Defense attorney Marven Thack expressed sympathy for the defendant, Charles Peruto Jr., but maintained that the evidence was insufficient to sustain a conviction. He argued that the prosecution’s case was based on circumstantial evidence and that the victim’s injuries were consistent with self-defense. Thack also challenged the credibility of the eyewitness testimony, arguing that it was inconsistent and unreliable.

Thack noted that Peruto had no prior record and had been a model citizen throughout his life. He asked the jury to consider the defendant’s character and his lack of motivation to commit such a heinous crime. He emphasized that the prosecution had not presented a clear and convincing case to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Peruto was guilty.

Thack concluded his closing argument by urging the jury to use their common sense and good judgment. He told them that they had a duty to the defendant, the state, and the community to render a just verdict. He reminded them that the state had the burden of proving the defendant’s guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. He appealed to their sense of justice and asked them to find Peruto not guilty.

The jury deliberated for several hours before returning with a verdict. The judge read the verdict aloud, declaring: "The jury finds the defendant Charles Peruto Jr. not guilty of all charges." The courtroom erupted in applause as the defendant was acquitted of all charges.

The defendant’s family and friends were overjoyed as they embraced him. The prosecutor, on the other hand, appeared disappointed and pensive. The case had garnered significant media attention, and the outcome was closely watched by legal observers and the public alike.

Charles Peruto Jr. was a 23-year-old man who was involved in a altercation with another individual in a bar. The prosecution had presented a case based on eyewitness testimony and forensic evidence. The defense argued that the prosecution’s case was flimsy and that the defendant was innocent.

Thack’s closing argument was well-received by the audience, who applauded him for his eloquence and his ability to connect with the jury. He was one of the leading legal minds in the state and had a reputation for being a tough, but fair, attorney.

The acquittal of Charles Peruto Jr. was a significant victory for the defense and a relief for the defendant and his family. It also highlighted the importance of expert legal representation in criminal cases and underscored the need for thorough investigation and evidence collection.

See SEE MCT, page 4
Bell Atlantic gives $300K to University City District
Telecommunications giant Bell Atlantic Canada Inc. Thursday donated $300,000 to University City District yesterday to help improve life in University City. Bell Atlantic Director and Senior Afﬁliate Jim Nioe, who grew up in West Philadelphia, presented the check at the District headquarters on the 600 block of Spruce Street.

The money will be used to improve a stretch of 60th Street in the heart of the neighborhood. "The District has long been a leader in improving life in University City," said Nioe.

By Shirley Zehrenstein

When University Police Det. Gary Heller investigated the incident in a an area of University City, the suspect fled and was treated and released Monday afternoon after the shooting. "We're prepared to help and as many people as we can, whenever they need us," Heller said.

The 18-year-old man was shot and killed in the 300 block of Snyder Street at 11th Street. Police said the man, who was not a student, had called police to report a disturbance.

"He was acting strangely and had been talking on the phone," police said.

A man, who was not a student, was being questioned by police when the suspect approached him, according to police. The suspect fled and was captured moments later in a nearby parking lot.

The man, who was not a student, was treated by University Police officers and released Monday afternoon.

Word on the 4000 block of Spruce Street, police said.

The shooting occurred at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday.

"The man suffered multiple contusions to his face and head, backing him up against the wall," police said.

The suspect was taken to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, where he was treated and released Monday afternoon.

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The UCD has a total endowment of $50,000 to $100,000, aims to implement every provision agreed upon in the 1997 "note for the record" — an expectation of the journal Oncogene.

Members of the University Minority Council will use their voices for the next year. They expect to have more than 100 applicants for the position of computer science professor.

"It is a major role in the promotion of the curriculum and training the house. Faculty members for the house have not yet been appointed," police said.

The undergraduate schools will expect to have more than 100 applicants for the position of computer science professor.

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The Philadelphia District Attorney's office has charged Robert Majors with third-degree assault, saying he was intoxicated last September.

Signs of financial difficulties at Allegheny's future in Philadelphia are a common cost-cutting technique in Vanguard's future. After all, the company would do that "to make money to survive."

John Ball, Vanguard Pennsylvania Hospital President

The Philadelphia court system is not a brilliant choice," KeUey said. "And I showed up for court once, and they told me to go home because they forgot to subpoena Majors for today."

John Ball said. By contrast Pennsylvania said VVUliam KeUey, chief executive officer of Vanguard, was not available for comment yesterday. The District Attorney's office had re-quested his appearance in court, but Majors did not appear.

The Philadelphia District Attorney's office had requested Majors' trial by jury but Majors agreed to the trial by judge only.

"Although Vanguard does not do all that says because the math just doesn't add up," Ball said.

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U. to offer Nursing, SEAS degree

By Erica Beatty

Will the new Bill Gates have a degree from Penn's Nursing School? Although not exactly the main goal of administrators in the Nursing School, Engineering and Applied Sciences, a newly-created program geared toward students planning to work in both the health and information fields is being introduced. This is the Nursing Informatics program. Nursing Information Programs will be tailored to provide clinical professionals, able to organize and analyze data to provide efficient and effective patient care. This is a brand new area of nursing study.

The program will enroll its first class this fall. It has just been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The information in this area can be used by health care providers in several ways, and will expand the field of health care. In the future, more students will enter into this field and learn about the latest technologies. The program is designed for students with an associate's degree, as well as those with a bachelor's degree in health care.

Rassekh's project will take place in the African countries and will involve gathering access to basic educational materials and health care. The graduate level of this information, provided by the Nonprofit Information Space Administration, corresponds to the elementary and junior high school levels of American education.

"Because NASA is a government institution, as long as I'm not doing this for profit, I can get some of their software and bring it into the Internet," he said. In addition, he is working with Wharton students to develop the joint degree programs.

"The ultimate goal is cost-effective, but high quality care," she added.

Kalbach said that the new joint-degree program will allow for the transfer of students between the two schools. While the exact details of the program have not been finalized, she said that it would be "very flexible." She added that the program would be "very open" to students from both schools.

"I think it will start small but will grow," Rassekh said.

The new program is expected to offer students a unique opportunity to combine their interests in healthcare and technology.

By Carolyn Blado

If personal information is a necessary ingredient for attaining success, then what are your Pennsylvania directors doing about it? The William Ravelin, the only undergraduate Pennsylvania director, has been working on the Pennsylvania Nursing School. Rassekh, a junior majoring in Nursing and Information Systems, has been working on the Pennsylvania Nursing School program. In order to be able to organize and analyze data to provide efficient and effective patient care, it is necessary to have a degree from Penn's Nursing School.

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starts friday march 20 at 3p/et

MTV online at mtv.com and AOL keyword:MTV
Prepared for a transit crisis

The University has joined with Drexel to develop plans to minimize the effects of a SEPTA strike in 1996.

Penn and Drexel are working to ensure smooth transit services. While officials from the SEPTA, Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, and several members of the community have met to develop workarounds for the transit strike, the two universities joined forces to develop transit contingency plans. In the event of a public transportation shutdown, four Penn buses and Drexel busses will shuttle passengers from both institutions between Houston Hall and three sites: 30th Street Station, the University City Terminal, and 61st and Locust streets.

Penn Transportation Services has also set up a phone number for flyers suggesting all day parking locations.

People means we went into effect during the last city-wide transit strike in 1996.

We commend Penn and Drexel for their efforts to minimize the negative effects of the strike, which will have on students, faculty members, and staff. A public transportation shutdown would be a disaster for the city, leaving 500,000 week-day passengers to find other ways to get to work or school.

Kudos to the two institutions for making the best of the situation and preparing to mobilize for the possibility of a transit strike.

It’s now time for SEPTA and union officials to act together.

If people might also be deterred from beginning the habit of smoking, because they’re aware of the costs of their decisions. What’s done is done, and it seems fair to blame tobacco companies for their products’ harmful effects.

Recently, the University City has been caught unaware of this. I would like the university community to understand the settlement. This will have implications for all aspects of our service, including safety technology.

The Daily Pennsylvania

Letters

LETTERS

CUNNAMONI-ZELLA BLACKWELL has introduced and the University fully supports the legislation.

The University’s position on vending is relatively simple: We believe that vending needs to be regulated to ensure that public health is preserved. In the city of Philadelphia, vending is not regulated. For example, while the University’s vending policies protect the health of students, vendors are not required to meet health standards. This is a significant issue because it affects the health of the community.

On behalf of Public Health, we believe that our vending must be consistent with our community’s continuing commitment to public health.

Strata Holdings

The need for regulation

In the past, we have had difficulty maintaining the cleanliness of the vending machines. As faculty members in the School of Medicine, we enjoy reading the GP composition of tobacco products) to be adjusted according to various in- dices of tobacco-related health hazards or economic model or the competitiveness of tobacco companies to encourage tobacco companies to make their products safer in the long run.

The tobacco industry acknowledges that the recent historic tobacco settlement accorded them things. In fact, harm- ful to the health of smokers. Secondhand smoke harms innocent bystanders. Automatic children of smokers cannot be done.

As faculty members in the School of Medicine, we enjoy reading about the interesting and informative aspects of our service, including safety technology.

Jack Shannon
Manager of Economic Development
Ban tobacco ads

To the Editor: An opportunity to keep current with the rest of the University community. We were shocked to see the January 27 issue in which there was an insert about the ban of tobacco ads. We believe that this ban is a mistake and that the University should reconsider its position.

As members of the Pennsylvania Environmental Protection Association, we have fought for many years to promote the health and safety of the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Vendors Alliance on many issues related to vending. It is now our hope that after hours of conversations, many moderated by Councilwoman Blackwell, City Council will pass the ordinance.

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Israel, Palestinians agree to hold talks in Switzerland

The meeting would address the issue of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

UNITED NATIONS — In a move that could redefine Middle East peace talks, Israel and the Palestinians announced on March 18 that they have agreed to meet in Switzerland to discuss a peace process.

President Clinton yesterday called for a "new chapter in the Middle East," and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin and Palestinian leader Arafat said they were ready to cooperate with Switzerland, but preferred to hold talks in a region "where there is no history of conflict." The Palestinians and the European Union say the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe should host the talks.

The Swiss, which has yet to be scheduled, would revolve talks on a substantive issue for the first time since Israeli settlement building chilled negotiations a year ago, officials said.

Israel steadfastly opposes a full meeting of the Geneva Convention signatories, eager to keep away as much as possible from the 21-page Israeli ghost draft which marked their arrival at Wednesday's conference.

The General Assembly resolution, a reiteration of a January 1993 vote, permits a meeting in "any other region." U.S. Ambassador Bill Kuchardson said the resolution "is a more cautious effort than earlier versions."

A UN General Assembly resolution calling for a meeting with wider international representation — a move that failed to win acceptance in the United States, which has always pushed for Switzerland — was defeated yesterday. The United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and France, and three Arab Arab nations — Jordan, Iraq and Syria — voted against the resolution.

The resolution, which was approved by a vote of 120-3, was defeated by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria, who voted against it. The United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and France, and three Arab Arab nations — Jordan, Iraq and Syria — voted against the resolution.
Chinese population to be 1.6 billion in 2050

BEIJING — China's population, already the world's largest, will hit 1.6 billion in about 2050, state media reported yesterday.

Despite a declining birth rate, the population is expanding because the number of women of childbearing age (ages 15 to 49) in China will still add 10 million babies on average each year through 2050.

New Jersey goes extra mile to save the turtles

INVERLOELY, N.J. — New Jersey is giving the extra mile to keep turtles out of the fast lane.

The New Jersey Turnpike Authority has spent $8.1 million to build a two-mile fence along a stretch of highway near the Meadowlands to prevent turtles from crossing the road and being smashed by passing cars.

"We're also saving a 100 species of turtles," said Robert Spiegel of the Edison Wetlands Association, an environmental protection group.

He pointed out the problem to turnpike officials last summer after seeing turtles crossing the road.

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Corporate giant sued for discrimination

SEATTLE — A波re minority workers used the Bar T. Co. to prey on the city's black community.

A civil rights suit accuses the company of discriminating against black employees.

The lawsuit seeks millions of dollars for back pay, court expenses, damages for emotional stress and medical expenses.

Belfast sees first St. Patrick's in years

Northern Ireland - Despite a tenuous truce, the city remained tense yesterday as thousands of police watched over the parade in the city.

Celebrants stressed peacefully on the day of the traditional parade.

Robert Tarrant, a member of the Protestant organization, said, "The parade is a symbol of our identity.

But yesterday's events were marked by a sharp increase in tension, with police officers involved in a clash with a group of Protestant youths.

The parade, which had been disrupted earlier in the day, was repeatedly postponed due to safety concerns.

The parade featured children with painted faces and shamrocks on their heads, as well as fife and drum bands to skip overtly Protestant marches.

The parade was held a year after the ceasefire was declared, and marked the first time the parade had taken place without restrictions.

The parade ended with a large crowd of people singing "The National."
Disputes continue in war-ridden Yugoslavia

Serbs will not let the province of Kosovo secede while the Albanian majority wants independence.

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia - Serb authorities reported a new attack on police in the turbulent province of Kosovo, which was dropped from the map of Yugoslavia in the 1990s to try to defuse the crisis.

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said yesterday, however, that diplomacy should be given a chance and ruled out sending more American police in the turbulent province of Kosovo as long as the Albanian minority remains behind the barricades.

"Our patience is exhausted," said the resolution approved yesterday by the Parliamentary Council on HIV AIDS, "It was the harshest criticism yet of the entire policy on needle exchange programs giving drug addicts cleanneedles in exchange for dirty ones that have been contaminated with the deadly HIV virus.

"Our patience is exhausted," said the panel's chairman, Scott Hitt, who treats patients with HIV and AIDS.

The top U.S. envoy for the Balkans, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, hinted yesterday that they are only fighting what he described as "independent" police, which are not controlled by the authorities in Kosovo.

Meanwhile, an independent panel convened in New York by the U.S. government to review the data already available, including an independent group of experts convened by the National Institutes of Health.

"Does needle exchange promote drug use? A preparation of evidence shows either no change or decreased drug use," the NIH concluded more than a year ago, saying that needle exchange programs "protect drug users — or are children born with AIDS, "said the resolution approved yesterday by the Parliamentary Council on HIV AIDS.

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EBERLYVILLE, Calif. - Internet service providers have a new weapon to keep consumers from getting too载体 by junk mail.

"Spam," the most popular software used to block junk mail by blocking the spam addresses, has been tested by computer users, announced a panel at the conference on computer network systems.

Tampering with the ban on funding for these programs may be little likely to cause drug use in high or low drug use in high drug use.

The ban on funding for these programs may be little likely to cause drug use in high drug use.

Monday slightly injured a policeman near Pievo, 20 miles east of Pristina. The report by Serb forces in Kosovo even suggested that the main Albanian ethnic Albanian party in the Serb-primed elections this weekend may be unable to mobilize Serb forces in Kosovo.

"Are we using these services as a condition to enter talks," said the resolution approved yesterday by the Parliamentary Council on HIV AIDS.

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The early bird gets the best nest.

Guide to finding great off-campus housing:
1. Start looking early.
2. Visit Campus Apartments and pick up their listings.

Camps Apartments has the finest selection of houses and apartments. The early birds get to live in them.

If you, two, three, or up to twelve birds find a nest at the above locations around campus,

DOOR TO DOOR SATURDAY IS HERE!

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Saturday, March 28, 1998

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The Creators of Beige Block
W. Tennis showed more utility than counterparts

BAREBALL from page 14

"It was a total breakdown," Nagle said. "We were all sleeping in our shoes. Maybe it was too much at the time." If the Florida competition overwhelmed the Quakers, this afternoon's home opener at Beaver Field against West Chester University gave the coaches an opportunity to stay on target.

Led by sniper Jack Hopkins, the Quakers' veteran infield and young lance lead. West Chester was just 1-4 over all in 1996, but split a doubleheader from Penn last season. And in 1996, the Quakers upset the West Chester, 4-1, in the first game.

"We've shown more utility than counterparts and when they had the opportunity to win, we didn't lose," Hang said. "All we've got to do is be consistent."

The Affirmative

"We've been able to prove that we can win," Hang said. "I'm not saying we're going to win every game, but we're going to prove that we can win."

The Affirmative

Hang's team is young, but they have been consistent. They have been able to win games and they have been able to prove that they can win.

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Young pitcher starts front end of twin bill against rival Villanova at Warren Field

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DP Sports is gratificingly giving you a chance to redeem yourself and prove your hoops skills. Oh that’s right, we forgot, you were the one person who had Yale and Rhode Island meeting in the Sweet 16. With that in mind, it’s time for the always free, 3606 Annual DP Sports/Midwest Smoke Sixteen Contest. Fill out the blanks below including the total combined points of the final game. Then run, walk, drive or fly your entry to the DP office, main campus. All decisions are final. Okay, DP Sports and Weesies, you can’t play, nor can anyone else that spends more than the $2 in change is for. For Lans, however, it’s still required. Dr. Rodin, you didn’t win last year, but that doesn’t mean you should stop trying. And this year you want your favorite bartender from your student days, Steve Goodrich, just because you can’t make free throws and are now sitting at home doesn’t mean that you won’t be doing the Kinkade Four, and six for getting the champ right TV."

