

Dare

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 14

TENNESSEE'S LESBIAN AND GAY NEWSWEEKLY

APRIL 7-13, 1989

Kowalski to be moved again

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Sharon Kowalski may be moved to a short-term rehabilitation facility near Minneapolis if her doctors' recommendation is followed.

Doctors at the Miller-Dwan Medical Clinic in Duluth, Minn., have recommended that Kowalski be transferred to the rehabilitation facility before eventually being moved to Courage House, "where Sharon will receive the type of training she needs in order to foster her self-sufficiency and independence," according to Penny Campbell of the Nashville Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski.

The doctor's recommendation marks yet another victory in the protracted legal battle that has dragged on since 1984, when Kowalski was seriously injured in an automobile accident involving a drunken driver. Her lover, Karen Thompson, has been pursuing legal action to force Sharon's father, Donald Kowalski, to allow her to see his daughter and to be involved in decisions regarding her care.

Donald Kowalski, as his daughter's legal guardian, had refused to allow Thompson any contact with his daughter since Thompson revealed the facts of the two women's relationship to him.

However, following a court order that Sharon Kowalski be transferred to Miller-Dwan for competency testing, the two women

were reunited last Feb. 2, after an almost-four year separation.

Sharon Kowalski has been a patient at Miller-Dwan since Jan. 17, undergoing a period of rehabilitative care under the supervision of Dr. Matthew Eckman.

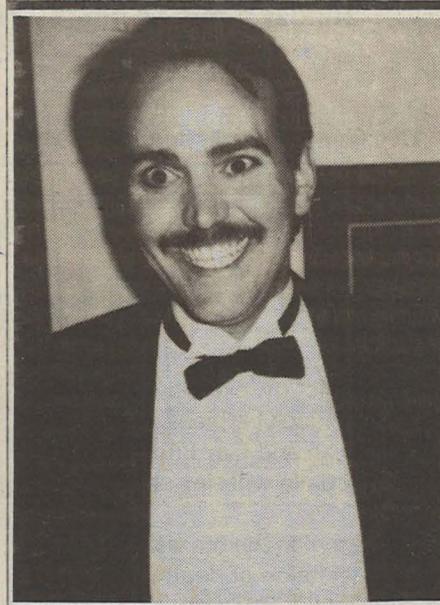
Thompson has traveled throughout the country during the past four years, speaking to groups about her plight and the plight of other same-sex couples whose relationships are not protected by law.

According to Caroline Foty, of the National Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski, Donald Kowalski repeatedly has tried to contact Judge Robert Campbell — the judge who originally ordered Kowalski tested at Miller Dwan — to protest the doctors' recommendations.

Foty said Campbell has refused Donald Kowalski's phone calls and entreaties to intercede in the case once more.

Then, according to Foty, Kowalski contacted his daughter's court-appointed attorney, Gary Pagliacetti, to say that if he could not have complete control over her treatment and visitors, he would relinquish any claims of guardianship over his daughter.

"This is another step in what we hope will be the final resolution — that Sharon will come home to St. Cloud with Karen where she belongs and where she has indicated she wants to be," Campbell said. •



Matthew Presley, who plays Alan McCarthy in the new Memphis production of Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band*, enjoys a lighter moment after the show's opening Sunday night at WKRB in Memphis. The company will travel to Nashville for one performance Saturday, April 22, presented by *Dare*, to benefit Advance, the political action committee of the Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA). — DARE STAFF PHOTO

Dallas judge charged

by STUART BIVIN
Editor

Texas's Commission on Judicial Conduct has filed formal charges against Jack Hampton, the Dallas judge who gave more lenient sentence to a convicted double murderer because the victims were gay.

The charges include a request that the Texas Supreme Court appoint a special judge to hold hearings to determine whether to discipline Hampton, drawing praise from state and local lesbian and gay activists. A formal review will then begin if Hampton does not resign.

Hampton drew a storm of protest in December when he told the *Dallas Times-Herald* that he would have sentenced Richard Bednarski to life in prison had his victims not been gay.

"I don't care for queers cruising the streets. I've got a teen-age boy....I put prostitutes and gays at about the same level. If these boys had picked up two prostitutes and taken them to the woods and killed them, I'd consider that a similar case. I'd be hard put to give someone life in prison for killing a prostitute," Hampton said. •

Tennessean faces fundamentalists

by STUART BIVIN
Editor

Longtime gay activist Sam Adams, a Nashvillian, was scheduled to appear yesterday on former presidential candidate Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) to discuss the ways biological families deal with the homosexuality of family members.

