that the real people whose free speech is under attack are those on the left. In 1991 several campus newspapers were shut down for printing an article entitled "The Gay Man's Guide to Safe Sex." At this campus, many departments are still keeping blacklists against people who refused to cross the picket line during the 1992 strike. Women who have suffered sexual harassment cannot even make a complaint without fear of having their confidentiality being violated.

For more information and discussion, come to the meeting of the International Socialists in room 228 Buch. on Friday, February 11 "In Defence of Political Correctness."

Dan Moore
International Socialists
Law II

Presenting.... "James H. Steiger"

When I first read "Sex Sells in AMS Elections," a Perspective piece by one "Fernando Avendano" in the February 1 *Ubyssey*, I was angry. This piece seemed to be nothing more than character assassination. It seemed as if, lacking the courage and good grace to accept disappointment in the recent AMS elections, "Avendano" engaged in petty revenge that he tried to disguise as some kind of public service message.

But I wondered. What appeared as a totally transparent smear against two young women who entered the recent election, campaigned in good faith, and won fairly (but evidently failed "Avendano's" ideological litmus test) would not fool anyone with a 3-digit IQ for more than a millisecond. Would anyone be so dull of wit, so flabby of mind, so devoid of imagination as to try to foist such a piece seriously on even a moderately intelligent readership?

Besides, the piece was so politically incorrect! If such comments had been written by, say, a "white male professor" in Counselling Psychology about a leftist female candidate, the journalistic upheaval from the *Ubyssey* editorial staff would have made the Hiroshima mushroom cloud look like a puff of cigarette smoke! Yet here were such comments, written about a candidate the *Ubyssey* editors opposed in the recent elections, and they made not a peep. How could they expose themselves so nakedly as totally sexist hypocrites? Wouldn't they have said something?

If finally dawned on me: I was reading a very clever parody. "Sex Sells in AMS Election" was a kind of mini-*Amadeus*, "Avendano" its Salieri. Bravo, gentlemen!!

James H. Steiger, Ph.D.

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		WAVAW/Rape Crisis	255-6344

Women Students' Office Sexual Harassment Office Student Health Outreach Housing and Conferences Alma Mater Society Student Counselling & Resources Women

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commentators: Brian Wieser & Marc Dinsdale

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Ron Athey: A fatal attraction for life.

by Ted Young-Ing

Ron Athey is a freak. ¶ And he lets the world know it. ¶ He's an intimidating homo. His shaved head is heavily tattooed and pierced—as is his whole body. He looks hardcore; fierce, even. ¶ It's hard to define what Ron is known for. He's a performance artist whose medium is the body. His performances always involve blood and ritual. ¶ His most recent project was consceptual-directing the new Pornos For Pyros video, *Sadness*. He also is part of the 'First Family of Fuck'. Club Fuck was a queer SM clubnight that went on in a dingy LA restaurant for several months—until it was shut down by the police. Ron was one of the dancer/performers there.

I'm a little anxious as I approach his house. My only contact with Ron comes from seeing him at clubs and in his performaces. He usually has a whip by his side; he's usually clad in leather or uniforms. Someone recently told me about Ron's penchant for giving enemas and fisting. All this makes me nervous to meeting him face to face.

But he's surprisingly pussy cat-like. When he invites me in, I get the impression that he's a little nervous as well.

He sits across from me in his ecclecticly decorated house in the Silverlake neighbourhood of Los Angeles. He's definately personable and accessible. Very open. What I thought would be a 20-minute q&a interview turns into a 3 1/2 hour discussion.

Ron was raised by his parents to be a minister. At 14, he'd spent all his life around adults, emmerced in a surrealistic world of god and the scriptures.

"It's a real unrealistic way of growing up. Everybody believing I was this Holy Child.

"It made me what I am. Fanaticism, extremism—that's me. I was raised with it. I don't resent the texture."

Ron's life has more *texture* than most. He went through the seventies and eighties a frustrated and alienated queer punk bent on self-destruction. He became a teenage junkie, and spent several years hooked on heroin.

He's been clean for eight years now. He still feels frustrated and alienated, but he's a little less self-destructive now.