I’cnn’s indoor track season

Dr. Jonathan M. Mann
Dean of the School of Public Health
At Allegheny University
Will speak about
"Public Health and Human Rights"

Wednesday, March 18, 1998 • 7:15 PM
Class of 1962 Auditorium, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
Enter through the Johnson Pavilion
Information: Dr. Gail Glickman 898-7324
<glicksm@pobox.upenn.edu>

Wrestling from page 14

Five wrestlers head to NCAA tournament

The Dorothy Everett Martin Lectureship in Human Sexuality

Keynote Speaker:
Robert Heaste, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Ithaca College (New York)

"Sex is Good! Why are Professionals the Last to Admit It?"

Thursday, March 19, 1998
7:00 - 9:00 P.M.
(Reception following lecture)
Penn Faculty Club/Alumni Hall
200 S. 36th Street
Philadelphia, PA

The lecture is free and open to professionals and students in social work, medicine, health policy, and related areas.

Sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work
For more Information 215-898-5526

Dr. Robert P. Wasserman, director of the CPR 2000 program at the University of Pennsylvania, has been named the 1998-99 CPR Educator of the Year by the American Heart Association. The award recognizes Wasserman's dedication to promoting CPR education.

"The importance of CPR education cannot be overstated," Wasserman said. "CPR is a skill that can save lives, and it's something that everyone can learn."

Wasserman is a professor of psychology and co-director of the CPR 2000 program at the University of Pennsylvania. The program, which is funded by the American Heart Association, provides CPR training to community groups and individuals.

"I am honored to receive this award," Wasserman said. "It's a reflection of the hard work and dedication of all those involved in the CPR 2000 program."

The award was presented to Wasserman during the American Heart Association's annual meeting in Dallas. Wasserman was one of five recipients of the award.

The other award winners were:

- Dr. John G. Reis, director of the CPR 2000 program at the University of Pennsylvania
- Dr. Robert E. Stiell, director of the CPR 2000 program at the University of Western Ontario
- Dr. James J. M. Lindsay, director of the CPR 2000 program at the University of British Columbia
- Dr. John J. D. M. Lindsay, director of the CPR 2000 program at the University of British Columbia

The American Heart Association is a national voluntary health organization that empowers people to live longer, healthier lives by preventing and managing cardiovascular diseases and stroke. The association operates nationwide and has more than 100 million members and supporters.
Wednesday, March 18, 1998

**SPORTS**

**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

**NCAA puts gag on Alabama's controversial war**

**TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Alabama coach Nick Saban has been ordered by the NCAA not to talk about the controversial finish in the Citrus Bowl against the Notre Dame Irish in this season's second-round NCAA tournament win.

The NCAA has admittedly made a mistake in not issuing a statement on the controversy Saturday. The school announced the gag order yesterday.

Saban, on Saturday said he's going to talk about the war.

**LAFAYETTE, La. — The University of Lafayette or the NCAA not to talk about the controversy surrounding the Cajuns' 35-28 victory over Southern Mississippi last week.

The Cajuns are 3-4 but have won their last two. They have lost 15 straight.

**Dykstra's back puts his baseball future in doubt**

**PHILADELPHIA — Outfielder Lenny Dykstra, once one of baseball's premier leadoff hitters, is ending his comeback bid for now, and maybe for good.

Dykstra, who missed the last 1-2 seasons recovering from major back surgery, on Saturday said he's going to take at least a "few months" off because of recurring back pain.

"I'm not talking about next year. I'm not talking about playing," Dykstra said. "I feel I've had a career and a career and a career and a career and a career and a career...but there's a limit to how many things the human body can take..."

**NASCAR changes specifications on dominate Ford Taurus**

**PHILADELPHIA — NASCAR, hoping to even out the competition in its premier Winston Cup series, has made its second modification this month to the rear spoiler of the new Ford Taurus.

The change, which took place at the February 15 Daytona 500 race, is designed to cut back the efficiency of the rear spoiler.

"I think the guys at Ford have a lot of pride in the car," said NASCAR spokesman Jeff Motley yesterday.

"Taking two inches off the width of the rear spoiler will have more effect on the drag of the car than just shaving an inch off the height of it..."

**Red Wings 4, Oilers 3**

**DETROIT — Norm Macari didn't have a chance to get nervous about his first NHL start.

Macari made 38 saves and Steve Yzerman had a goal and two assists as the Detroit Red Wings rallied from a pair of two-goal deficits to beat the Edmonton Oilers 4-3 last night.

**Greif's roller bettah**

**VANCOUVER, B.C. —"I can't sit here and lie to you, I'm not that dramatically different," Dykstra said. "I've been masking a little bit of a back injury, is ending his comeback bid for now, and maybe for good.

"If Dykstra makes the whole series.,..."
Baseball looks to snap 5-game 'L' streak

Going just 2-7 in Florida, the Penn men's baseball team needs a win today against the tricky West Chester Rams.

By Marc Edelman

The Penn softball team hopes to rebound from the spring break trip today against West Chester in the Quakers' first home game of the year.

By Jennifer Frankel

Softball seeks new outlook in doubleheader at home

The Penn softball team hopes to find a new mental approach to the game after a rough break.

By Jennifer Frankel

W. Tennis builds team unity in split

Two losses were two more expected than Mike Dowd expected from his team.

By Joseph Pincus

Martin takes 800 at IC4As as team takes fourth

The Penn men's track team finished fourth while several individuals excelled in the field.

By Zac Castelli

Martin's victory at the IC4As culminated a remarkable season. He was an 800-meter runner in the 1990-meter run at Big Ten Championships, his fifth-place finish.

The usual suspects turned in their standard performances, picking up one point in each event for the Quakers.

The Penn wrestling team earned seedings, earning individual EIWA crowns.

The Quakers were upset by Villanova, the Quakers fell short of their goal of qualifying for the NCAA championships, its best team performance.

The Penn wrestling team was highly skilled, with two of its members winning individual EIWA crowns.

Penn's wrestling team earned a first- or second-place finish in their weight class, or, in some particularly strong weight classes, even a third-place finish.

Penn's 400-pound pair finished second overall at the championships, its best team performance.

Penn hopes to have more success up North as it begins its home season against West Chester at 3 p.m. today at Bowier Field.

The Red and Blue dropped its final five games on the road — three times squandering a lead after the seventh inning.

"Our team didn't play up to our potential," said Kennedy. "We set some games aside, we let them slip away from us."

A 3-11 loss gave the Blue Hens a team average of just 2.77 home runs per game in the field, a team average of 3.0 runs per game in the field.

"The Penn softball team hopes to rebound from the spring break trip today against West Chester in the Quakers' first home game of the year.

"I feel very happy that I was able to win the 800-meter run, and I won the race today," said Martin. "I don't think that's something you can do every day, but it's nice to have that kind of success.

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Faces of Diversity
We thought our tenure as editors was over, so we were flattered when Lesbian Gay Bisexual Alliance co-chairs Alex Gino and Andy Byala asked us to return for the collaboration of this year’s magazine. We have been invested in the growth and development of this publication over the last three years and we welcomed the opportunity to further its progress. Just as our own lives have changed dramatically in the last year, the political and social climate for LGBT people continues to evolve at a rapid pace, and our leaders take on new forms. With this in mind, we dedicate this issue to the ever-changing face of diversity within our community.

We came together again this year to explore the complexities of sexual identity. The writing continues to exhibit freshness and depth. Every year a new chorus of young voices emerges into the LGBT scene at Penn, and the veterans reflect upon the subtleties of their experiences. The tone of this issue resonates with optimism and a strength of spirit earned by having the courage to confront difficult issues of identity. The gifted individuals who chose to share their stories will, we hope, serve as positive role models for gay youth who have yet to come to terms with their sexuality. The writers grapple with family tension, religious condemnation, academic alienation, and a host of other conditions which mire the ‘naturalization’ of alternative sexualities into mainstream society. The fact that these individuals elect to publish their stories is testimony to the strength that emerges from adversity.

The personal accounts contained within these pages offer a sampling of the wide range of perspectives within the LGBT community. The B-GLAD planning committee has accounted for an extensive array of interests by selecting experts to speak on a comprehensive range of topics. We hope you will take advantage of some (or all!) of these opportunities to push the limits of your education. The events scheduled promise to be informative, provocative, and fun. Our mission, as always, is to include as many facets and ideals represented within our community as possible, and to make them accessible to all.

In dedication to that mission, we strive to bring together the many faces of diversity existing around us. However, this magazine cannot speak for the entire LGBT community, nor can it address all of its concerns. This magazine is by no means a complete representation, but it is a start. The events planned for B-GLAD ‘98 continue this effort.

Please join us in celebration. It is with much pride that we present the B-GLAD ‘98 Magazine.

### Contents

- Thoughts from the Tip of my Tongue
- A Mother’s Love
- My Cloud’s Silver Lining
- Unlearning Homophobia
- Avez-vous un petit-am? Non, j’ai une petite-amie!
- Politicizing a Coming Out
- Draaagin Out in Philly:
  - Act I: They’re Young, They’re Gay, They’re Faabulous!
- “Mommy! Look what I brought home!”
- A Journey In Faith
- Statement from the Reverend Charles E. Bennison, Jr.
- The Dating Gayme
- Symbols of Identity
- Calendar of Events
- Out and Proud
- Draaagin Out in Philadelphia
- Act II: The Godmother Speaks
- SPEAKERS
- From Silence To Song
- She Smiles
- Mending My Checkered Past
- Love In Cyberspace
- The Only One
- About the William Way Community Center
- Acknowledgments
- MENT SUCK!
- Poetry:
  - Between Friends
  - The Pirate Queen
  - Caught
  - Salt Water Pierogies at Midnight
  - The G Word
  - I Could Have
  - I Feel
  - Numb Hands
  - Ode to Mother

LGBA Weekly Meetings
Wednesdays 7pm
LGBA Office
243 Houston Hall

B-GLAD there’s DIFFERENCE!
LOVE THY GAY NEIGHBOR
by: Mike LaMonaca
One of the main reasons I chose to attend the University of Pennsylvania was the diverse student population it offered. Coming from a very Italian-Catholic town, I knew that Penn would provide the diversity which I longed to experience. Although most of my interactions with other members of Penn's community were very enlightening and beneficial, I nevertheless encountered a few people who I felt were quite harmful in their beliefs and actions.

Last year, I was a student manager in Hill House, one of Penn's undergraduate dormitories. The staff in Hill takes pride in the diversity of the residents, and the excellent support structure provided for them. Each suite consists of approximately twenty-five first-year students, a few upper class students, and one "Graduate Fellow," a graduate student who acts as the residential advisor for the suite. Coordinating this entire process is a three-member Senior Staff.

On April 30th of last year, ABC aired the well-publicized episode of Ellen, where Ellen DeGeneres's character came out as a lesbian (thus becoming the first gay leading character in a television series). On this night, Hill House and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Alliance at Penn co-sponsored an "Ellen-Watching Party" in Hill's TV Room. As a student manager, I assisted in the coordination of the event. That afternoon, I sent an e-mail message to the eighteen Grad Fellows in Hill to inform them of the event, so that they could provide the information for their suitemates—this is standard procedure for a Hill event.

The event was a success, with a great turnout of both Hill residents and LGB members of Penn's community. After the event, I returned to my room and received the following e-mail message from one of the Grad Fellows:

Dear Mike:
I write to you to let you know that while I understand that your heart is to be sensitive to the needs for those who have chosen a homosexual lifestyle, I believe that it is not the role of the University to shove homosexuality down the throats of teenagers. One of the men who baptized me had a homosexual relationship earlier in his life, and I have spoken to several former homosexual men who have escaped that lifestyle. In addition, I have had many men tell me how they have had fleeting temptations, which is not uncommon from a crowd that tries to keep itself clean from masturbation and premarital sex, but played about it, confessed it, and conquered it.

I'm not writing to tell you to hate people who have given in to that temptation. I've given to my own temptations that are just as evil and wrong. But I will never teach someone that they should live that life, or that they have no choice in the matter. The Bible teaches the exact opposite. Moreover, the Bible teaches in Romans 1 that people who choose that lifestyle "heartily encourage others to do the same." Hence the "Ellen" show, the LGBA activities, and everything Res Life has done to advance a self-destructive agenda.

I don't preach Jesus to my kids. But I don't preach promiscuity either. Have you ever spoken to anyone who was a former homosexual? Do you have any idea what causes homosexuality? I doubt that you do, and I think that you don't realize that you're unwittingly advancing something that ruins peoples lives.

If the purpose of this program is to keep people from being homosexuals, or calling them faggots,” or heartlessly ostracizing them, then I agree with advancing the concept of basic human respect and compassion. I need to feel compassion for the child molester, the drug addict, the pornographer, because those people are just like me in that they are fallible. But I do not teach that their moral failures are not moral failures. The same holds true for homosexuality.

Unfortunately, the voices of those who have escaped homosexuality will never be heard on campus, or in the media. Rather, the debate will be between those who engage in it, and encourage others

continued on page 12

I'M NOT STRAIGHT BUT MY BOYFRIEND IS
by: Ilana Tannenbaum
So a bisexual woman dates a straight guy. Watch out, it's deceptively simple. My eyes have been jacked open again and again by an almost literal bombardment of new sensations and experiences since I started dating Nick four months ago. Girls had always been my preference, even though I've never denied my bisexuality. So you might say this is my first 'real,' as in college, male experience. You'd call him a boyfriend. I call him one of the greatest revelations of my life.

People see us holding hands and they smile. We'll flirt out in public and I see no wariness in his eyes, and it's so strange to me. We're just another normal couple on the streets. It would never occur to him to be concerned about people staring at us--the 'spectacle,' or their possible disgust, or the threat of violence if he kissed me. He doesn't worry, and I realized that I don't have to either. I've been thrown into a world of Straight Privilege. It never dawned on me how much I'd had to deal with all these years, before I experienced this release. The freedom I feel is unreal, and I love it.

FROM THE CO-CHAIRS
by: Andrew Byala and Alex Gino
Hey, everybody. We can't believe it's B-GLAD already. It seems like last board gets ready to take over, we look back on this past year, amazed with how much our community has accomplished. Everyone's dedication and willingness to discuss serious topics has allowed us to become more aware of important issues.

We've created a new Constitution, which now includes transgender issues in its mission statement. We've had all sorts of weekly social events, both on campus and downtown. At our meetings, we discussed varied topics. We worked to increase connections with other schools, with a dance co-sponsored with Drexel as well as attendance at the first Queer Ivy Conference and a conference for local schools. We participated in the National Day of Silence our first day as a new Board to show the way we have been silenced in the past. Since then, communication has improved. Our visibility during Coming Out Days, and throughout the entire year, demonstrates how the environment on Penn's campus becomes more supportive every year. As with all groups, it's been tough at times, and there were periods we were sure it was all going to fall apart. It didn't, and it's great to see how much we've done for each other and what we're passing on to those who follow us.

We would like to thank the LGBA Board, the LGBA membership, the endless help of the LGB Center, all of the LGBT groups on campus, the Penn community at large, and the Philadelphia LGBT community. Your dedication, support, assistance, and collaboration has been most useful. We'd also like to formally thank each other, for always being there when the other needed it. This has been a great year and though we're sorry to see it end, we look forward to the future to see what will come next. Those of you who have been involved, please continue to do so. Those of you who haven't, come to some B-GLAD events and see what you think.

continued on page 13
THE TIP OF MY TONGUE

by: Andrew Byala

"Why are you so involved in the LGBA?"

"Do you have to advertise your sexuality to the world?"

"Why must you have so many gay friends? You're excluding so many nice people just because they're straight; why must you actively find other gay people?"

"Even if you are gay, you don't need to become a part of a gay community, you know."

With time it becomes easy to tell people that I'm gay; those two little words don't seem quite so formidable now that I've said them to most of my friends. I've read the articles and can verify the statistics, so I can answer questions about the "state of the gay world." And I can talk forever about what the LGBA is up to. (Anyone who has sat through one of our meetings can verify that.) But when it comes down to the real questions, such as the ones above, it can be difficult to give a good answer on the spot. It's far too easy to give a brief and unclear response to avoid the discomfort of telling the truth. So this article is my way of speaking the words I've been trying to say to friends and family members.

When I came out to myself in the eleventh grade, it was not a pleasant sight. Like so many other queer kids, I hated myself and thought that I could never be happy. For months I called my friends at night, crying, my head off the shower would listen. I skipped several classes to speak with teachers and guidance counselors. (Unlike many people I know, I actually found my counselor to be very helpful and understanding.)