Adams said that he was contacted by the producers of *Straight Talk*, a daily magazine-format program hosted by Scott Ross, to ap-

pear along with Mary Borhec, an author, mother of a gay son, and representative of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

Barb McCuen, CBN representative, could not provide *Dare* with names of other guests at press time.

Nashvillian Gregory Fisher, board member of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, appeared several weeks ago on the same program to discuss the ex-gay movement. •

Community activists analyze paper

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Just three weeks into its second year of publication, *Dare* remains a focal point for members of the mid-south's lesbian and gay community.

Since that mid-March day in 1988 when the region's first continuing newsweekly appeared, it has at times been the focus of controversy and outrage, while at others the focus of praise and huzzahs.

The wide range of emotions evoked when readers are questioned about the newspaper demonstrates the time-honored traditions of the news-gathering profession and the audience it serves.

"During the past year, *Dare* has served as an excellent source of news for the gay and lesbian community," said Sandee Potter, executive director of Nashville CARES, Middle Tennessee's primary AIDS services organization. "At CARES, we are particularly grateful for the coverage devoted to AIDS education. I could go on and on for hours on end. I'm a very big fan of the paper."

But yet while many of the paper's readers are not so glowing in their praises as Potter, most do agree with her assertion that a newsweekly is vital to the burgeoning lesbian/gay rights movement in the mid-south.

"To me, *Dare's* greatest contribution to the local lesbian and gay community is that it serves as a chronicler of our growth as a community and recording for future reflection, our successes and strengths, as

well as our failures and weaknesses," said Gregory Fisher, a member of the board of directors of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).

Despite that, however, Fisher decried the paper's coverage of "pedophilia cases" — referring to the coverage of the legal battles of Nashville physician John Stuart Wolf and the men arrested for their involvement in a teenage prostitution sting operation.

"I'm tired of the coverage given the pedophile cases. That's not something that I, as a gay man, am interested in reading about," he said.

Terry Kevlin, finance director for the Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA), echoed Fisher's sentiments about the coverage, suggesting that such stories may help to perpetuate misconceptions about homosexuals as child molesters.

"Treating pedophilia as a topic our community is interested in escapes me. It's not specific to us and may be sending out the wrong message about us to people who don't understand the differences between pedophiles and homosexuals," Kevlin said.

Kevlin was just as quick to point to what she saw as *Dare's* greatest contribution: "Giving the community a focus point, in a regular format, on pertinent issues that are specifically dealing with us, even to the point of giving us a place to find merchants who are interested in targeting members of our community as consumers."

Longtime gay activist Sam Adams, a board member • continued on page 3

I N S I D E

this week's *Dare*

Did you hear the one about
the homosexual preacher?
Sociables, page 3



Exceptional women:
the common thread.
Lesbian Paris, page 4.

Do you kiss your
parents with that mouth?
Quotes, page 8.



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Gay Alternative Hour Radio show, WEVL-FM 90, 6-7pm.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Tuesdays

Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Wednesdays

Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Thursdays

P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Support group, St. John's Episcopal Church, 322 S Greer. 1st Thursday only. Info 901 761-1444.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30pm. Info 901 272-9459.
Into the Light (Women's Alcoholics Anonymous) Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 276-7379.

Fridays

Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 10pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Saturdays

Twisted Sisters (ACOA) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. Noon. Info 901 726-7379.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Sundays

Agape New Life Church Sunday School, 9:30am. Worship service, 11am. Info 901 276-1872.
Holy Trinity Community Church Worship service, 11am. 1216 Forrest Ave. Info 901 726-9443.
Into the Light (Women's Alcoholics Anonymous) Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. Noon. Info 901 276-7379.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

NASHVILLE

Mondays

Gay Overeaters Anonymous Open meeting for lesbian and gay overeaters. MCC, 5:30pm. Info 615-327-4614.
Nashville CARES HIV+ Education/Support Group. 6:30pm. ARC/AIDS Support Group, bimonthly. 6:30pm. Family Support Group, bimonthly. 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Lambda Group Closed Alcoholics Anonymous meeting for gay men and lesbians, Unitarian Church. 8pm.
MARRIET (Married and Gay Network) Support group for married gay men. 1st & 3rd Mondays only. MCC. 8pm. Info 615-320-0288.