At the most recent LA Gay Pride parade, Ron Athey stood as the main dancer of the Club Fuck float. He is immediately visible and recognizeable atop the float: tattoes, piercings and clad in a leather jockstrap and corset.

As the float passed a outsider—even within the gay community. His fanaticism and hardcore attitudes ensured that he was never quite accepted in the gay community. Still a punkboy at heart, Athey's identity comes partially from undermining the System which tries to hold him under.

"I've always instinctively hated anything that goes on in the mainstream," says Ron.

Athey is dissappointed that he was booed at the parade. "You put all these expectations in the gay parade; like you're celebrating your diverse community." But somehow, he was also not surprised.

I sense that a part of Ron really gets off on being disenfanchised, though. I tell him about Situationism, a quasi-political anarchist art movement that strove to turn our "spectacle" culture upside-down. The Situationists lived life as active participants, not spectators, and saw "shooting a gun into a faceless crowd" as the ultimate act of "negating the negation." Then I ask him about his own political views.

"I think I'm a situationist. I'm completely schizophrenic on everything; I can relate to absolute violence and disorder and I want to remain as illegal as possible. And then there's a side of me that believes that things can get better if we just love everything.

"I'm a fatalist with a lust for life. I don't have hope for any big movement. I just believe in getting up every day, and having a good time, and getting something done."

A fatalist with a lust for life.

straight out about being positive, too. It's just another thing that I've never cared if it's put me more on the outside of things. It can be a rotten deal, and it's no big deal at the same time. It's been seven years now, and I'm still healthy.

Being HIV was a kick in the ass for Ron. "After being diagnosed positive, I felt like, what if you die in a few years? Are you happy with your life the way it is? I can't just go to work, go to dinner with a friend, go to a 12-step meeting and then go to bed, I'ts just not rich enough.

"I don't want to be waiting for the day I die; I want to raise a lot of hell before then."

My mind wanders and I'm thinking about a good friend who just started AZT treatment.

"I'm constantly erasing names from my phone book of peple who have died. I've desensitized a lot. I'm not going to turn into a grieving machine and let it eat me up.

Ron Athey is known for staging shows that mix S/M ritual, personal revelation and performance.

His most recent performance piece, *4 Scenes From A Harsh Life*, deals with issues of transcendence, addiction, fetishism and the increasing automitization of the human being.

The third scene—the most powerful scene in *4 Scenes* is about Ron's addiction and suicide attempts. He jabs 20 syringes in his arm, ties off the other arm and slashes his wrist. Then he gauges his face. Blood streams down his face. Then he begins to climb a rope ladder, into a stream of light

were finished and I was levitating and there was a man with all black tattooes next to me and we were rotating around each other and we levitated up into the light."

It's a scene that involves healing—an important new direction in his art.

"It's difficult for me to watch this [a video copy of the performance]. It still feels like I'm there. I'm too personally involved."

Ron shows me the new tattooes on his chest. He got them while he was in London doing his performance piece.

I ask him about his facial tattooes.

"It feels really natural on me to have my face tattooed. It's a line that I've crossed that certainly I wouldn't egg anyone else on to do."

"It's not enough to be gay and it's not enought to be queer. It's a way of setting yourself apart form people. It's something that does have ancient meaning. It has a lot of different sides to it."

Because of his long-standing interest in body modification, Ron has become a spokesperson for the Modern Primitive movement.

"It's important that I'm queer. But somehow because I've been in for a long time, I've embodied a movement, I guess. It's not just me people are interested in, it's the roots of the Modern Primitive movement which just happense to be really queer.

Ron is a little uncomfortable being a spokesperson for anything. He understands that he looks like a freak; that his views are freakish.

"Housewives in Idaho look at me and think, 'freak'. I don't want to give them fuel for fire.

But he is an anarchist who doesn't really care about what people think about him. Part of urban tribalism is about finding a tribe; Ron has a close family that he cares for.

"I like creating little families of people that think the same way to protect and love, instead of just being some big hippy and loving everyone at random.

"I just don't think I'm going to change the world with my smiling, sunny face. I'm a fatalist. I have no hope