For all the empathy my friends and teachers had, they still could not understand what I was experiencing. After all, there is an enormous difference between someone who can feel your pain and someone who can remember it.

Fast forward to freshman year.

When I came to Penn a year and a half ago, I thought I knew what to expect. I had found the LGBA homepage when I was filling out college applications, so I figured that I could meet a few people who would help me deal with my issues. My first event was a program called "You Are Not Alone," in September of 1996. It was a pretty warm day, and the furnace of a meeting room made the event that much more uncomfortable. When I entered the room, four or five Sophomores were sitting around a table, chatting with each other about their summer breaks and remembering the fun they had had the previous year. When the meeting actually began, I heard about the experiences they had shared together in their freshman year.

It was then I knew that the LGBA would offer me more than support for my problems. I knew that, with time, I would return the favor to the community, just as these students were doing. Most of us had problems when we were first coming out, and we had to find people who could help us. Today I do my best to give the same help that I needed when I came to school. But I also know that the gay community is more than a forum for counsel.

A MOTHER'S LOVE

by Cindy Gino

This is the article that I wrote. This is the late article that I wrote. This is the late article that I said I would write, because my daughter asked me to, that I wrote. This is the late article that I said I would write, because my daughter asked me to, to show my support, that I wrote. This is the late article that I said I would write because my daughter asked me to, to show my support for what are considered alternative lifestyles, that I wrote.

Maybe I can make myself more clear by just saying that I feel every parent should be open to whatever paths their children take. We all make hard choices every day and I applaud my daughter for being able to make and stand by her choices. Our differences are what fuel the world's creativity. We need all of the imagination, love and support we can get just to survive day to day. Let's not spend time hating and fighting over basic human facts.

We are all different but we are all human.

PS: Some of my best friends are gay :)

THOUGHTS FROM

by: Cindy Gino

"Why are you so involved in the LGBA?"

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When I came out to myself in the eleventh grade, it was not a pleasant sight. Like so many other queer kids, I hated myself and thought that I could never be happy. For months I called my friends at night, crying, my head off the shower would listen. I skipped several classes to speak with teachers and guidance counselors. (Unlike many people I know, I actually found my counselor to be very helpful and understanding.)

But for all the empathy my friends and teachers had, they still could not understand what I was experiencing. After all, there is an enormous difference between someone who can feel your pain and someone who can remember it.

Fast forward to freshman year.

When I came to Penn a year and a half ago, I thought I knew what to expect. I had found the LGBA homepage when I was filling out college applications, so I figured that I could meet a few people who would help me deal with my issues. My first event was a program called "You Are Not Alone," in September of 1996. It was a pretty warm day, and the furnace of a meeting room made the event that much more uncomfortable. When I entered the room, four or five Sophomores were sitting around a table, chatting with each other about their summer breaks and remembering the fun they had had the previous year. When the meeting actually began, I heard about the experiences they had shared together in their freshman year.

It was then I knew that the LGBA would offer me more than support for my problems. I knew that, with time, I would return the favor to the community, just as these students were doing. Most of us had problems when we were first coming out, and we had to find people who could help us. Today I do my best to give the same help that I needed when I came to school. But I also know that the gay community is more than a forum for counsel.

A MOTHER'S LOVE

by Cindy Gino

This is the article that I wrote. This is the late article that I wrote. This is the late article that I said I would write, because my daughter asked me to, that I wrote. This is the late article that I said I would write, because my daughter asked me to, to show my support, that I wrote. This is the late article that I said I would write because my daughter asked me to, to show my support for what are considered alternative lifestyles, that I wrote.

Maybe I can make myself more clear by just saying that I feel every parent should be open to whatever paths their children take. We all make hard choices every day and I applaud my daughter for being able to make and stand by her choices. Our differences are what fuel the world's creativity. We need all of the imagination, love and support we can get just to survive day to day. Let's not spend time hating and fighting over basic human facts.

We are all different but we are all human.

PS: Some of my best friends are gay :)

THOUGHTS FROM

by: Cindy Gino

"Why are you so involved in the LGBA?"

"Do you have to advertise your sexuality to the world?"

"Why must you have so many gay friends? You're excluding so many nice people just because they're straight; why must you actively find other gay people?"

"Even if you are gay, you don't need to become a part of a gay community, you know."

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We are all different but we are all human.

PS: Some of my best friends are gay :)
I used to think I was cursed. Every day I would ask myself, "Why me? Why do I have to be gay?" For two years I thought like this. Each morning I would wake up hoping that my curse was lifted. Alas, it never was. That got me thinking. You see, I'm not one to just accept things. There has to be a reason for everything. The problem was that I just couldn't find it.

A couple of weeks later, I went home for a random visit. Things had gotten a little stressful here at school and I needed a break. When I got home, no one was around. "Great!" I thought to myself. I threw my bags down, fixed myself a snack and fell down on the couch for some good old cartoon watching. My mother and sister got home about an hour later. I gave them their hugs and went back to rotting my brain. When my dad returned from work, we all sat down for dinner.

The weekend was very relaxing. I slept a lot. I dined on some home cooked vittles. I caught up on the gossip in my high school and chatted with my sister. Sunday evening I packed all of my stuff into the trunk of my dad's car and we began the long trek back to school. The ride was filled with a lot of bullshit conversation. We talked about classes and work and what I'd be doing for the summer. When we made that turn up Spruce St. from 76, my stomach got that usual knot which signified the return to work.

We pulled up in front of High Rise South and unloaded. My dad helped me bring my stuff upstairs to my room. After I was settled, I gave him a hug and kiss good bye and told him I loved him. He said, "I love you too, son. Continue to make me proud." I walked him downstairs and then retreated back to my room.

I lay in my bed for a long while. I didn't really want to unpack, so my clothes would probably stay in my duffle bag for about another week. I just lay there thinking about my weekend at home. I had a great time and wished it didn't have to end. Then, all of a sudden, something hit me like a ton of bricks. I LOVE MY DAD! Maybe that seems like a funny thing to realize, but it happened to me. I was never close to my dad when I was growing up. He worked at night and slept during the day. I rarely saw him and so we never had a chance to form any sort of close bond. I never told him I loved him, let alone showed him any sort of physical affection. What was it that made things different now?

I racked my brain trying to figure out exactly when this started happening. When I began to doubt my sexuality a little over two years ago, my entire life came into question. I distanced myself from family and friends. I didn't want to accept who I was, or to give anyone else the chance to. My parents noticed this change in me and my dad began questioning me about lots of things. I couldn't give him a straight answer (no pun intended). I didn't know what my answer was. This was, however, the first time that my dad and I really sat down and discussed life. I had gotten lectures when I did something wrong. I would be asked about my day, but I never really talked to my dad. It was wonderful. I may have felt a little uncomfortable with the subject matter, but it was the greatest thing.

These talks brought us a lot closer. For the first time in my life, I could truly say that I loved my dad. I mean, I always loved him for the things he had done for me. I loved him the way a son loves a father, but now it was different. There was something so much stronger, something so wonderful that I got chills thinking about it. I finally accepted who I was and I "came out" to my parents. Since then, it has been smooth sailing. My parents are and always have been wonderful.

So, I am gay so that I can have a better relationship with my father? Maybe it sounds a little far fetched, but it works for me. I am in no way saying this is the cause of my homosexuality, rather that I do have something to be thankful for because of it. Being gay will mean a lot of extra work on my part. I may have to fight to keep a job. I may need to move because my neighbors don't want me living in their neighborhood. I may not be able to hold my partner's hand walking down Locust Walk. One thing is certain, though. My dad loves me, and I love him. He will be there to support me in everything I do for the rest of my life. I know this now, and it is the greatest feeling in the world.
UNLEARNING HOMOPHOBIA

by Sarah Trachtenberg

Doing outreach with the AIDS Task Force. Waltzing down 12th Street in Philadelphia's gay ghetto area with a heavy bag of condoms on my left arm, my right hand proffers latex, Reality and dental dam packs, one of each. We pass by two men praying, or possibly dawning, outside the Philadelphia Blackwell Women's Health Center. Danny, my supervisor, doesn't let me harass them. "'Fucking straight bitch,' I sneer to my coworkers after a woman about my age rebuffs my offerings of latex. They laugh; do so I. Even though my demographic assumptions may have been correct, my comment was pretty snotty, I know I wouldn't appreciate it if the almost exclusively gay AIDS Task Force members made the same remark about me; after I became an AIDS activist, I realized that my heterosexuality made me a rather glaring exception. This surprised me, since it had been instilled in me for most of my life that AIDS is not a gay problem. Since realizing how many heterosexuals consider themselves exempt, my frustration manifested in self-deprecating reactions against my own sexual identity, I was a 'fucking straight bitch, wasn't I? My relationship with my colleagues often revolved around my perception of role reversal: so many of them, only one of me. I have called myself a breeder on more than one occasion. Maybe even a closet heterosexual. When asked if I would attend the Outfest last October, I replied that I was an out heterosexual, then adding, "It's not just a phase!"

While it is difficult to be gay or bi in a homophobic world, being supportive of the rights of gays and lesbians is difficult as well, even for those in the sexual majority. Anyone who has ever lent their voice to an oppressed group knows that fears can be displaced; consider the terms 'Jew friend' or 'nigger lover' of generations past. Unlike racism and anti-Semitism, however, homophobia has survived as an acceptable qualm, something that many people feel free to celebrate. I am fortunate to have grown up without hearing racist tirades, but no one ever felt shy about explaining exactly why gay men and lesbians are unnatural. I can still hear the groans when I announced to my ninth grade English class that in my opinion, "age 13, it was his first rally for the rights of gays and lesbians. Robert came of age in the seventies, when homophobia wasn't as insidious as it is today, "after Reagan."

Having been raised in an almost exclusively lesbian environment since the age of five, Robert has a unique advantage. His sister and her partners raised him after his mother abandoned him. He compares growing up in their household with the movie The Incredible True Story of Two Girls in Love: "All these people around, it was the same thing (as in the movie); organized chaos. For example, at mealtimes, everyone would be involved in preparing food without being asked. Even ex-lovers were invited in, which is something you don't see in the heterosexual world. There's a lot of animosity between heterosexuals in that regard."

Malia lived in Fort Worth, home of tennis star Martina Navratilova, whose coming out caused a local stir. Malia pointed out that she was one of the first openly lesbian celebrities. At school, her refusal to acknowledge Navratilova's behavior as deviant caused another student to hit her at age 13.

Liz Caffrey (Penn, SAS) was fortunate to have attended a much more liberal school. "I was lucky to be in a liberal environment when I was forming my opinions," she said. "It seems obvious that you would be gay friendly. At high school, most people had a strong affiliation (as gay friends). When I came here (Penn), I saw that a lot of people weren't and that made me angry. Coming here was a shock. It made me realize that I may not be the 'average American' in my attitudes. I feel I have to make a statement."

While many of the people interviewed expressed frustration that Penn's campus isn't particularly conducive to making a statement, this doesn't prevent them from speaking out publicly. Robert Scheyder (Penn, CSS) is one of the students who participated in the rally for same sex marriage on February 13; it was his first rally for the rights of gays and lesbians. Robert came of age in the seventies, when homophobia wasn't as insidious as it is today, "after Reagan."

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On same sex marriage:

"Robert has stressed that it is absolutely necessary; had it been legal at the time of his sister's death, it would have saved the family additional tragedy. As it was, his sister's lover wasn't allowed to care for her or to inherit anything after her death. Instead, everything went to their mother. Later, Robert got into legal debate with the Catholic cemetery for the right to bury her with a raised tombstone, which are generally not given to unmarried women."

"Religious fundamentalism is the main source of homophobia, and it's exclusive to the United States," he said emphatically. "You don't see this in Europe. They think Americans are crazy. Their (American's) version of Christianity is ignorant, stupid; that's my opinion."

When I asked Robert if being raised by a lesbian couple had any effect on his own sexuality, he replied, "No, I had no inkling to be gay. My best friend in high school turned out to be gay, and then me later, but I wasn't freaked out. I just couldn't do anything about not being gay, I wasn't that way."

Many people mentioned religion, specifically reaction to religion, as grounds for gay-friendly attitudes. Dr. Bill Stein, who is a sex therapist, minister, and professor in the Graduate School of Education, believes that organized religion has played a part in our culturally instilled beliefs about sexuality. Such mentality is a dangerous one since he cites homophobia, heterosexism and sexism as the enemies of sexual health. The majority of the population is bi-potential. They are capable of bisexual feelings, but we live in a culture that represses them. People are afraid, so they may have feelings but push them down. Organized religion isn't helpful with this, and a lot of people do react out of religious background. As a result, people don't know what to do with their feelings. I believe that the United States is particularly harsh towards sexuality due to our Puritan Legacy, which can be seen as a disruptive tradition throughout our history. In comparison to other countries, at least in the Western World, the United States never quite emancipated herself from the strict roles and self-repression of our early European settlers. While Holland was making strides revolutionizing modern birth control, mentioning such a topic was illegal in the United States under Comstock Law, which forbade, among other things, any information regarding contraception. Today, while European women have the option of RU-486, their American counterparts find that abortion of any method is becoming increasingly more difficult to obtain. As a society, we prefer to punish the people we view as sexual deviants. Clearly, the problem of homophobia is a cultural one.

Likening homophobia as cultural, or any prejudice for that matter, sounds reassuring; if it can be learned, it can be unlearned. For many of us, this isn't as simple as it sounds. Before falling ass-backwards into what could only be called "gay rights activism," I found myself unable to admit that I was a liberal, even if it meant something as simple as hanging out in the LGT center. It would've felt safer for me to wear a button that said "Straight Not Narrow."

At the time, I justified my reasoning that if people thought I were a lesbian, my life would be more difficult. At the very least, it would be harder to pick up guys. I now realize this reservation as the remnants of inhibitions people tried to instill in me. Maybe with time I will be able to identify with Malia when she says, "There are two types of straight support: those who are still upset when other people think you're gay, and those who don't care what other people think. If people think I'm gay, it doesn't phase me."
Avez-vous un petit-ami? Non, j'ai une petite-amie!

(Do you have a boyfriend? No, I have a girlfriend!)

by: Alex Gino

Ah, sex day in social psychology class. Sounds great, right? The lecture began:

"Experts have found about six million different positions for sex. I don't want to know how they found all this out, but they did. I guess if you move your pinkie, that makes a different position. But basically, there are six categories." We all wanted to know what they were.

"There's man-on-top (you know, missionary), woman-on-top, side-by-side, front-to-back (commonly referred to as "doggy style"), sitting up (which is less common than some other forms), and standing up. Well, I suppose you'd need to have the right heights for that one..." The class laughed.

For a second, I did too. Then I looked at the notes I had just taken. These were the categories for all six million different forms of sex, and yet, something seemed wrong. They were all, explicitly or implicitly, forms of one-male/one-female, penile/vaginal intercourse.

I looked down my rows of peers, gears clicking in their minds too. A row of queer women, thinking, "Is that what YOU did last night? I didn't." But basically, there are six categories. Experts have found about six million different positions for sex. I don't want to know how they found all this out, but they did. I guess if you move your pinkie, that makes a different position. But basically, there are six categories." We all wanted to know what they were.

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I looked down my rows of peers, gears clicking in their minds too. A row of queer women, thinking, "Is that what YOU did last night? I didn't." And in that moment, slowly fading away, we all looked at each other, wondering who was going to raise a hand and disrupt the class.

No one did. I can't tell you why. It wasn't that any of us was out. Maybe we were all expecting someone else to do it - pretty funny, considering social psych spends a lot of time talking about diffusion of responsibility and how people don't do things if there are others around who could do it. Perhaps too much time had passed between his statement and our realization of its implications, so that the conversation had already "moved on" and it was "inappropriate" to bring it back. It could've been the size of the class. It's pretty intimidating to stop a class of 200 or so to stand up and make a point of clarity that would likely be brushed aside as, "Yeah, they have sex too. Now back to the lesson." Maybe no one wanted to disturb the lesson plan.

I don't know what it was, but it happened. I'm sorry it did. I wish I had stood up at the time and said, "No, it's not okay for you to thoroughly ignore us." I know at least 7 people who were in that class and do not identify as straight, and I'm sure there were others. None of us spoke up.

I don't fault any of us. It is not our responsibility to prove ourselves. Often, we, as queer people, end up doing so. That shouldn't have to happen. It is the responsibility of all of society to fight heterosexism. We may be the primary ones pointing it out and speaking up against it, but we shouldn't be.

Heterosexism. what is it? Well, it can be the assumption that heterosexuals are somehow better than other people. If you're reading this, you probably don't think that way. (This is unfortunate. Perhaps if more homophobic people read this supplement, they might learn something more about LGBT people.) However, heterosexism is more than just impeding that heterosexuals have something that homosexuals don't, unless you are referring to social acceptance or equality under the law.