Tuesdays

Nashville CARES ARC/AIDS Support Group. 4pm. Info 615-385-1510.
AI-Anon Closed meeting, MCC. 6:30pm.
P-FLAG Meeting of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 4th Tuesday only. Unitarian Church. 7:30pm. Info 615-662-0332.
MTSU Lambda Association Meeting for lesbian and gay Middle Tennessee State University students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Murfreesboro. 7pm. Info 615-890-3787.
Sister Sisters (Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous) Closed meeting, MCC. 8pm.
Gay Cable Network Viacom Channel 35 (Community Access Television). 9pm.

Wednesdays

Sex Addicts Anonymous Closed meeting for gay men and lesbians. MCC. 5:30pm.
Nashville CARES ARC/AIDS Support Group. 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.

Thursdays

Gay Overeaters Anonymous Open meeting for lesbian and gay overeaters. MCC, 5:30pm. Info 615-327-4614.
Nashville CARES Visualization Group. 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Vanderbilt Lambda Association Meeting for gay and lesbian Vanderbilt students, faculty, staff and alumni. President's House, Peabody Campus, alternates weekly with Film Series (see Special Events). 7pm. Info 615-297-5352.
Alternatives (Alcoholics Anonymous) Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC. 8pm.
Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) Meeting. 8pm. Info 615-385-4776 or 615-352-5823.

Fridays

Sexuals Anonymous Closed meeting, MCC. 5pm.
Gay Parents Support Group Meeting, MCC. 1st Friday only. 7pm. Info 615-831-2941 or 615-320-0288.
Alcoholics Anonymous Program Study Group Meeting, Belmont United Methodist. 7:30 pm.

Saturdays

Nashville CARES HIV/AIDS Support Group, bimonthly. 4pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Metropolitan Community Church Mortgage Meal, all you can eat. 7:30pm. \$5.
Gay Cable Network Viacom Channel 35 (Community Access Television). 8pm.

Sundays

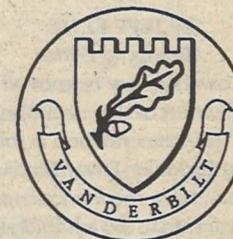
Metropolitan Community Church Worship services, 11am and 7pm. Info 615-320-0288.

Special Events

Monday, April 10

Antoinette Brown Lecture *The Power of Women and the Power of God*, sponsored by Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville. 7:30pm. Free. Info 901-322-4205.

The Idealistic Alternatives in Law Lecture



gallsa
Vanderbilt Gay & Lesbian
Law Students Association

Wednesday, April 12

Lecture *Idealistic Alternatives in Law*, featuring Nashville attorney Abby Rubinfeld, former legal director of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, sponsored by Vanderbilt Gay & Lesbian Law Students Association. Rm 131, Vanderbilt Law School, Nashville. 4pm. Reception follows. Free.

Thursday, April 13

Film *All of Me*, sponsored by Vanderbilt Lambda Association. 220 Garland Hall, Nashville. 7pm. \$1 donation. Info 615-297-5352.

Saturday, April 15

Concert *Lucie Blue Tremblay*. Regis Inn, 1220 Memorial Pkwy, N.W., Huntsville, Alabama. 7:30pm. \$10 advance, \$12 at the door. Alternative housing available. Info, tickets 615-386-9222 or 615-646-8945.

Women's Dance *Random's Spring Dance*. Beer, set-ups available. Laurel Theatre, 1538 Laurel Ave, Knoxville. 8pm. \$4. Info 615-688-3428.

Saturday, April 15

BWMT Workshop *Hot, Horny & Healthy*, sponsored by Black and White Men Together, Memphis. 7:30pm. Free. Info 901-726-1461.

Round Up On the River *Puttin' on the Lips*, lip sync contest. Memphis Lambda Center, 241 N. Cleveland. \$5 admission, \$10 entry fee. Info 901-725-5399.

Sunday, April 16

Planning Meeting Nashville Pride Week '89. 1pm. Info 615-297-4293.

Feminist Book Circle Unitarian Universalist Church, 1808 Woodmont Blvd, Nashville. 5-7pm. Free. Info 615-297-5352.

Dinner Black and White Men Together, Memphis. At Spaghetti Warehouse, 40 West Huling Ave, Memphis. 7pm. Info 901-327-3753.

Your nonprofit event can be listed free in *Dates*. Write to *Dare*, Box 40422, Nashville, TN 37204-0422, or phone 615 327-3273 and leave a message. Please include information about time, location, cost, sponsor, and a contact person's name with address and/or phone number for verification. Deadline noon Tuesday for publication next Friday.

S O C I A B L E S

The inside scoop

by JAAN STURGIS
Staff Writer

Well, my dears, a little bird came up to me recently and told me one of the most marvelous things: **Tim Roberts**, illustrious reporter for the Louisville *Courier-Journal* and resident of the K-Y state, is on the team that won the Pulitzer Prize for their reporting on the bus crash which occurred in northern Kentucky last May. My, my to know such a celebrity. Our hats go off to you, Tim, and all your comrades!

Kudos to **Irene M. Guerin** and **Krzysztof Krakoviak** for their wonderful letters to the editor in last Monday's *Nashville Banner*. They both repudiated a woman who had complained about the lesbian and gay rights. We need more folks like them. Congratulations on a fine rebuttal!

John Epps, **Vincent Astor**, **Jay Starr**, **Don Griesheimer**, **Den-Eric Smith**, **George Junior**, **Bret Taylor**, **Matthew Presley** and **Dennis Massey** wowed 'em at WKRB in Memphis with **Sharon Wray's** production of *The Boys in the Band*.

Massey also directed the show, which played to packed houses Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Word is that *Dare* will present the show in Nashville later this month in a benefit performance for **Advance**. You Nashvillians had better check your calendars for Saturday the 22nd. Cast and crew (13, women and men) will need places to crash, so call *Dare*, (615) 327-3273, to volunteer your extra sleepspace and your hospitality.

Out of the corner of my eye I caught a glimpse of **Tom Carpenter** and his *fraülein du jour*. Where and what, you say? Why, my dears, at *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, of course. Murfreesboro's **Terry Ralston** and I attended this funny musical last Tuesday night. Truly a delightful evening.

On a recent outing to the Towne House Tea Room with officemate and everyone's other friend **Julie High**, we had the time of our lives when chatty and cute **Rick Villareal** waited on us during a hasty but delightful lunch.

Dearhearts, I'll almost bet money that you were at *Beni* last Friday night. I saw every prominent and proper homosexual in Nash-

...analysis

• continued from page 1

of the Southeastern Conference for Lesbians and Gay Men, attributed much of the Nashville community's growth to the "networking" weekly publication allows.

"Putting the community on paper and giving us an opportunity to network is the biggest contribution," Adams said. "It's a big accomplishment that the local lesbian and gay community can feel a sense of power through communication."

The greatest shortcoming? "It's a shame that a greater number of folks in the community don't have an interest in what the paper covers.

ville there. Even **Jim Hoobler** made an appearance to see this acclaimed production, as did **Mark Brown**, **Leo Lindsay**, **Karl Zehner**, **Ann Marie Talbot**, **Harrison Hicks**, **Mitchell Patton**, **Bud Blackwell**, **Billy Isaacs** and yours truly.

What's the largest gathering of the clan I've attended lately? Well, I guess it'd have to be the Sixth Anniversary Dinner (and roast) given in honor of Metropolitan Community Church/Nashville pastor **Paul Tucker** last Saturday evening. Some 74 people attended. Infamous *Dare* editor **Stuart Bivin** claimed that that number was approximately Paul's IQ! I wonder how he got so close to the actual number? Also roasting was pungent wit **Tom Bryant**. Everyone's favorite NOW activist, **Wanda Mathis** (who claimed she alone is carrying Paul's child - did she say April Fool's?) discussed Paul's love of backing traffic up (hmmm) while stopping for one every aluminum can on the side of the road. **Debbie Neely** braised Paul on his cheapness, and yours truly discussed his exploits since his appearance in Nashville.

Bob Galloway, pastor of MCC/Knoxville, was the honored guest speaker and praised Paul to the tits and beyond. The audience hosted such Nashville faves as **Joe O'Cain**, **David Bursey**, **Sherri McCormick**, **Cornell Stockton**, **Joan Perry**,

David Whited, **Stephanie Mortinsen**, **Steve Jenks**, **Tommy Powell**, **Steve Davidson**, and **Jim Aldredge**, along with a host of others. I was going to say "other unnoticeables," but it would have gotten edited out, so I didn't.