How many times have you been in a language class and been asked if you had an opposite gender boy/girlfriend as early as elementary school? Have you ever been walking around with a member of the opposite sex and had people think you were a couple? What about when you walked around with a member of the same sex?

This is all heterosexism. Assuming someone is "straight until proven gay" is a heterosexist thought. Yes, more people may identify as straight than gay, but this does not mean we should classify everyone we meet as heterosexual until we learn otherwise. Rather, we should not make assumptions. Unless you plan on dating someone, you don't need to know their sexual orientation.

Note: This does not in any way mean that LGBT people shouldn't come out to people they barely know. Coming out is a valid tactic to fight heterosexism and homophobia in our world. Since there is presently the assumption that people will be straight, many people choose to dispel that notion by coming out. Ideally, that would not be necessary. If people did not assume others to be straight, they would not need to actively come out as queer. We could all be free to express what we chose.

In the meantime, we must all work to point out heterosexism when we find it and say, "No, that is not OK." Many people who would declare themselves not to be homophobic still hold many heterosexist notions. Blatant homophobia and heterosexism are relatively easy to spot and are beginning to be condemned. However, subtle heterosexism exhibited by both straight and queer people is also problematic. We can't always fight it, but let's do so when we can. Don't assume everyone you meet is straight. Don't even try to figure out which ones are gay. Just assume everyone you meet is a person and let more come out when the time is right.
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**Unleashing Our Legacies:**

Exploring Third World Feminisms

March 19 - 20, Bodek Lounge, Houston Hall,

3417 Spruce Street

**Friday, March 20**

12:00 - 1:15pm

Keynote Speech: Maria Lugones

1:15 - 2:00pm

Lunch & Resource Fair

2:00 - 3:30pm

Panel Discussion: Feminist Movements: Social, Political, & Economic Justice

4:00 - 5:30pm

Panel Discussion: Sexuality and Representations of Third World Women

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**Thursday, March 19**

Film Premiere: Miss India Georgia

311 Towne Hall

1:30 - 3:00pm

Co-sponsored by LGBA, NOW, Sangam, GIC (Greenfield Intercultural Center), Women’s Alliance and many others.

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**POLITICIZING A COMING OUT**

by: Carol-Anne Villanova

So Ellen Degeneres has officially “come out” as a lesbian and some members of the non-gay public are horrified and angry. Religious and so-called family-rights activists are treating Ellen’s coming out as the downfall of civilization. Unbeknownst to them, their uproar only shows their inherent hatred and constant misunderstandings of what it is like to be gay. They also do not see the very painful implication of how their hatred affects gay and lesbian youth and adults who are already treated as a nonexistent population by many people.

Several companies, Chrysler, Wendy’s and JC Penny’s, have removed their advertising dollars from the Ellen show. Though these companies show cultural diversity in their ads, it does not mean they support diverse ideals. It seems they only want to capitalize off the squarish clean dollars from heterosexuals! The lives of gays, in the minds of the white heterosexual advertising majority, do not matter. What they don’t realize is that by removing their ad dollars, they only serve to perpetuate the hatred and stigmas against gay people.

The non-gay, non-understanding folk of America need to realize that the world is not made from one apple pie mold. We don’t all conform genetically, religiously, or physically to one another’s ideal image. I am horrified by the fact that religious groups embrace hatred and fear tactics more readily than gay members of their own families and communities. Where have America’s morals gone when hatred becomes an acceptable method of expression? Coming out as a gay person is not, in any way, easy. Even gays who have accepting friends and family are still constantly reminded by non-understanding heterosexuals that we are not part of YOUR America. Can you be fired from your job on the basis of who you date or love? No. Can you be denied equal protection under the law due an American citizen? Not unless you are gay. Then you fall into the estranged category of American, non-equal and ‘subhuman’ and can be legally discriminated against. Being gay and the act of coming out are not publicity stunts. There is no magic wand to wave over the land to make all well and good when you are gay. I did not wake up many years back and decide to do something that would cause me to be mocked and hated. I truly disagree that anyone would purposely choose to be loathed by so many people just to make a statement!

I am not ready to hear I was “accepting a lifestyle” that priests had told them would lead me directly to Satan. Sodom and Gomorrah had gotten charted in the Rhone Island territory and hell fires were certain to burn.

My coming out did not end with the telling of close family members and friends. Almost fifteen years later, I find myself constantly having to come out and explain who I am to new acquaintances who assume everyone is a heterosexual. I could lie and tell them I am happily in love and married to the “man of my dreams.” My conscience still echoes the voice of my mother, loudly telling me when I was a child, “Don’t ever let me catch you lying again!” When I was much older, I came out to a few of my oldest and closest friends. My mother grew angry at me when I told her that they were now ex-friends. “Oh, Carol-Anne, why did you tell them? Why? Because I refuse to lie in order to make someone comfortable at my expense. As freaky as it may seem, when asked of my personal status, I try not to lie. Honesty is the best policy, even though it leaves many gays wide open for alienation, harassment and violence. It also ensures that thousands of people who have never met you, will hate your very existence. That’s right folks, coming out is a piece of cake!

Ironically, the same week Ellen comes out on television, is my youngest sister’s wedding and my own wedding anniversary. I am proud of my sister. She and her husband-to-be are happy and in love! It will be an Italian-Catholic wedding in grand style, mass and volume.

Does this mean I will spend the day coming out continuously to relatives at my sister’s wedding? No, but yes. Just by being at my sister’s wedding, a statement is being made that my immediate family is happy for me and wants my wife and me at the wedding. It shows that gay people are a part of almost every family unit. Our presence proves that our love will not destroy my family. Rather, it enriches it. Surely, there will be relatives or guests who will look at us with scorn. Some may not even notice we are a couple. Others will simply see us as part of the family, happy that we are proud and not lying about our relationship.

Remember, love makes a family and hatred is not a family value. If our own families perpetuate hate, what does that tell children about accepting and loving themselves and the differences we all bring together to form a family?
Between Friends
By: Joe Cruz

innumerable shades of green
puke
passion
grass
leaf.
crystal sunlight sets a glorious sheen
of color, earthy, heavenly, between belief.
dry, hazy heat, humid, arid cold
one minute a sigh, next a cry too bold
the sweetness of life, like a bubbling pepsi
on one of those long, hot, summer days
share with a friend, and passed between
like HIV in a crack whore house.
such pleasant thoughts, sex constantly filling my brain
and groin and head and heart
ejaculation, erection, bodily fluids
so disgusting to some, like ambrosia to others
the gift of life in something smaller than a thought,
collections of atoms and energy.
ask it? you say. who do you love? been there.
why do you love? done that.
how do you love? Well...
i love like a paper cup
thrown into a vat of molten amber;
quickly engulfed and filled
and swept away.
pull it out and I empty just as quickly.
but something was left over, something impossible to remove
without destroying the cup;
a layer that hardens around it
and protects
and soothes.
but leaves less space for more at the
second encounter.
are you run out of love?
erwin.
ray.
howard.
laura.
joshua.
is my amber so thick that nothing could possibly be
left over for whatever reason.
how long for love to refill my heart.
even though it burns
and sears
till my bones
and heart
are bleached and laid bare
for the world to see.
there is space yet.
a when and a where I’ll not soon forget
with friends and family
and lovers.

Caught in the sticky web,
I yearn to break free.
Twisting and turning
Before sleep embraces me,
Pushing and squeezing
Through the oddly shaped crevices,
While buzzing insects swarm
around me.
He tugs on my left arm;
She tugs on my right,
And I remain trapped between their
worlds.
Decisions, choices,
Freedom exists,
Yet I have no one to turn to.
Their advice means nothing.
For they are not caught in my net.
Tangled up in blue,
I resist the urge to jump
From my fence.
It’s comfortable here—
No chain links, barbed wire, nor
fence posts,
Smooth, even satiny.

the pirate queen was in love.
the pirate queen was dashing and bold and in love.
the pirate queen carried a shiny knife and wore a big hat and
tall boots and sailed the wild seas.
the pirate queen loved to dance and loved to eat in beautiful restaurants.
the pirate queen loved a charming princess from a far off land.

the princess was in love.
the princess had a bright smile and rode fast horses and sang like an
angel, like a nightingale.
the princess loved to listen to stories the pirate queen told and
looked into her pirate queen’s eyes and saw forests and secrets and magic.
the princess danced with barons and dukes and lords at the royal ball.
the princess loathed the royal ball.

the pirate queen could never go home again.
the princess never never never talked about the pirate queen.
the princess and the pirate queen walked together on the street, sometimes.
sometimes they walked apart.
men whistled and called when the pirate queen held her princess’s hand.
the princess blushed, the pirate queen frowned.

the princess saved her most tender songs for the pirate queen.
the pirate queen gave her most beautiful treasues to the princess.
the princess wore her necklaces tucked into her gowns.
the pirates knew better than to ask who the pirate queen
wrote to while they sailed the wild seas.

the princess was happy almost all the time.
the pirate queen was happy almost all the time.
the princess and the pirate queen told each other stories
of meeting each other’s family and
dancing at the royal ball.
sometimes stories come true, but sometimes they don’t.

-Stephanie Louise Marrs
"THEY'RE YOUNG, THEY'RE GAY, THEY'RE FAAAABULOUS!"

Act I: Three Divine Divas Discuss Drag

The cast:
Ian: Brittany Lynn
BJ: Brenda
Bengie: Alona

The setting: Saturday afternoon in February. After a spirited conversation the night before, the three divas agreed to meet and dish about drag. Bengie was the first to arrive; Ian and BJ soon followed. The attire of choice was jeans, a T-shirt, black leather, and a five o'clock shadow. They introduced themselves as members of the Drag Mafia. Of course, we have to ask...

BJ: Hi, I'm BJ, Brenda, white wine alcoholic. That's me, second in command.


Ian: It's kind of like our support group. It basically started because...well, it's only been a year and two months with me, but I guess you'd call it a lot of lucky breaks and everything. It's just a support group; we kind of joke around, we call ourselves the Drag Mafia. Sandy Beach, of course, is the godmother, the mafia princess. (I'm the president, [Bengie] is the secretary, and [BJ] is the strong man. When I get a show, I bring in the girls from the Drag Mafia (points to the other two). We, like, help each other out, and when we find someone starting out, we take them in, show them the ropes and how it's done. I don't want to say "once they've proven themselves," but once they start becoming like a regular, when they become comfortable, then they start doing the shows that we're booked for. It's basically a support group, and if anyone has any problems, we rub 'em out.

(Benacical laughter)

Be GLAD and PROUD!

You said that Sandy Beach is the godmother... who is she?
Ian: Sandy Beach is the hostess at the 12th Air Command, I'm like her dragdaugther.

How do you define drag?
Ian: Drag is different things to different people. It may not be for me what it is for you. It could be catty, it could be fun. People can take it at different levels. Like some people just dress up in drag for the fun of it, you do it for performance art. Most of the time, you won't catch me out in drag, unless I'm booked for something, like a show.

Bengie: To me, being in drag is like dressing up as a female. I want people to be confused with my sexuality. As a matter of fact, it happens to me... even when I dress up as a guy, people are like, "Excuse me miss, may I take your order please?" It's real funny. I like doing that. For me, being in drag is fun. I try to pass as a female.

Ian: Yeah, a vaginally challenged female. (Unpublishable raunch ensues)

How did you first get involved in the Drag Mafia and the drag scene?
Bengie: The first time I did it, it was Halloween Night, 1996. I bought my clothes from the thrift store, I had horrible makeup, a horrible wig. My friends were saying, "Ooh, you look so cute!" People I didn't even know were complimenting me. From then on, I started doing it, from January 1997. I started doing the show at 12th Air Command. I remember in the middle of the song, I was like, "Come on, get out of it, just finish this stuff and get on with your life." I was so nervous; I was a wreck.

(Alona has recently been voted Miss 12th Air Command)

Ian: I started [drag] because I was doing a tour with the Rocky Horror Show, as Frankenfurter, for a year and a half. By coincidence, after doing Rocky Horror, I began doing a tour of the Brady Bunch show as Alice, so I was again in drag.

Did you have any prior acting experience?
Ian: I wasn't doing the standup comic route; then when I saw I could incorporate that with drag, then I said, "Okay, that's fine." My mom started me acting early, big stage mother, big Jewish stickler. I got to meet the lady who played Alice [from Brady Bunch]... Angie Davis, is that it? She came to one of our shows. She did not want to acknowledge the fact that someone was playing her in drag. (Oos and aahs from the crowd.)

BJ: I was going to shows, and then one day Tinsel Garland and a bunch of other drag queens got me on stage. It's been eight years. How did you choose your stage name?
Bengie: I had no boyfriend, and since I was always alone, I thought Alona would be a good name for me.

Ian: Mine is my little sister's name, because she had no idea why I constantly had to borrow her Barbies... When she [Ian's alter-ego] went to compete, Tinsel asked what her name was and I said, "Brittany Lynn." I didn't want anything too campy because I didn't want to be stuck with camp, so Brittny is like that kind of sexy name. We can do something funny, something slutty.

Did you have any role models in the drag world?
Ian: I learned from the Big Girls, like Tinsel. She always did her own thing. I don't like competing in the competitions, you can't really be yourself, you always worry about how you look, worry what people are thinking of you. When I came out and hosted, there's none of that pressure. I can just relax and do my own thing.

Bengie: I tried to look really hard at their faces to see how they were doing their makeup. I just did it for fun. I didn't actually try to make a career out of it, or try to be a role model for someone...

How has drag helped you to push yourself more?
Ian: I learned that you have to switch back and forth, but it gets really frustrating when people only know your name. When I started out, my drag like used to be separate from my real life, but it's not so separate anymore. Brittany is a bitch, but what about me?

What is the strangest question asked of you?
BJ: Where do you put that? Sometimes I say, "That's why I'm smiling. (squails.) I'm sitting on it."

Ian: People ask you, "Are your tits real?" Is this how you really live? You get a lot of sick questions.

Bengie: I don't fuck. I just put it down and use girdles and three pairs of stockings. That's how I keep it flat.

continued on page 19
"Mommy! Look what I brought home!"

A dual retrospective

By: Joshua Sammon and Steven Chiong

"Steven's graduation day was approaching fast and it was to be a big day for both of us. For Steven, it was a day of recognition- the culmination of years of hard work. To me, it was also a day of recognition- an admittance that Steven and I were serious enough about each other that he would introduce me, for the first time, to his family."

New Year's had come and gone, and watching that ball fall down was too anti-climactic. I was to start off the New Year by attending my boyfriend's family reunion. It was to be his coming out party, and I was to be his sole anti-climactic. As excited as I was to go to his hometown and meet his family, I was wracked with a sense of nervousness about what his parents were going to think of me. Joshua and I were both excited because it would be a chance to show his parents that positive gay relationships do exist.

The anticipation of meeting Steven's parents was bad enough without Steven needing to flip out about it. He was nervous about the meeting, perhaps more so than I was. He told me how his mother was slowly beginning to accept his being gay, and the fact that he had a boyfriend. I also learned how she was very lukewarm to the idea of meeting me, but was interested in finding out who the infamous "boyfriend" was. It was fair to say that before his family had even arrived, I had decided that his mother and I probably wouldn't get along. At the very least, I assumed his Aunt and I would hit it off well because of interests in the medical field.

I wanted the journey to Joshua's hometown to be a chance for me find out more about his childhood and his family history. He was a quintessential country boy, and I was the exact opposite, an angst ridden urban city boy. Beyond just the difference of our childhood environment though, Joshua and I came from totally opposite backgrounds. His family was a very strong unit, with both a strong father figure as well as a supportive mother. I grew up with a single parent, and went to an inner city high school in south central Los Angeles. Our worlds were so far apart, but I hoped that in meeting his parents, I could understand Joshua on a deeper level. My greatest concern was not necessarily making a total fool out of myself, but how his family was going to react to the fact that their son was dating an Asian American.

"Steven and I ran into his family at Franklin Field. We saw them across the street, and instantly I felt queasy. I should have taken some propranolol to calm my nerves. (It's pharmacy school lingo.) We ran across Spruce Street, dodging the crazy Philadelphia cabs, and then came the introductions. It was a very subtle introduction, with only his mother and his aunt knowing who I truly was. As we were running late, Steven eventually had to leave me with his family. Jeez! I was all alone now, without Steven there to act as a buffer. I knew he was nervous as all hell about graduation, without having to worry about leaving his boyfriend with his family alone. The horror!"

I wasn't exactly clear on what I would be doing during Joshua's family reunion (except smile, nod, and eat). Though I had enough on my hands just trying to memorize everyone's names as I met them. Being the lone non-family member was not too much of a struggle for me, but being the sole ethnic minority in the room made me feel uneasy. The uneasiness subsided, as Joshua kept giving me reassuring glances that I was doing well and that he was very excited to introduce me to the family. Through it all, I was struck by how similar Joshua's family was to mine. Though we came from two different cultural, educational, and economic backgrounds, our families held the same core values at heart (good food, good company, and bickering!).