One last scoop: Nashville will soon be getting a new women's bookstore, near 100 Oaks Mall, that will carry plenty of lesbiana nd gay stuff. You read it here.

Well, dearhearts, I have an upcoming trip to Detroit planned. Where are you off to this month? Why don't you pick up that phone right now and let me know. No, don't hold back. I want to hear all—(615) 352-7405. 'Til next time, that's *Sociables*. •

I'm not sure it's the paper's fault. So many people are just not interested in news," he conceded.

It's not the news, but rather the lack of it that perplexes Paul Tucker, pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church-Nashville.

"There's just not enough of it. I wish there could be a 16-page paper every week, but I realize there's not always that much news."

Tucker, however, said he was pleased by *Dare's* first year of publication: "It has provided a public forum that is common to the whole community, giving everyone a chance to be heard." •



—DARE ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX CARSON

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by **SHERRE DRYDEN**
Book Editor

OVER THE PAST WEEKS I have examined the lives of some of the women writers who lived and worked in Paris between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II – Natalie Barney, Renée Vivien, Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas, Sylvia Beach, Djuna Barnes, Janet Flanner and Solita Solano, Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap.

Other women were there as well, artists and writers, permanent residents and regular visitors – Berenice Abbott, Josephine Baker, Kaye Boyle, Romaine Brooks, Bryher, Caresse Crosby, Nancy Cunard, Hilda Doolittle, Radclyffe Hall, Maria Jolas, Mina Loy, Anaïs Nin, Jean Rhys, Dorothy Wilde, Thelma Woods.

The question I ask when I list these names and know that these 25 women – plus many more whose names I haven't given or don't know – all gathered in one place, is why.



Why were so many of the creative women in England and the United States drawn to leave their families, homes and countries for a country where they knew no one, where no one spoke their language? Were their reasons the same as the reasons that many men gathered there, too? What kept them there, many of them for the rest of their lives?

Some of the reasons are logical, practical ones. The economy was fortuitous – you could live well in Paris on funds that would not keep you alive in New York. World War I catapulted women into new, freer roles. Middle and upper class (mostly white) women were, for the first time, permitted to support themselves and to choose their own lives.

In addition, literary movements that valued the new – and what was newer than the modern woman? – flourished and supported the creation of literary magazines and small publishing houses. Writers outside the mainstream, as women artist have always been, found it easier to get work into print.

But these reasons – even the economic ones, since a number of the women in question had independent incomes or were supported by family – do not adequately explain the inter-war movement of women to Paris.

But read Robert Sage's description of *Little Review* publisher Margaret Anderson, from the January 18, 1931, *Paris Tribune*.

"PERSONALLY, I FIND her ideas frequently confused, frequently impractical, nearly always original. It is this striking original quality that excuses many weaknesses in logic. It is what makes her role fundamentally that of a conversationalist rather than that of an artist.

"She is an exceptional person, has something exceptional to say, and is capable of saying it in a way that, if not entirely exceptional, is at least fresh, interesting, direct and very much to the point...She might serve

"She might serve admirably as the Modern American Girl...she has had the courage (or, let's say, the guts) to go ahead and do the things that Average Modern American Girl only dreams of doing...But her impulse and that of the Average Modern American Girl are the same – they both want to be 'free' and 'to lead their own lives"



ONAL WOMEN

Common thread



admirably as the Model Modern American Girl.

"Where she is exceptional is that she has had the courage (or, less elegantly but more exactly, the guts) to go ahead and do the things that Average Modern American Girl only dreams of doing. Not that she has made whoopee, in the traditional sense...But her impulse and that of the Average Modern American Girl are the same—they both want to be 'free' and 'to lead their own lives.' To do this, it is necessary to get rid of family and influence and become indifferent to 'what people say.' Miss Anderson accomplished both these things early in life.

"Moreover, despite her periodical claim that she never felt much like a human being, *she shows that she has frequently felt, not only like a human being, but like a woman.*"

SAGE, I THINK, gives some important clues to why Paris was so attractive.