"His aunt and I started the usual small talk and I felt like she was interrogating me to find out if I was good enough for her nephew. After graduation, we headed to the Wharton reception and mingled with Steven's friends. Boy, was I ecstatic to see people I actually knew! We then headed off to Steven's house where he gave his family a tour. Steven's mother started berating him about the condition of his place, and refused to see any part of the house. I decided to take this opportunity to talk with her one-on-one. Talking to Mrs. Chiong was effortless; conversation flowed freely. I think that we were both relieved. I was glad that she seemed so accepting of me. I think she was happy that I was being discrete and wasn't "tagging out." She hadn't met enough gay men to know what being gay was like and I'm sure she had thoughts of her Wharton son dating a 'gay hairdresser.'"

I was a serious klutz. My worst nightmare came to fruition at the reunion. As I was eating my appetizers, my knee knocked the small table next to me, consequently knocking down half a bottle of red wine onto the antique rug below. I was stunned by my idiocy! (I am at peace with this now.) Luckily enough, several of his family members came to the rescue by dousing the rug with a can of seltzer water. Within minutes, the stain was gone, and I was saved. I was embarrassed the rest of the time, but, though his family members insisted that it was nothing, I felt otherwise. It was comforting however, to see how laid-back his family was. Joshua's family was very warm and inviting to me. I was their son's first intimate relationship, and I was the first one they had ever met. They welcomed me with open arms and treated me like their own son.

"Anyway, we went to this Chinese-'Chinese' restaurant for lunch (I'm used to American Chinese- and I discovered that there was a big difference). Steven's family was very fond of seafood. I am however, not that big on fish (except Sushi!)."
Love Thy Gay Neighbor
continued from page 3

to do so, and those who will bash
them and hate them for it. I hope
someday that you, and any gay
friends you may have, can come to
learn that that is not the whole story.
In fact, it’s not the story at all.

Sincerely,
[omitted]

Needless to say, I was reeling. How
could someone in his position as a
mentor write such a hateful message
to me? As shocked as I was to
receive it, it didn’t come as a com-
plete surprise to me.

This Grad Fellow was a third year
law student, and was hired as a staff
member at the end of the previous
academic year. The interviewing
process is quite intensive, and both
academic year. The interviewing
member at the end of the previous
law student, and was hired as a staff
of the other interviewers immediately
asked him if his religious beliefs
would interfere with his decision-
making abilities as a Grad Fellow. He
assured us that they would not—he
also added that he was currently not
affiliated with any religious organiza-
tion. Other than this concern, he
gave an excellent interview, and was
hired for the position. (At that time in
my life, I never would have considered
asking about his ability to deal with
issues of sexual orientation…) In the
middle of the year, it was learned
that this Grad Fellow rejoined a group
called Campus Christian Movement,
a student division of the Interna-
tional Church of Christ, which many on
campus refer to as “The Cult.” This
group is well-known for its manipula-
tive ways of recruit-
ing new members,
and the psychological
pressure in-
flicted upon them.
(Two friends of mine
were former mem-
ers, who now speak
strongly against the organization.)

Because of an exam and a group
project, it was almost a full day
before I was able to bring up the
matter with the Senior Staff. I am
lucky to say that I was never worried
about how the Senior Staff would
handle it—I had worked closely with
them, and I knew they were very
dedicated to the missions and well-
being of the Hill House community.

Basically, they agreed that the
Grad Fellow’s actions were in violation
of the University’s non-discrimination
policy, which has included sexual
orientation since 1979. With only
two more weeks left in the year, and
with the Grad Fellow earning his law
degree and leaving Penn, there was
not much more that the Senior Staff
could do but inform him that serious
actions would otherwise be taken.

The senior staff assured me that
issues regarding sexual orientation
would always be addressed in future
Grad Fellow interviews.

As the Senior Staff was dealing
with the Grad Fellow, one of them
recommended that the Grad Fellow
talk with me to make sure that
opinions were expressed clearly—we
were both on the staff at the dorm,
and they wanted to be sure we could
maintain a working relationship
(which I had no problem doing,
although I’ll admit it was difficult). I
took this opportunity to ask the Grad
Fellow a few questions about his
beliefs. I asked him if he could ever
consider that homosexuality is a
natural condition present in some
people, even if science were to
definitely prove it. He said he never
would, because “it’s in the Bible.” I
also asked what he would do if his
15-year-old son were to tell him that
he’s gay. “It would never happen,” he
replied. He said that he and his son
would always pray together, and his
son would know better. He ended the
conversation by saying that I should
be more respectful of other people’s
beliefs. I suggested that he should
do the same.

This entire episode brings up two
main concerns. One is simply the
responsibility of those in advising
and mentoring positions, and also
the responsibility of those who hire
them. Although this Grad Fellow
seemed to be the best person for the
job, his performance was far less
than beneficial. Although it’s exactly
unclear if this Grad Fellow influenced
any first-year residents during his
position, it was later learned that he
used to occasionally pray with a
freshman resident named Patrick
Altman, who recently had two letters
to the editor printed in The Daily
Pennsylvanian. In them, he expressed
the moral corruption of Freedom to
Marry Day, and how homosexuals
were sinners. He also referred to
several passages in the Bible.

This directs us to the second main
concern—the seemingly irreconcil-
able contradictions between several
Bible passages, and what seems
physically and psychologically natural
for gay people. The Grad Fellow
referred to the first chapter in the
Book of Romans. As I was preparing
this article, I realized that I’ve never
bothered to read it. I dusted-off my
Bible and opened it to Romans:

“In the same way the men give
up natural sexual relations with
women and burn with passion for
each other. Men do shameful things
with each other, and as a result they
bring upon themselves the
punishment they deserve for their
continued on page 24
A JOURNEY IN FAITH

by: Rev. Andrew A. Barasda, Jr., Associate Minister, The Christian Association

When I was growing up, the world was quite a different place. I’m talking about the Fifties; when father knew best, Korea was a household word, Ike was apple pie Americans. They tightly wrapped their religious queer. Many citizens of this era were God fearing. Bible quoting, causes was branded an atheist, wimp, minority lover, communist, or from other boys. I viewed the world with beliefs in the brightly colored paper of capitalism. I, however, grew up questioning everything, often to my parents’ embarrassment. I knew I was different from other boys. I viewed the world with compassion, empathized with the oppressed, and chose collaboration over competition. It was painful being “different.” I felt all alone. The role models I had inherited - John Wayne, Joe McCarthy, Bishop Sheen - didn’t fit me at all. I sought refuge in acting because theater had historically welcomed the misfits. I also became involved with a church that proclaimed God’s love for everyone, even fairies like me. Being gay and a Christian was difficult at times. I felt all alone. The compassion, empathized with the oppressed, church that proclaimed God’s love for everyone, even fairies like me. Their conformity to the culture has left many of them emotionally high and economically well-off, but spiritually weak.

Bishop John Shelby Spong wrote, “Prejudice erects walls that enclose us in a feeling of security. God beckons us out of or confining lived to a place where we are able to grow into more sensitive and open people, people capable of reflecting the infinite inclusiveness of the God whose invitation is not selective.” (Living in Sin? A Bishop Rethinks Human Sexuality, p. 37) I believe being gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered is something to be celebrated. We are bringing new vision and acceptance and approval from my family and friends. My Grandmother, one of my queer friends, in the Jewish. The bigotry is really getting worse. Earlier this year, I had a double standard. If I date women, I'm not enjoying it. They still haven’t accepted ME as a bisexual, and yet here is all this positive feeling thrust at me. And even that is not complete. My Grandmother, one of the few who still doesn’t know about my sexuality, refuses to acknowledge my boyfriend because he isn’t Jewish. The bigotry is really getting to me here.

My friends, both straight and queer, are acting differently towards me now, and I'm not sure what to make of it. Earlier this year, I had a brief relationship with a girl, and while I would never say that any of my friends are homophobic or heterophobic, I'm noticing some different attitudes now that I'm with Nick. My straight friends seem more comfortable, if they know what to make of things now. They were so careful and deliberate before, I'm guessing out of a fear of offending me, saving the wrong thing, or not acting liberal or accepting enough. The contrast I'm seeing now is very clear. My queer friends are acting differently as well, though the change in them is not as dramatic. It's still a big surprise for me. I know this sounds prejudiced, but I wouldn't expect this from my queer friends. I'm averaging about one "going straight" crack a week. I've laughingly been called "traitor," but after so many times it's not funny anymore. I've been struck by a disturbing double standard. If I date women, it seems that nobody has a problem understanding and accepting me as a bisexual woman. But now that I'm with a guy, I get a general 'are you sure?' feeling from people who know. I see it reflected in the ravel of my straight friends, in the defensiveness of my queer friends, and in my mother’s satisfaction. I know I'm not perfect, but I'm trying to be better, if in a crazy way I feel like I'm losing my identity. But I don't regret it, I'm getting a taste of something that's normally felt from one angle. I'm getting better, and I don't think I'll ever be the same. I guess, in a way, I really am losing my identity — and maybe it's not so crazy after all.

BOOK REVIEW: IS THE HOMOSEXUAL MY NEIGHBOR? ANOTHER CHRISTIAN VIEW

By Reverend Dr. Beverly Dale

So your roommate who has fast become your best friend confides one night to you over dinner that he/she needs to tell you something important, “I am gay.” Or, you receive a phone call from home from your brother who graduated from high school this year to tell you that he has only recently decided to tell the family something he has kept hidden for years, “I am gay.” Now what do you do? As a straight person, you have rarely given any thought to the whole issue and now there it is. You have to deal with it. It’s your best friend. It’s your brother.

You have heard all the hype on this topic from the TV preachers, all of them foaming at the mouth and quoting obscure passages in the Bible, denouncing the abomination of it all. You don’t want to endorse or approve of anything that will incur God’s wrath. Then again, you don’t consider your best friend or your brother an abomination either. Two Christian writers would ask you the question, “But do you consider them your neighbors?”

The authors conclude the short book by proposing a homosexual Christian ethic. I particularly appreciate the section on the “high price of caring” which suggests that any person of faith who dares to rethink this subject in any way other than the way the Religious Right would interpret it will have great resistance. I can attest to this from personal experience. In this school year alone at Penn I have had my ordination to the ministry challenged as illegitimate, been chided with teaching deception, and felt as if I was not a Christian, all because I would advocate for and with gays. I cannot speak for, like Scanzoni and Mollenkott, I know the homosexual is indeed my neighbor.
B-GLAD it's Friday
Penn Dance

Friday, March 27

William Way Community Center
1315 Spruce Street
10 PM - 2 AM
$5 admission
$4 w/ student ID

Featuring
DJ SubZero and Friends
THE DATING GAME

of courting is radically different from the norm. We realized, upon our first meeting, the commonalities between us. We are both creative people, willing to do what it takes to get the job done and allowing ourselves to be as creative as possible. In the beginning, we did silly little things to engender ourselves to one another - visited each other at work, talked on the phone for hours on end (don't even get us started on the phone bills), and spent almost all of our free time together (ok, maybe we are lesbian influenced - both of us own Birkenstocks). We had the opportunity to explore the intricacies of each other in every sense, helping both of our jaded souls come to terms with the fact that we quite possibly had met the person we had been longing to find. And we have. But we digress.

Our hopes in writing this article were to define dating and to reconcile our friends' concerns with our own feelings. So where do you go when you want a definition? The dictionary.

According to both Webster's and Oxford, dating is, "to make or to have a social appointment with a member of the opposite sex, to have such appointments with the same person regularly." The lack of acknowledgment of same sex dating is appalling, especially when you could simply be real with each other and truly begin the discovery process! Being in the closet teaches us that trying to be someone you are not is a waste of time, energy and emotion. When you build something on shaky ground, don't be surprised when it quickly crumbles. Look at the homes in California.

Our dating experience has been nothing short of genuine right from the start. Perhaps it has roots in how we met, as we had to be up front about who we are in a potentially risky setting. We are not advocating carelessness in your dating practices - in fact, we want you to take great care. Take care to represent yourselves honestly and openly, to put yourselves in a situation of command rather than regret. Life is too short to play games of banter and dialogue when you can get to the heart of the matter and begin sharing wondrous experiences right from the get-go.

The bottom line is this: if you meet someone you are interested in, go for it! Be yourself right from the start. Put the phony social graces aside and let them see you for who you are. After all, isn't that the person that you want them to fall in love with? The risk is small compared to the immensity of the rewards.

Mommy! Look...

continued from page 11

The front of the restaurant had an assortment of fish swimming around in a tank and we eventually ordered a big, multi-course seafood banquet. As an appetizing note, we saw the waiters pass our table with buckets filled with freshly scooped-out fish from the aquarium we had just seen. I was taken aback by the brazenness of the restaurant in showing their customers the live fish before cooking it. "Eewww," I thought the whole thing was really nasty, and his family started towards the probability of forming the everlasting bond that most humans yearn to make. But what most maze runners fail to realize is that the socially entrenched regiment of dating itself is to blame for many of their lovelorn woes.

Having skipped the conventional dating tactics, we were able to see each other at our best and worst right from the start. Now we did NOT meet and instantly marry (we are not lesbians, after all); we are still in our courtship process. But our idea was a real bonding moment for the family and I could see Steven was very happy and overjoyed at how well his family was reacting to me. I felt that even though I was very different and unexpected, they accepted me and were treating me like a regular member of the family.

I feel very lucky that both Joshua and I have been able to share our relationship with our families. We weren't engaged or anything, but it was nice to share and be honest, for once, with our families about who we loved. For so long, we both had closed the doors of our personal lives to our families because of shame about our sexuality. But now we have begun to open that door. We are more open, honest, and appreciative of our familial backgrounds. We understand how it has helped shaped our personalities, as well as the values we place on the relationships that we make outside of our families. The end result is that Joshua and...
Symbols of Identity

The Rainbow Flag is a symbol of pride for the lesbian and gay communities in the United States and Europe. The rainbow represents the diversity and many colors of our community.

The Pink Triangle, worn by male homosexuals in Nazi concentrations camps, was reclaimed as a symbol of gay liberation. It means never forget, never go back.

The Overlapping Pink and Blue Triangle is a symbol of bisexuality.

The Black Triangle, worn by lesbians and political and social misfits in the nazi concentration camps, was reclaimed as a symbol of liberation.

The Lambda, the eleventh letter of the Greek alphabet, represents L for liberation. It was also used by the Spartan platoons made up of homosexual men as a decoration on their shields.

The International Foundation for Gender Education logo denotes support of transgender individuals. This symbol combines the lavender color and the triangle shape with a ring denoting all genders fused into one. The Astrological Sign of Mercury is traditionally the sign of transgender people.

The Labrys is a symbol of power and pride worn by many lesbians. It is said to have been used by Amazon women as an agricultural tool during matriarchal times.

The Black, Blue, and White Striped Flag with a red heart is a symbol of leather pride, and the color combination is now used in a variety of products worn with pride by the leather community.

The Red Ribbon is a symbol of awareness and compassion for the many people who have died from AIDS, as well as support for those living with the disease.

The Rainbow Shield is a symbol of pride for PENN's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community. Pick up a button from the LGB Center. Also, copy this image from our homepage to yours (http://dolphin.upenn.edu/~lgba) to show your pride!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All events associated with B-GLAD'98 are free and open to the public unless otherwise indicated.

Sunday, March 22
Q'zine: Queer Activism on College Campuses
9:00 PM on 88.5 WXPN-FM.

Monday, March 23
Photo exhibit, "The Shared Heart"

Terry Dewhirst, showing her film, "Endoscope"
4:00 - 5:30 PM in 201 Writers House, 3805 Locust Walk. Co-sponsored by the Writer's House.

OutEd shows "It's Elementary"
6:45 PM at the Greenfield Interultural Center (GIC), 3708 Chestnut Street. Co-sponsored by OutEd and LGB Social Workers at Penn.

Academy Awards Party
8:30 PM in the Hill House TV Lounge, 3333 Walnut Street. Co-sponsored by Hill College House. Dormitory access is restricted to PENN affiliates.

Tuesday, March 24
Women's Center and PEARL Dinner
6:00 PM at the Women's Center, 3643 Locust Walk. Co-sponsored by the Women's Center and PEARL. All are welcome. RSVP to the Women's Center 215-898-8611.

Rebecca Alpert: "Like Bread on the Seder Plate: Jewish Lesbians and the Transformation of Tradition"
8:00 PM in the Ben Franklin Room of Houston Hall, 3417 Spruce Street. Co-sponsored by Connaissance, Hillel, J-BaGeL, and RJ-C-Kesher.

Wednesday, March 25
B-GLAD Rally
12:30 - 1:30 PM on the College Green. Pictures taken for "The Shared Heart" project - see ad on page 12

Religion and Sexuality," Hill House Gallery Dinner
5:30 - 7:00 PM in the Hill House Gallery, 3333 Walnut Street. Guests include Dr. Ann Matter, Rev. Andy Barasda, and Rev. Dr. Beverly Dale. Co-sponsored by Hill College House. Dining Plan enrollment required. To reserve your seats, e-mail Mike LaMonaca at mh19seas.upenn.edu.

Gabriel Rotello, author of Sexual Ecology
7:30 PM in Stiteler B6, 208 South 37th Street. Co-sponsored by Connaissance.

Thursday, March 26
A discussion on being gay and Catholic
Part of the Newman Graduate Activities Council's series, "Life, the Universe, and Dinner;" 6:15 PM Dinner, 7:00 PM discussion. 3720 Chestnut Street. Co-sponsored by Lambda Grads and the Newman Center.
Thursday, March 26 (cont’d)
Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

Friday, March 27
Lambda Grads Social
5:30 PM in the Raiser Lounge, second floor of the Towne Building, East End, 220 South 33rd Street. Co-sponsored by Lambda Grads.

Dorothy Allison

B-GLAD it’s Friday Dance
10:00 PM - 2:00 AM at the William Way Center, 1315 Spruce Street. $5/$4 with student ID. Co-sponsored by the William Way Center.

Saturday, March 28
“How to be Sex-Positive during a Sex Panic”
Panel discussion with Richard Goldstein, Dr. Martin Fishbein, and Amber Hollinbaugh, 2:00 - 5:00 PM at 110 Annenberg School, 3620 Walnut Street. Co-sponsored by the Lesbian Gay Academic Union.

Resnet Movie: Paris Is Burning
6:00 PM on Channel 11, 10:00 PM on Channel 22
Livingston’s award-winning documentary focuses on voguing and the drag balls of Harlem. Livingston enters a once-secret world where gay, black and Latino men stage elaborate costume competitions in which they dress like and parody many of society’s mainstream conventions. (78 min.).

Ice Skating
Midnight - 2:00 AM, Class of 1923 Ice Rink, 3130 Walnut Street. Admission fee and skate rental.

Sunday, March 29
Breast Health Institute
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM at the Ritz-Carlton, 17th & Chestnut Streets at Liberty Place. $18 registration fee. Call 215-829-1899 to reserve your seat or for more information. (Discounts available to students based on need. Contact Nurt at 215-563-0652 for information.).

Sunday, March 29 (cont’d)
Mosaic Workshop
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM at the Blauhaus, 100 South 33rd Street. $5 per person (for materials). Advance registration required. Contact Heather at 215-898-5044 or hstar@pobox.upenn.edu.

Kerry Lobel on Q’zine
9:00 PM on WXPN, 88.5 FM.

Monday, March 30
Issues in Lesbian Health: A Talk with Dr. Kate O’Hanlan
12:00 PM, location TBA, call the events line 215-898-8888 for more information. Co-sponsored by Lesbian Gay Bisexual People in Medicine.

Assessing Youth Adult Suicide Risk Across Sexual Orientation
3:30 - 4:30 PM at Graduate School of Education, Room D-44, 3700 Walnut Street. Co-sponsored by the Human Sexuality Education Program.

Kerry Lobel: Building the Movement in the Fifty States
7:00 PM in the Bodek Lounge of Houston Hall, 3417 Spruce St. Community Leaders Reception afterwards in the Bowl Room. Co-sponsored by Connaissance. Reception sponsored by LGB Social Workers at Penn.

Tuesday, March 31
Straight Allies program
5:00 - 7:00 PM in the Smith-Penniman Room of Houston Hall, 3417 Spruce Street.

Keith Boykin: Black and Gay in America
7:00 PM in 110 Annenberg School, 3620 Walnut Street. Co-sponsored by Connaissance. Reception sponsored by LGB Social Workers at Penn.

Queer Women’s Discussion Group
Join us for our weekly meeting at 7:00 PM in the LGB Center, 3537 Locust Walk, Third Floor.

Wednesday, April 1
Resnet movie: In & Out
8:00 PM on Channel 11, Midnight on Channel 22
A high school English teacher is outed as a gay man while a former student while accepting an marriage of convenience is the perfect way to prevent his parents back in Taiwan from discovering that he is gay. Plans backfire hilariously when his parents insist on coming to New York for the wedding (109 min.).

Wednesday, April 1 (cont’d)
LGBA social event
All details are TBA. Call the events line 215-898-8888 for more information.

Thursday, April 2
OutEd Panel discussion, "Out in the Classroom"
6:45 PM in Graduate School of Education, Room D-44, 3700 Spruce Street. Co-sponsored by OutEd.

Riki Anne Wilchins
8:00 PM in 109 Annenberg School, 3620 Walnut Street. Co-sponsored by Connaissance.

Resnet movie: I Shot Andy Warhol
8:00 PM on Channel 11, Midnight on Channel 22
Based on the true story of Valerie Solanas who as a 60s radical preaching hatred toward men in her “Scum” manifesto. She wrote a screenplay for a film that she wanted Andy Warhol to produce, but he continued to ignore her. Valerie shot him, and this is her story.

Friday, April 3
Resnet movie: Jeffrey
8:00 PM on Channel 11, Midnight on Channel 22
Jeffery, a young gay man in New York, decides that sex is too much and decided to become celibate. He immediately meets the man of his dreams and must decide whether or not love is worth the danger of a boyfriend dying.

Saturday, April 4
Resnet movie: Go Fish
8:00 PM on Channel 11, Midnight on Channel 22
Max is a trendy, pretty, young lesbian who is having trouble finding love. A friend sets her up with Ely, whom Max likes, but Ely is frumpy, homely, and older. Nor do they have much in common. Can Max learn to look past the packaging?

Sunday, April 5
Resnet movie: The Wedding Banquet
8:00 PM on Channel 11, Midnight on Channel 22
A Chinese yuppie living in New York decides that a marriage of convenience is the perfect way to prevent his parents back in Taiwan from discovering that he is gay. Plans backfire hilariously when his parents insist on coming to New York for the wedding (109 min.).

Monday, April 6
Resnet movie: The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love
8:00 PM on Channel 11, Midnight on Channel 22
This is an adventurous love story between two young women of different social and economic backgrounds who find themselves going through all the typical struggles of a new romance.
Save this date: Sunday, March 29, 1998

OUT AND PROUD

by Daniel Sloane

When I went to University of Pennsylvania as a freshman, I had just begun to explore what it meant to be gay. Even though I had known I was gay all through my high school years, they were years of denial and self-hatred. I had never confided in anyone, not even my closest friends. When I finally came to terms with myself and who I was, I realized the next step was to come out to my best friend of six years, Wendy. I guess you can say things went smoothly. We hugged, we cried, and that you can say things went smoothly. We hugged, we cried, and that summer we checked out guys together. And even though I couldn’t ask for a better friend in the whole world, I still felt alone. I wanted to be around other people like me. I wanted to meet other gay people. So during my first week at Penn, I wanted to meet other gay people. So during my first week at Penn, I decided to go. There were some of the people there that I had met the week before. When I told them what happened, they suggested I come back the next day and speak with Bob Schoenberg, the director of the center.

The next day I met with Bob and explained to him what had happened. He took action immediately. That day Bob made phone calls, and promised that he would see this through to the end. For the first time, I felt like someone was on my side. Bob spoke with Steve Feld, at that time Assistant Dean of Hill House (the dorm I was living in) and with my Grad Fellow, Senthil. A Grad Fellow is a graduate student who serves as a resident advisor in the dorm. Bob told me that I needed to go talk with Senthil and file an incident report.

"You have been harassed and it needs to be documented."

I just stood there and nodded my head, but inside I was relieved. I didn’t want to be a victim. I didn’t want to file an incident report. I didn’t want to be gay. What I wanted to do was run. Run far away. Away from my roommate, from my dorm, from my room, from homophobia, from everything. But I realized I had run long enough.

I returned to my dorm that evening and met with Senthil in his room. We talked for a little while about what had happened and I filled out an incident report. He then called my roommate into his room. It was the first time I had seen Dylan since this incident had started. He seemed nervous and uncomfortable. The topic of my being gay never came up in the conversation, but it was obvious that he knew. He couldn’t even look at me. "Maybe someone broke into our room and did it," Dylan suggested after Senthil told him what had happened. Dylan swore he knew nothing about the incident.

There were no signs of forced entry, and nothing was stolen. Between the two of us we had a TV, VCR, stereo, refrigerator, and bun-

continued on page 30
They’re Faabulous!
continued from page 10
How do you differentiate between all the terminology for what you do? How do you define transsexual, cross-dresser, drag queen, etc?
Ian: I think a drag queen is just someone who comes out in drag. Three days or more in drag makes you a transvestite. If you’re a female impersonator, you go out to give an illusion of a female performance. And personally, I think that once people start getting ‘work’ done, people that compete, they start getting hormone shots or breasts, cheek implants and all that. I think then you’re taking things a step further. All about being a performance artist is about giving an illusion without all that work. Once people start getting the enhancements and the work done, they shouldn’t compete anymore because they’re becoming a woman, not giving an illusion. They’re actually becoming a female rather than being a female impersonator.

It’s not fair when we compete and I’ve got two bags of rice on my chest and this other girl comes out with tits! That gives them an edge, and all the terminology for what you continued from page 11

What do you think of mainstream representations of drag, like Tootsie and Mrs. Doubtfire?
Ian: I guess the straight world sees that as “Well, that’s okay that they’re in drag because this one [Mrs. Doubtfire] is going to get his kids back.” It was only temporary. Too Wong Foo was, like, so commercial. They were in drag all the time.

What about performers like RuPaul who have broken into the mainstream?
Ian: It’s every performer’s dream. She has a crew and costume designing and all that. All we have is a bar tab. Her show is good, but she’s not a real good host.

How do you find the Philadelphia scene compared to New York?
Ian: Here in Philadelphia, it’s all competition to be the most glamorous.

THE GODMOTHER SPEAKS

ACT II: SANDY BEACH GIVES THE INSIDE SCOOP
by Patrick Callaghan
Later on the same Saturday we conducted another interview with the godmother of the drag Mafia, Sandy Beach. As you already know, Sandy Beach is the host of USO show held every Thursday night at the Twelfth Air Command [located on 254 S. 12th Street], and has played a integral part in helping young drag queens get started.

How did you get your start?
I was working in a dinner theatre in downtown Atlantic City, and some friends took me to see a drag show on York Ave. called Ruby Red Lips. I then entered a Halloween contest in drag and won first prize. I was offered a guest spot on a comedy show, then went to work on the show for about six months. I then hooked up with a friend in 1977 named Tinsel Garland and created a live act as two guys working in gay clubs. That act went over like a lead balloon. When we put drag in, the act went off like gangbusters doing the same material. It was just bizarre. And hence I got started that way.

What is your age?
A young 40 something, 44.

Who were your mentors or idols?
Gene Kelly because I started in the business as a singer/dancer, and I actually left the drag business for about 10 years to get back into acting. It would have to be Gene Kelly because he was both masculine and graceful.

So what can you say about your background in show business?
I started as a child model from the years of 4-8, from 8-12 I started dancing and singing on the Tony Grant Stars of Tomorrow Show on Steel Pier. My aunt had a modeling agency and I got a lot of work out of her. I started working as an assistant spinning records for Ed Hires, and while working on the pier I started to make friends with the circus performers, and ended up being the dolphin trainer. I did that show 8 times a day, 7 days a week. If I wanted a day off, I had to do 16 shows. I was 18 at the time and it was my first really professional job. It taught me a lot of discipline; the show went on. If you got cut or bit by an animal, you schlepped through.

What’s your definition of drag?
If you watch the film “Some Like it Hot” – men are disguised as women, but underneath it all they’re still men. It’s an illusion. A drag can say things that a real woman sometimes can’t (unless you’re Joan Rivers). We get away with more off-the-wall comedy lines. A drag to me should be a man, but when they’re on stage, they don’t have the costume, and when the curtain comes down, the costume comes off. It’s a performance piece.

How do you feel about all the confusion around drag with terms like cross dresser, transgender etc. through talk shows like Jerry Springer? And how does it take away from the art of drag?
Jerry Springer show is a circus. How is it performing for straight crowds as opposed a gay audience?
Ian: Actually, I prefer performing with straight crowds because it’s so much fun for them. But a gay crowd is critical, like, “Look, she’s missing a rhinestone” or, “Her eyelash is falling off.”

BJ: We just did a show at Bryn Mawr College that was just amazing, because so many of them had never seen drag. We could have come out and passed out and they still would have clapped for us.

Ian: A lot of times, these straight guys come in and see the show, and then they come up to you and they’re like, “Are you a girl? Are you a guy? What’s going on?” They’re all drunk, and they want to touch. Then you have to change them, and then next thing you know you’re pregnant. (laugh)

The three Divas gather themselves and head for the road. Sandy Beach and the family are travelling to New York today, and the Godmother hates to be kept waiting. The Divas exit in a flurry, and we almost expect a curtain to close in their wake. Back to business as usual.

DRAAAAGIN’ OUT IN PHILADELPHIA

features and the stuff that God gave you, and to try transforming that in a way to give the female illusion.

Does your family know what you do?
Ian: My dad’s comes to a lot of my shows, and my grandmother got a lovely picture of me for Christmas. I kind of force it on them.

BJ: Sort of, but they don’t really want to know.

Bengie: My family lives far away.

What do you think of mainstream representations of drag, like Tootsie and Mrs. Doubtfire?
Ian: I guess the straight world sees that as “Well, that’s okay that they’re in drag because this one [Mrs. Doubtfire] is going to get his kids back.” It was only temporary. Too Wong Foo was, like, so commercial. They were in drag all the time.

What about performers like RuPaul who have broken into the mainstream?
Ian: It’s every performer’s dream. She has a crew and costume designing and all that. All we have is a bar tab. Her show is good, but she’s not a real good host.

How do you find the Philadelphia scene compared to New York?
Ian: Here in Philadelphia, it’s all competition to be the most glamorous.

Does being a drag artist ever interfere with your dating life?
Ian: I had problems with a guy I was dating last summer. He wasn’t interested in me when I was out of drag. He wouldn’t call me by my real name, he would call me up and ask for Brittany. “Where’s Brittany?” Where’s Brittany?” and I was like, “Uh, I don’t think she’s home right now.” But some guys I’ve dated feel all weird standing next to me in drag.

BJ: I was seeing this guy who didn’t like the fact that I perform. He was not accepting of Brenda at all, he likes BJ, but not Brenda. He couldn’t handle the whole package, I guess.

How do you find the Philadelphia scene compared to New York?
Ian: That once people start getting ‘work’ done, people that compete, they start getting hormone shots or breasts, cheek implants and all that. I think then you’re taking things a step further. All about being a performance artist is about giving an illusion without all that work. Once people start getting the enhancements and the work done, they shouldn’t compete anymore because they’re becoming a woman, not giving an illusion. They’re actually becoming a female rather than being a female impersonator.

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(Brenda, Brittany Lynn, Alona, and Sandy Beach perform Thursday nights at the 12th Air Command, 254 S. 12th Street. They also perform at other area venues, including Bob and Barbara’s Lounge, 15th & South Street, which caters to a colorful and very mixed crowd. Call for more info.)
DR. KATE O'HANLAN

B-GLAD welcomes Dr. Kate O'Hanlan, a leading expert in the field of women's health. Dr. O'Hanlan is currently Assistant Professor and Associate Director of the Gynecological Cancer Section of Stanford University Medical School and is the past president of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association. She earned her M.D. at the Medical College of Virginia and was later awarded a two-year fellowship at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

Dr. O'Hanlan has authored many studies detailing homophobia as it affects the delivery of medical services. Her work includes, “Homophobia as a Health Hazard,” and “Lesbian Health and Homophobia.” She directs many of her presentations toward lesbian health awareness.

Dr. O'Hanlan will be speaking at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, 17th & Chestnut, on breast health on Sunday, March 29 at 8:30 AM, and on Monday, March 30 at 12:00 PM (call 898-8888 for location). The event is co-sponsored by the Sexual Orientation Medical Awareness (SOMA) med student group, LGB People in Medicine (LGBPM), the Penn Women's Center, and the Women's Studies Program.

REBECCA ALPERT

Rebecca Alpert is a crusader for reform within the Jewish community. Along with other lesbians in the early 80's, Alpert began placing leavened bread on the seder plate, an act of irreverence to the Jewish tradition and a symbol of her quest to forge a place in a community which had rendered her and other lesbians as “other.”

Rebecca Alpert is one of the first women to be ordained a rabbi while openly asserting her identity as a lesbian. In her talk at Penn, Alpert will discuss her role in these often discordant groups, and explore means for reconciliation. In her recent book, Like Bread on the Seder Plate, Alpert offers new interpretations of parts of the Torah which are traditionally considered to be condemning of homosexuality. Her work is scholarly as well as personal, and is of interest not only to the LGBT community, but also to anyone who seeks to carve their own place in Judaism.