First of all, these were exceptional women. Educated, creative, independent. Many publicly espoused feminist and/or socialist causes. They had the courage to make a path, to be first. They were pioneers.

This courage, however, was not rewarded for the women as it would be for men. Instead, the women felt, like Margaret Anderson, "never much like a human being," and perhaps not much like women. For a variety of reasons, they were different, outside the mainstream, other.

First, they were "other" merely by being women. Moreover, they were "other" because of their pioneering roles. They had not much in common with their mothers, who had been reared to be the spiritually superior yet constitutionally weak "angel of the house."

In addition, many were "other" on another level. At least 17 of the 25 names I list are those of women who thought of themselves as lesbian or bisexual. If the names of the women who did not achieve success (or notoriety) were added to the list, the lesbian percentage would increase sharply.

As marginal and outside as these women were, they must have been terrifically frightening to their fathers and brothers. Even when they appear to be complimentary, male commentators on the women expatriates find ways to marginalize them even more.

Like Robert Sage, who slyly conflates Margaret Anderson's feelings of alienation from the human race with being a woman and with a confused, impractical originality, these women were repeatedly relegated to the realm of curiosity and superficiality.

Samuel Patterson tells us that Margaret Anderson was "very beautiful" and "played the piano rather charmingly" (Anderson was an accomplished enough pianist to accompany Georgette Leblanc in concert). About Natalie Barney, poet William Carlos Williams remembered only seeing women dancing together at her salon. Sisley Huddleston repeatedly refers

to Sylvia Beach in 1931, when she was 44 year old, as the "daring American girl." The *Paris Tribune* tells us that Djuna Barnes was "well-built."

If they were not given the woman-as-physical-object treatment in the traditional sense, there was always the mannish lesbian model of discreditation.

Samuel Putnam found Emma Goldman a "disappointment" because he often saw her "surrounded by a group of lesbians." Gertrude Stein is frequently described as looking like a (male) Roman orator. Morril Cody, usually touchingly unbiased about the women he knew, describes Janet Flanner clothes as "mannish."

We hear all about their looks and clothes, their social lives and love affairs, but little about their actual work. Male commentators dwell on petty differences and jealousies (Gertrude Stein hardly spoke to Sylvia Beach after Sylvia became associated with James Joyce, Natalie Barney make snide remarks about Janet Flanner), further diminishing their status as serious artists. Certainly, these women did not always love one another unreservedly, but the evidence of their won writing indicates a loyalty that transcends individual differences.

And the marginalization goes on. Karla Jay just last year wrote the first book-length critical evaluation of the works of Natalie Barney and Renée Vivien. In the October, 1988 *Voice Literary Supplement*, Albert Mobilio called Gertrude Stein "our country's most famous unread writer."

IT IS THIS SENSE of otherness, was often only exacerbated by public success, which seems to have led these women to desperately seek a community where they could feel at ease. Hilda Doolittle, for example, hated Paris when she first visited, accompanied by Ezra Pound. On a subsequent visit, accompanied by lesbian writer Bryher, she felt at home and returned frequently. Only because they knew the support of the women's community existed could they continue to work in a subtly hostile environment.

Further, this sense of alienation and otherness is a unifying factor in their work. Their concern with lesbian sexuality united them and unites their works. Some, like Natalie Barney, wrote openly of their sexuality. Others, like Gertrude Stein, wrote in a deeply coded manner, with a lesbian subtext obvious only to those who knew to look for it. Janet Flanner wrote frequently of members of the community, leaving hints along the way for those "in the know."

Their unification served, in turn, to give them more evidence of their own validity. Their accomplishments and their eventual triumph over marginalization will, again in turn, give modern lesbians and heterosexual women evidence of our own validity. •

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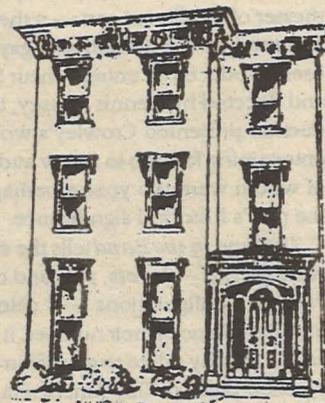


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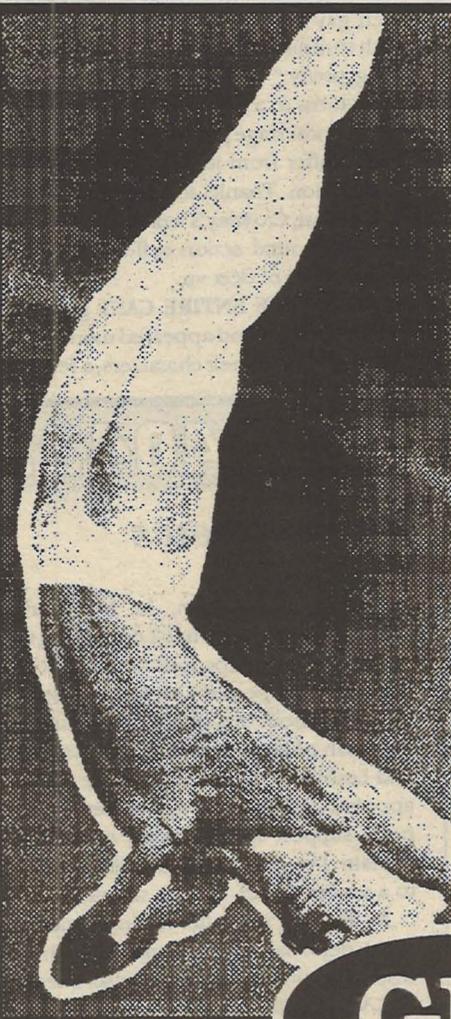


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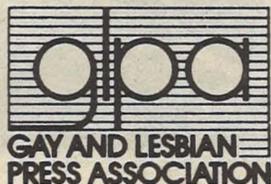
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CURTAINS

The Boys in the Band

reviewed by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

THEATER HISTORY was made in 1968 with the Broadway debut of Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band*, a no-holds-barred look at the intertwined lives of eight gay men and the straight man who stumbles unexpectedly onto their revelry.

Crowley's play was heralded for its candor and its frank examination of homosexuality, heretofore spoken of in veiled references and various aliases on the stage.

Last weekend the play again made history as it was presented in Memphis by a community theater of a different sort — a theater offering mounted by the lesbian and gay community itself. Produced by entrepreneur Sharon Wray and directed by Dennis Massey, the new production presented Crowley's work in a most entertaining fashion to a new audience, many of whom were too young perhaps to realize the play's historical significance.

The Boys in the Band tells the story of a few close friends — lovers, pals and confidants in various configurations — celebrating the birthday of one of their number. It is a raucous, caustic, bitchy salute to gay life in the late '60s, a period piece of Gay Americana, if you will.

Crowley's script is at times both documentary and creation, recording the jingoisms of the day as well as introducing new phrases into the vernacular. The script is peppered with such gay-isms as "Oh Mary, don't ask!" and such truisms as "It takes a fairy to make something pretty," and "In spring a young man's fancy turns to a fancy young man."

Like most stage plays, *The Boys in the Band* could suffer from its one set and somewhat static action. Thanks to Massey's direction of an able cast, Crowley's words are given life and the stagebound action suffuses its audience with a sense of déjà vu.

WHILE THE ENTIRE CAST greeted their roles with vigor and appeared more than up to the challenge of their characters, a few notable

exceptions threatened to steal the show.

Veteran Memphis actor Vincent Astor, who after the show said he had been preparing for his part as the effeminate decorator Emory since he was four years old, brought the stage to life the moment he entered and, in the process, helped to elevate the level of energy of his co-stars.

Perhaps the most surprising performance was given by male impersonator George Junior, who played the role of Bernard. The performance was surprising because George Junior "became" the man she played, exhibiting a blend of tenderness and pathos that is essential to keep Bernard from caricature.

Massey, doing double duty both as director

and as Harold-the-birthday-boy, proved himself capable of both jobs, showing us a Harold whose insecurities are overcome by his own amazing wealth of self-confidence and pride.

The other members of the cast performed ably, delineating their characters with imagination and zeal.

Praise is also due to the crew for their splendid timing on lighting cues and to Massey and Matt Presley for their set design which transformed a nightclub's dance floor into a modish 1968 New York duplex.