Rebecca Alpert currently serves as Assistant Professor and Co-Director of the Women's Studies Program at Temple University. Her body of work is scholarly as well as personal, and is of interest not only to the LGBT community, but also to anyone who seeks to carve their own place in Judaism.

Eye On Equality

A monthly column by Kerry Lobel

MARCH

* the political landscape has changed dramatically, and with that, our focus must also change

The political landscape has changed dramatically, and with that, our focus must also change.

KERRY LOBEL

Lobel, 44, has earned her current position as Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) through years of organizing within the LGBT community. Lobel attended the University of California/Los Angeles (UCLA) where she edited the women’s newspaper, Together, and was active in the Women’s Resource Center.

Since her days at UCLA, Lobel has served over 200 groups around the nation as an organizational consultant. Her work has helped such groups to clarify their missions and strengthen their internal structures.

Lobel founded the Commission on the Status of Women in Santa Monica and worked as Executive Director of the Southern California Coalition on Battered Women from 1979 to 1984. She also served as chair of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (1988, 1989) as well as the Ocean Park Community Organization. Lobel was a board member of the Ryan White Center, and continues to serve as a board member of the National Network of Women in Prison.


Lobel will be speaking at Penn on Monday March 30 at 7:00 PM in the Bodek Lounge of Houston Hall. Following her talk, there will be a reception in the Bowl Room. Co-sponsored by Connaissance.

Once in a while it really hits people that they don't have to experience the world in the way they have been told to.” - Alan Keightley

SPEAKERS

This year’s speakers challenge us to look at the world from different perspectives. We encourage you to take advantage of this memorable opportunity.

RIKI ANNE WILCHINS

Considered a controversial writer within the transgender scene, Riki Anne Wilchins composes “emotional and spiritual survival kits” for transsexuals. She has been called “too radical” by many inside and outside the trans community, and promises to be a captivating speaker during B-GLAD ’98.

Wilchins founded Transsexual Menace and serves as Executive Director of GenderPAC. Brutally honest and, at times, explicitly sexual, she is considered one of the most brilliant writers in her field. Come hear her speak at 8:00 PM in Room 109 of the Annenberg School on Thursday, April 2. Co-sponsored by Connaissance.

Finnian’s

Salon

2045 Chestnut Street 564-1860

SPEAKERS

Monday, March 23
Terry Desilets, 4-6:00 PM
202 Writers House, 305 Locust Walk

Terry Desilets, 4-6:00 PM
202 Writers House, 305 Locust Walk

Tuesday, March 24
Rebecca Alpert, 8:00 PM
“Like Bread on the Seder Plate: Jewish Lesbians and the Transformation of Tradition”
Ben Franklin Room, Houston Hall
3417 Spruce Street

Wednesday, March 25
Gabriel Rotello, 7:30 PM
“Talk with Gabriel Rotello”
Sittler Hall 116
208 South 37th Street

Friday, March 27
Dorothy Allison, 7:30 PM
St. Luke’s and the Epiphany
330 S. 13th Street
Dorothy Allison

Dorothy Allison, born 1949, is a prominent and provocative writer both inside and out of the LGBT community. She grew up as part of America’s poor white contingency in South Carolina and writes about her experiences with disarming candor and grace. Her writing is not, she insists, about “growing up queer successfully.” Rather, she opts for the edgy and often uncomfortable truths of being an outcast within an isolated community.

Allison survived her troubled beginnings, and much of her work reflects the tension of maintaining her passion for life. She considers writing “the only way I know to make sure of my ongoing decision to live.”

Incest, poverty, abuse, and survival are common themes among her work.

Her recent work, Bastard Out of Carolina, was a National Book Award Finalist, and her collection of short stories, Trash, was selected for two Lambda Literary Awards. Allison has also published a collection of poetry, The Women Who Hate Me, and most recently a collection of essays, entitled Two or Three Things I Know for Sure. Allison also regularly speaks at writers’ conferences.

Dorothy Allison will be speaking Friday, March 27, at 7:30 PM at St. Luke’s and the Epiphany (330 S. 13th Street). There will be a reception afterwards at Giovanni’s Room, 345 S. 12th Street. This event is being co-sponsored by Giovanni’s Room.

Gabriel Rotello

One of the most controversial figures in the AIDS debate, Gabriel Rotello explores possible origins of HIV and traces its spread among gay men. In his book, Sexual Ecology, Rotello presents detailed research about the epidemiology of the disease, and addresses behavioral factors among gay men that have contributed to its proliferation. Rotello is a long-time AIDS activist and award-winning journalist who seeks to answer the question of “Why me?” circulating throughout the gay community.

With the “second wave” of AIDS now hitting the gay male population, Rotello’s work carries a timely and important message: although AIDS cannot be cured, it can be contained. Rotello rebuts both the right-wing stance that AIDS resulted from promiscuity alone, and the left’s position that AIDS is mere accident. Rotello will discuss his research and the veracity of his findings in a timely and important message: although AIDS cannot be cured, it can be contained. Rotello rebuts both the right-wing stance that AIDS resulted from promiscuity alone, and the left’s position that AIDS is mere accident. Rotello will discuss his research and the veracity contained in opposing sides of the AIDS debate. The event is co-sponsored by Connaissance.

Gabriel Rotello is the founding editor of Outweek magazine and was a columnist for New York Newsday. Winner of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation Outstanding Journalist of the Year award for 1995, Rotello has written for Out magazine, the New York Times, The Nation, the Village Voice, The Advocate, and other publications. He lives in New York City.

Rotello, author of Sexual Ecology, will be speaking at 7:30 PM in Stiteler Hall, 86 (208 South 37th Street). His Presentation, Talk with Gabriel Rotello, is being co-sponsored by Connaissance.

Terry Dewhirst

Filmmaker Terry Dewhirst brings to Penn an enlightening presentation about media and medical representations of hermaphrodites. She will be showing her film, “Endoscope” which raises questions about the entire concept of gender. Dewhirst, partner of filmmaker Alex Sichel (All Over Me), will be screening her work Monday, March 23 at 4:00 PM, 202 Writers House, 3805 Locust Walk. This event is being co-sponsored by The Writer’s House.

Keith Boykin

Keith Boykin is the current Executive Director of the National Black Gay and Lesbian Task Force and a 1992 graduate of Harvard Law School. In his recent work, One More River to Cross, Boykin explores the tension surrounding the black experience within the LGBT community.

Responding to black leaders’ resistance to align the black civil rights with LGBT movements, Boykin interviews Baptist ministers, gay political leaders, and black gays and lesbians to investigate what it means to be both black and gay in America. His research addresses issues of “faith, family, discrimination, and visibility to determine what differences – real and imagined – separate the two communities.” Keith Boykin will speak on the topic of dual minority status on March 31 at the Annenberg Center, 7:00 PM. The event is co-sponsored by Connaissance, the African-American Resource Center, and the Greenfield Intercultural Center.

Queer Activism On Area Campuses

Nearly 30 years after Stonewall and the first wave of campus unrest in the 60’s, we’ll revisit the issue of what shape queer activism is taking on today’s campuses. We’ll talk with representatives from area colleges about organizing around various issues like AIDS, women’s health, welfare reform, social networking, and even coming out.

Tune In Sunday, March 22, 9pm

q-zine (in [kypo seen]): a weekly queer audio magazine broadcasting live from 9-10pm every sunday evening on WXPN-fm. As always, your calls are welcomed at 1-800-543-7976.
1998 B-GLAD Writing Competition Winners

First Prize
SALT WATER PIEROGIES AT MIDNIGHT
(PAGE 27)

Second Prize
AVEZ-VOUS UN PETIT-AMI? NON, J'AI UNE PETITE-AMIE! (PAGE 7)

Third Prize
THE G-WORD (PAGE 27)

Look for the winning submissions in upcoming issues of the au Courant

Giving Voice to our Entire Community

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FROM SILENCE TO SONG
by: Katherine Sosnoff

In an industry obsessed with categorization and labeling, Steve Cohen defies definition. This Philadelphia-based singer and songwriter has dared the music industry to define him: "I figure, let them try to define me." Cohen's personal irreverence to the industry's categorizing custom is reflected in reviews of his October 1997 album, Silent Too Long. His success with producing a CD has spurred interest in a second. Cohen never ceases to write new songs; even while waiting tables or bicycle riding, he cannot prevent himself from composing. This habit is consistent with Cohen's emphasis as a teenager. At sixteen he used money for car insurance to buy a piano. Also, when Cohen was first formally educated in music, he neglected scales and other exercises, skipping instead to songwriting. These were the first steps in realizing a childhood goal of stardom. Cohen remembers thinking, "I don't need to go to college. I just want to be a rock and roll superstar." Even after his teenage years, Cohen's tenacity continues to surface. He leaves little time to dwell on individual successes. In modesty he admitted, "I'm usually so deep into thinking about the next thing to do that I don't appreciate what's going on. Sometimes I even question the reality of the successes." At this point, the truth of Cohen's achievement is undeniable; his album alone is testimony of this.

Despite his small size and youthful appearance, Steve Cohen commands attention. The powerful combination of persuasive, sometimes parodic lyrics and a voice of gravelly solemnity simply perfects an candid and charismatic presentation. When asked from where his lyrics come, Cohen frankly responded, "from the heart." This is quite clear.

This year's Festival will be held May 3rd.

For the past eighteen months, Steve Cohen has removed himself from the forefront of Outmusic in order to spend time on Silent Too Long. His success with producing a CD has spurred interest in a second. Cohen never ceases to write new songs; even while waiting tables or bicycle riding, he cannot prevent himself from composing. This habit is consistent with Cohen's emphasis as a teenager. At sixteen he used money for car insurance to buy a piano. Also, when Cohen was first formally educated in music, he neglected scales and other exercises, skipping instead to songwriting. These were the first steps in realizing a childhood goal of stardom. Cohen remembers thinking, "I don't need to go to college. I just want to be a rock and roll superstar." Even after his teenage years, Cohen's tenacity continues to surface. He leaves little time to dwell on individual successes. In modesty he admitted, "I'm usually so deep into thinking about the next thing to do that I don't appreciate what's going on. Sometimes I even question the reality of the successes." At this point, the truth of Cohen's achievement is undeniable; his album alone is testimony of this.

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Steve Cohen can be contacted through Hurricane Recording Company (PO. Box 42614/ Philadelphia, PA 19101 and http://members.aol.com/KeysCohen/). Silent Too Long can be purchased at Tower Records, HMV, and Giovanni's Room, as well as through Ladieslipper, inc. distributors (www.ladieslipper.org). Cohen's upcoming live performances include:

April 3, 1998 at the Woodbind Inn, Penmsauken, N.J. This fundraiser for the Southern New Jersey AIDS Coalition will include bands, a buffet, and a speedo fashion show. 6-12pm overall, Cohen will perform at 10:30. There is a $5 admission fee.

May 3, 1998, 4pm, The Lesbian and Gay Music Festival (part of Pridefest Sunday Out)
May 8, 1998 at the Borders in Springfield at 8pm
May 17, 1998 at the Bike Stop, 10:30pm

Queer Women's Discussion Group
Every Thursday, 7:00 PM
LGB Center, 3537 Locust Walk, Third Floor
Call 896-5044 for details.
I guess you can say that I had a rough time growing up. Apart from that, I never personalized what I was saying and as I got older I continued to question myself. To what feelings were the words attached to whom? I began to see that the way I was seeing the world was wrong, but till this day I struggle to erase the training.

Some of you will say I'm weak for being a racist, sexist, homophobic, but I am. I say that because I think eliminating "isms" is an everyday struggle. For me to say that I'm not a racist would imply that I can stop positive action. Many people use denial to cover up their feelings. I believe that most people have similar attitudes but will not admit it, even to themselves. Having a checkered past helps me understand both sides. Walking around pretending to be the PC poster boy will not win the Human Rights Award. If you want to change your attitudes and beliefs, you have to confront them head on.

I have had the opportunity to challenge myself by being exposed to different groups. First, I discovered for myself the degree of "ism's" in this country and how it has impacted people throughout the years. Second, I started seeing the uniqueness in people instead of grouping them together. My quest is as much for discovering who me is as for discovering who is hated and why. To be a man about man my racist attitudes and assumptions might seem like suicide to some, but I have done it. Sharing honestly with people that you are trying to change and wanting to sort it all out will help deplete the bigots. As a social worker, I have worked in the field for over 10 years now and have had the pleasure to work in environments where I am the minority. Being a white male in this situation allows one to experience what it is like to be different.

I was one of the few straight males at the HIV and AIDS testing center. When other guys hit on me, I responded politely and was never offended by it. I do not know how I evolved this way, but it's nice to react with kindness and appreciation instead of the fearful violence so prevalent in this country.

This year I work at the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Campus Services on campus. I have integrated with the staff and consider them good friends. Never have I felt cause to be offended or feared for my manhood.

Being a straight ally to means accepting things the way they are and being open to change. This philosophy has widened my scope of the many possible things that people feel and experience. To me, being a straight ally means actually doing something positive, not just talking. Interpersonally, I have to decrease the amount of racist, sexist, homophobic speech and thought in my everyday life. Be aware of your own bias but do not hide it. Admit it and move on. Start with your own mind and heart. And act. Stop hanging out with friends who constantly put groups down. Try to put yourself in the shoes of the group that everyone hates. Put yourself in a place with people who are different from you and find out who you really are.

MENDING MY CHECKERED PAST

Love Thy Gay Neighbor

continued from page 12

wondering... They know that God's law says that people who live in this way deserve death. Yet, not only do they continue to do these things, but they even approve of others who do them. (Romans 1:27,32)

My version of the Bible, which is left over from my Catholic school days, is the "Catholic Study Edition." Immediately, I sensed a contradiction with the recent letter by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, which stresses that parents need to love and support their gay children. I felt that the wording of the passage was quite harsh, and I can understand how someone can read this and judge that God despises gay people.

Then I received a pamphlet which I picked up last year, titled "Catholicism, Homosexuality, and Dignity: Questions and Answers." The pamphlet is authored by Daniel A. Helminick for Dignity/USA, an organization for gay Catholics. In it, he addresses several seemingly hateful Biblical passages, including the one from Romans:

Romans 1:27 mentions men having relations with men. But the terms used to describe them are "dishonorable" and "shameless." These refer deliberately to social disapproval, not to ethical condemnation. Moreover, according to Paul's usage, the prevalent Stoic philosophy of the day, para physin ("unnatural") would best be translated "atyypical" or "beyond the ordinary." So it bears no reference to natural law. And it can be interpreted as a definition because in Romans 11:24 God is said to act para physin. Paul sees gay sex as an impurity (see Rm. 1:24), just like circumcision or eating forbidden foods. He mentions it to make the main point of his letter, that purely requirements of the Jewish Law are not relevant in Christ Jesus.

Many other Biblical passages have already been universally discounted as losses through translation, or as historical or cultural traditions. Particularly, the Book of Leviticus states that menstruating women and women who have recently given birth to children are "unclean." Why are these passages so easily dismissed, while others are viewed as God's absolute law? One comforting teaching which I've received through my Catholic education is that the Bible is a book of faith, and should not be interpreted as a book of facts or as literal. But even within the Catholic community, many people overlook this instruction when it comes to homosexuality.

Additionally, some organizations take these Bible passages further than personal guidelines, and use them to promote their own agendas. One such organization is the American Family Association, directed by Donald Wildmon. Last summer, I happened to come across a letter from this organization. It was the quote on the envelope which got my attention:

"If this episode helps some child in the Midwest with their sexual identification, we've done our job." — DAVE SAVEL, Executive Producer of the Disney/ABC program "Ellen"

The envelope contained a four-page letter, warning Americans about the "agenda" of homosexual "today's dominant thinking in the entertainment industry—specifically the television industry—is to foist homosexuality and lesbianism onto the American public and, in fact, go AFTER OUR CHILDREN!" Like many other religious organizations, AFA has experienced a recent drop in membership and monetary contributions. Apparently, they think that if they can lead people to believe that gay people are abnormal and that children should be gay, and that their organization can stop it, they will get more members and more donations.

It's quite ironic that the AFA, as well as Penn's "Cult," claim that gay people are the ones doing the recruiting. That's quite odd—I've never seen flyers or received letters in my mailbox suggesting that my life would be much more fulfilling should I choose to be gay. However, many people misinterpret this B-GAL supplement and the chalk messages on Locust Walk as being methods of recruiting. These tools are simply ways of reaching out to those who may be struggling with their orientation issues, and to let them know that they are not alone. (Gay youth are three times more likely to commit suicide.) They are also meant to educate others, and celebrate being honest and open in the face of adversity and hatred. (But that could be an entirely separate article.)