The young company certainly did itself proud with this production and plans are under way for future productions. The mid-south will be waiting at the box office. •

PAGES

Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life

Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life. By Warren J. Blumenfeld and Diane Raymond.
New York: Philosophical Library, 1988. 416 pp. \$, hardcover.

reviewed by SHERRE DRYDEN
Book Editor

THE SUBTITLE OF *Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life* could have been "An Introductory Text." For those of us lacking the opportunity to select a textbook for a first course in lesbian and gay studies, *Looking* can be the beginning point for an independent study of the subject, the book we give others who want (or need) to learn about homosexuality, a reference source for basic information no matter how advanced our own knowledge.

Warren J. Blumenfeld and Diane Raymond have written a readable, reasoned overview of nine areas of lesbian and gay life: socialization and gender roles, sexuality, theories of the causes of homosexuality, sexuality and western religions, prejudice and discrimination, lesbian and gay movement politics, AIDS, life-styles and culture, and literature.

In most cases, the topic discussed is placed in a broader context. For example, the chapter on religion discusses the attitudes of western religions toward sexuality in general, then moves to the more specific subject of attitudes toward homosexuality.

The chapter on socialization and gender roles gives background information on dominant theories of the development of gender identity. The chapter on prejudice and discrimination discusses how prejudice is formed.

Blumenfeld and Raymond present and explain, rather than espouse. Information is given objectively (although it is often possible to discern where the authors' own loyalties lie), allowing even the reader with deep convictions to see the reason of other points of view. Because it is so unemotional, *Looking* is particularly well suited for an audience that does not necessarily favor rights for lesbians

and gay men.

Additionally, Raymond and Blumenfeld make scholarly research accessible to the untrained reader. Terms that are likely to be unfamiliar are defined, few assumptions about prior knowledge are made. Yet the book is neither simplistic nor patronizing. The authors are careful to stress that their intent is only to introduce — further reading is required for a complete understanding of the issues surrounding individual topics. But for someone unfamiliar with a discipline or disinclined to undertake extended study, *Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life* is perfect.

Finally, the book is really quite interesting, even for someone who has read many of the more in-depth texts on homosexuality. Surely few of us have read that extensively in all of the

areas Raymond and Blumenfeld cover. Even if we have, they synthesize the information effectively, and may provide new information for the most advanced scholar.

I ADMIT TO putting off reading *Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life*, expecting it to be dry at best and boring at worst. Not only was I pleasantly surprised and now consider it an essential addition to any library on lesbian and gay

studies, I learned the answer to a question no one I've asked has been able to answer:

Members of the Gay Liberation Front and the Mattachine Society Action Committee formed the Gay Activists Alliance sometime after 1970. "GAA presented itself as a militant (though nonviolent) organization working for the civil rights of homosexuals, often through direct confrontation. GAA took its logo from the Greek letter Lambda, a symbol for wavelength in quantum physics, symbolizing dynamism." •



BOX 40422

No bad news

Dear Dare,

Carole Cunningham, in her "birthday" piece, mentions your habit of printing articles on people who rape and molest. Like those who have supported Carole in person, I am mystified about this policy. What justifies the inclusion of these stories in Tennessee's Gay and Lesbian Newsweekly? Carole seems disappointed that nobody has written *Dare* to express support for her point of view. I can explain: I've never seen an editorial response to a reader's letter. It's that simple.

By the way, my letter regarding potentially racist personal ads was met with the same response you give everyone else: Silence.

C.W. SHAW
Johnson City

Contrary to her assertion, Shaw's letter about possibly racist personal ads was not met with silence, but was published in its entirety in *Dare*, Vol. 2, No. 4, on Friday, January 27, 1989. *Dare* encourages the expression of opposing viewpoints, and will clarify its editorial policies when appropriate. — EDITOR

Warren's

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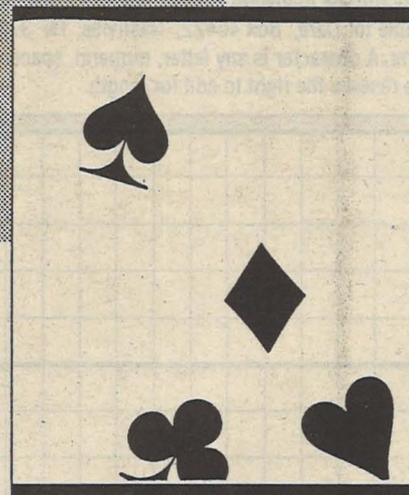
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