What lesson is to be learned from this experience? Religion can sometimes be a dangerous thing. I'm certainly not anti-religion; I still value many of the teachings I've received through the Catholic Church. However, I also recognize that some religious interpretations do not apply to real life, and result in actions which go against "Love your neighbor." Personally, I feel that everyone needs to determine for themselves what they believe in, and follow this personal faith, not organizational influences. To quote a T-Shirt: Hate not a Family Value. Organizations, as well as individuals, need to recognize that gay people are not "shameful" sinners who "deserve death." I praise those churches and religious organizations who already recognize being gay as something rooted in God's creation, not an abomination against Him. Yet many others still need to accept this. I find it quite ironic that our society is not allowed to discriminate against religious beliefs—a personal choice—yet very few laws protect gay people, who never chose to be gay, but nonetheless accepted the way God created them.
LOVE IN CYBERSPACE

by: Kurt Klinger

“So, where did you meet your boyfriend, Kurt?”

After a brief moment of nervous laughter, I reply, “On the Internet.”

Yes, I am currently dating someone whom I met on the Internet. Not only did I meet him on the Internet, but I also met my two ex-boyfriends on the Internet as well. Admittedly, it is a bit strange to actually admit this to people when they inquire about it. However, it is certainly not surprising to see how much of the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community is online today. The Internet has become quite a home for homosexual and bisexual people. Where the ‘common’ person logs onto the Internet to chat with friends or surf the net, a gay person logs on in hopes of much more. He looks for someone with whom to talk about what he is going through—someone with whom to share and get advice. He looks for others similar to or just like him so that he knows he is not the only one dealing with the kinds of feelings he has. When he feels he cannot tell his parents, brothers, sisters, friends, or anyone, he logs onto the Internet and finds someone with whom he can talk.

This is what I went through when I first explored the homosexual feelings I was experiencing. Up until that point, I knew I had these ‘abnormal’ feelings that I thought were wrong, but I believed I had no place to go, so I simply ignored them. Then one day I began exploring on America Online. As I became increasingly brave and adventure-some, I managed to stumble upon some of the homosexual resources online. I found the “PhillyM4M” chat room and the gay and lesbian message boards, and thus discovered a whole new world on the Internet. I found a world in which I could explore who I was and talk to other people about their experiences, while being presented only as a screen name and whatever it was I chose to tell about myself. I was simply a collection of letters, numbers, and spaces on a screen, and no one really knew any more than that.

I began posting on the message boards and talking in the chat rooms, and, slowly but surely, I became familiar with a number of people. I received a few e-mails regarding my posts, and some people would often follow up our chat room conversations with a message. I talked to these people—one my age, some younger, some older—and I realized that they were all feeling the things that I was. I realized that this must really be who I am. And I found people rather close to me geographically. So, I took the next logical step. I met some of them. I was not always selective when it came to the people I met, but I managed to never get myself into a dangerous situation. Whether that was due to smarts or just dumb luck, I am not sure. But I met these people, and I hung out with them, and I talked to them, and I discovered a new side of myself. Suddenly, I started to feel much more complete than I ever did before. Parts of me that I had never seen before emerged and developed. I was so much more comfortable with myself. I realize that, though my experiences of interacting with people on the Internet were never dangerous, the potential was certainly always there. The more I think about it, the more I realize that it was probably a lot more luck than smarts that prevented something terrible from happening to me. I know that the dangers of the Internet can be great, but I also realize what a fantastic resource it is, and it frustrates me to no end when I see people who are afraid of it, think it is evil, or simply do not understand it. Looking back, I can easily say that the Internet was an integral part in my coming-out process. Without it, who knows where I would be today?

At the writing of this article, I have been with my boyfriend for almost three months, and it is certainly no stretch to say that these have been the happiest three months of my life. The things he and I share are absolutely magical, and I would not trade what I have with him for anything in the world. And to think that it resulted from two people being online in the same chat room at the same time...

Special Thanks To

Eight on Bar

Drexel's all-male a-capella group for their support of B-GLAD '98

Check out their website at:
http://httpsrv.ocs.drexel.edu/org/dsodt

upcoming events

The following events are free and open to the public. If you have any questions, please call Chris — 215-575-1110 x104.

Wednesday, March 18

Twentysomethings
7 - 9pm
Washington West
1201 Locust Street

A great way to meet other twentysomethings men and discuss the issues that are on your mind. Call Chris at 215-575-1110, x104 for more information.

Wednesday, March 18

Hot, Horny, and Healthy
Gay Men's Health Workshop
6:30 - 9:30pm
AIDS Information Network
1211 Chestnut Street, 7th Floor

Learn how to protect yourself and your partner from STDs, and learn how to discuss safer sex and your health with partners and friends. A great way to meet other gay and bisexual men. Free, fun and NOT your usual night out.

Thursday, March 19

SafeGuards' RoundUp
6 - 9pm
AIDS Information Network
1211 Chestnut Street, 7th Floor

Join other SafeGuards volunteers as we plan our upcoming health programs, stuff condom packs, design advertisements, and prepare research. A great way to meet other folks in the community! Call 215-575-1110 x104 to sign up.

Saturday, March 28

SafeGuards' Night Out
10pm
Washington West
1201 Locust Street

Join us as we distribute health packs and information on the streets. A great way to make a difference in our communities.

check us out on the web:
http://www.critpath.org/safegd2.htm
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133 S. 13th Street
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- t

Pierogies. She orders Pierogies. She told me she loved me, and that our honesty is the most important thing. She accepted that I wouldn't have the white billowing gown of my sister. She misses my boyfriend, but respects my feelings. It was a lie, every time we spoke: I lied. I mean, that's what you do when you don't tell someone something. She deserved to know that I did find love, more pure and intense than anything I've ever dreamed of. The type of love that inspires artists. Honesty, right?

She gets more tea, squeezes the lemon till its dry. I've been buttering the same roll for five minutes. And not knowing how, I told her there was something she needed to know. I like women too. And I cried, I so wanted to be strong. I heard the dink of metal and hard plastic as her fork fell. Mom, did you hear me? She heard me. Its amazing to see a living being turn to stone. She fought back tears, but like the fork, they fell. She claims to have known, but prayed it wasn't true. She doesn't care that I have these feelings, but how dare an intelligent girl like myself act upon them. She asks me to sleep with my ex-boyfriend. As if pretending to love someone is better than really loving.

And I try to tell, to explain, but it's so hard to speak - and she won't hear. It's funny what you notice - there was a crack in the pepper shaker and just a smidgen of dried tomato sauce on the salt shaker's base. And all I saw was that red spot. If I looked up, just blank tears. Hollow eyes. She doesn't want to hear about this amazing girl - no, woman - who I met, who has woken me up and showed me how wonderful life can be, who my eyes I get lost in. She doesn't want to hear. But I want her to know. I want her to know everything. Words are said, cruel words, the kind that get under your skin and itch at you. But when I speak, there is no sound, because she hears nothing.

And my coffee is cold, I drink it anyhow, eyes fixated on the dark circle that lies within. I'm not her daughter, I'm not her child. How can't I be? She gave me life, nursed me, loved me up until this moment, and would still love me if I could erase this moment. She has been my best friend; I, her confidante. She taught me strength and courage, and truth in one's convictions. Now, she wants me to forget all this. She heard me cry twenty years ago, she wiped away the tears. She refuses to see them, to see me. She refuses to hear.

But I will not erase this moment. If I could, I would not. And maybe she'll change. Maybe she won't. I will not deny who I am, and will not give up the happiness I finally found. I want her back. The check comes. She'll meet me in the car. I may be dead to her, but I've only begun to live.

The G Word

My 'girlfriend,'
as my relatives refer to her
has a name.
At birth her parents summoned the help of baby books,
parenting magazines, their friends and Dr. Spock
and decided to name her after
a much endeared relative.
After three years
and many family events
I had hoped that they would steer their way
through the alphabet and find her initial.
Tired; they stopped at the letter 'G.'
When our wedding announcement runs will they stop at 'F'.
"My niece and her 'friend,' are getting 'married'!!"
My niece and her 'friend'
'My niece and her fiancé.'
"Her fiancé, well she's a woman,
They say they love one another and
are very happy together.'
A radical leap of faith
and they could find themselves
at the letter 'W.'
'My niece and her wife.'
Putting to use a longer stretch of the alphabet.
by Carol-Anne Villanova

POETRY

I could have spent a quiet evening at home, or gone partying with the rest of Penn's weekend revelers. Yet I am here, again, in a local gay bar. I'm not sure why I often end up here on weekends, but I'm sure that I'll come back here again, and again.

Nursing the beer in my hand, I'm suddenly grateful for the assurance this beer bottle gives me. I wonder what I'd do with my hands if I didn't have this prop. I remind myself to occasionally smile and nod politely as people around me exchange the latest gay gossip.

People parade by, some with that telltale gay walk that somehow makes their chests look bigger and their stomachs trimmer, some radiating that oft-rehearsed I-don't-give-a-shit attitude. It'd probably make an interesting topic for a paper, but I'm pretty sure people here aren't interested in writing papers. Neither am I.

Occasionally my eyes meet those of another. I indulge myself with plenty of excuses to quickly look away. I wonder if any of these people wouldn't shrivel away in bright daylight. I despise the very setting that I find weekly refuge in; the obviousness of this irony is becoming unbearable. The blend of cigarette smoke and colognes is making me a little queasy. I am almost relieved when the bartender announces last call: that's usually my cue to go home.

I leave the bar, alone, tasting that familiar faint bitterness in my mouth. How strange, I can no longer tell whether that bitterness comes from shame, or regret.

-Anonymous

I feel as if my eyes are open
Able to see that which remained hidden
As if a wall was removed from my brow
Allowing me to glimpse the forbidden

Now I see the beauty you possess
In your body, mind, and in your spirit
I can help you relieve all of your stress
My love is all yours, please do not fear it

Embrace these feelings that I share with you
My friend, "Come live with me and be my love"
All that is mine I freely give to you
My love surpasses God's Above

Happiness can be ours for all of time
Because these emotions are so sublime

-Michael Rogan
Sandy Beach

continued from page 19

Anyone who wants longevity in this business must perform live. You have to learn to sing, dance, and talk. Putting on a dress is one illusion, but another is keeping the audience entertained. I can't do live every week, however. I write all my own material, and a comedy routine takes time to write.

Is this your career?

Well I get paid very well for what I do, so if I don't like a club, I won't do it. I always scope out a club before I do it. If an agent calls tomorrow with an acting part, I'll work something out. If it's in Philly, I could logistically still work at the clubs. If I could do both, it would be perfect. Acting would come first, but to me Sandy is itself an acting job. Having been in the business a long time and getting a name you can really make a nice living. I wouldn't say it's a great living, but Kenny Kerr makes a wonderful living at it. In Philadelphia the whole drag genre is coming back, and by doing your own voice you have a real advantage.

Any thoughts on retiring?

Sandy has already retired once, in 85, to do benefits when the AIDS crisis reared its very ugly head. Then I created the first Drag Wars, the War between the States, and the Miss America Pageant. I never dropped Sandy completely, but also never went back to being a female impersonator until last year.

Is Thursday night at the 12th Air your main staple?

Yes. Starting April 15, the Sandy Beach 20th Anniversary tour hits the road. It'll hit Delaware, Atlantic City, etc.

What do you think of the opinions of drag in mainstream?

I prefer the term "male actress" over drag queen, for "the only thing royal about me is my mother." What do you want people to know about being a male actress [drag queen]?

It looks very easy to people, but it's probably one of the hardest livings. The shoes alone - the male and female balance are completely different. To keep legovity in the business, you must be well read, watch CNN religiously, and you have to stay on top of current events. I have a lot of young fans now because of keeping up to date. You have to stay on top of music to know what's out there. You have to keep your act fresh.

If you could do it all over again, would you?

(long pause) Very good question. Yes, but I would do it in a size 8!

Are there differences between your beginning performances and performances of today?

Shows today are a lot more serious, but the kids working now are basically doing what I did when I started: getting shot, getting into cat fights, and performing in old vaudeville acts. People still eat it up. I can't do the bits I used to do because I'm older now. Those kids who have a sense of humor are going to be in for the long run, but those who are only glamourous are in for a rude awakening.

Do you have any advice for upcoming performers?

Yeah, find a good podiatrist, a good chiropractor, and occasionally a good shrink.

Anything you'd like to add?

I feel that the 3 dragas [Ian, BJ, and Bengie] are some of the most level headed that I've worked with. I love them dearly and they call me their mother. I do give them ideas on numbers. When you have some idea of talent, share it. I've worked with a lot of selfish people over the years. [said with disdain] Give the upstarts some knowledge; try to help them. I'm not afraid of being upstaged. I need that competition in life. I'm having a ball helping these kids and teaching them the tricks of the trade. When these kids get older, I hope they also pass on the experiences.

Numb Hands

from a nervous wring
numb heart numb eyes have i
restless nights i lye awake
as real just passes by

I found solace inside you
then this distance is my hell
I came to look imagining all is well

I wonder:
will the stars still wreath around me
will the moon still have that gaze
will the sun still rise with healing warmth
to lighten up my days?

Never knew there was a world outside of my head
and my better half says lets go see
but then i get all cynical thinking without you
the world wont welcome me!

And when i face you, those stark expressions
only add to mounting rejections
my, how i try to close you out
but in detail i still see you pale and cold
with a fixed stare

and

I pretend not to remerber the curve
of your lips
the arch of your back
that stupid grin...

So now its nights wide awake-
but still dreaming
my mind is like a sieve
the memories are draining-
slow as tree sap

Ode To Mother

Chicken Noodle Soup for a red throat and a running nose
Brought with a heartfelt welcome to traveled roads side by side.
The conversation almost never ends and at those moments we share a comfortable silence exchanging energy through lipless communication.

Friends and Family—
Friends are Family—
It's unconditional
Driving through Hickville with an upside-down triangle on her windshield illuminating the colors of diversity
Illustrating love and unity even if the man behind us is a bigot.
Spreading herself thin with grace, dignity, intellect, and respect.
The cup is always half full and We'll share the wine—
Melanie Boley

B-GLAD RALLY
Wednesday, March 25
12:30-1:30 PM, College Green
Let your voice be heard!

THE ONLY ONE

by Clay Colwell

What did it feel like to be "the only one"?

The big one is isolating. It wasn't something to talk about, that's for sure, because it apparently hooked into being a "fag" or "homo" or "pansy," and you sure didn't want to be one of them, even when you really had little idea of what a "fag" or "homo" or "pansy" ever did. So you couldn't ask. You found out all you wanted to know by Clay Colwell
ABOUT THE WILLIAM WAY COMMUNITY CENTER

The William Way Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center is a multi-purpose, multi-service organization serving the sexual and gender minority community of greater Philadelphia. The Community Center is housed in a four-storey 26,000 square foot building in the heart of Center City's Washington Square West neighborhood at 1315 Spruce Street, just east of Broad. It is easily accessible by all forms of public transportation.

The Community Center was formed in 1996, when leaders in the community came together with the goal of creating greater cooperation within the community and providing for the long-term growth and stability of the Community Center. The William Way Community Center succeeds other community center efforts in our community, including Penguin Place. In early 1997, the Community Center purchased the former Engineers Club of Philadelphia. Prior to this, the Community Center had been awarded a $300,000 grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to purchase and renovate a building in which to house the Community Center. Renovations began in mid-1997. The bulk of the renovations are expected to be completed by the end of the year. Long-range renovations, including such amenities as an elevator, kitchen and a roof deck, will occur over the next three to five years.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY CENTER OFFERS

The Community Center provides a variety of social, educational, support and cultural services. Programs of the Community Center include:

- Gay and Lesbian Counseling Services, a supervised peer counseling program which provides free over-the-phone or in-person counseling
- Support Groups, including Sisters Healing Together and a newly-forming coming out support group for women
- Library and Reading Room, with a collection of over 8,000 pieces
- Archives, documenting the history of our local community
- Team Philadelphia, our area’s representative group to the international Gay Games

The William Way Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center is the home of nine independent organizations, each of whom rent office space in the building. The Community Center also serves as the meeting place for over 30 community groups and hosts several special events each month.

USING THE COMMUNITY CENTER

The Community Center is open to everyone, and we encourage everyone to take part. Most Community Center services are offered free of charge. The Community Center is open from Noon to 10pm, Monday through Friday, 10am to 5pm on Saturdays, and 10:30am to 8:30pm on Sundays.

VOLUNTEERING

How does a staff of only four people do it all? With the help of a growing and dedicated group of volunteers, Volunteering is an enriching, rewarding and fun way to participate and contribute to the community. Volunteer Orientations are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm.

CONTACTING THE COMMUNITY CENTER

To find out more about the Community Center, to volunteer or to be added to the mailing list, call (215) 732-2220. The Community Center can also be reached via email at waygay@iamproud.com and will soon have its website up and running. The Community Center’s web address is www.iamproud.com/waygaycenter.
Out and Proud
continued from page 18

dreds of CDs. Who would go through all the effort to break into the room and leave homophobic pictures on my desk without stealing anything? Why not just slip the pictures under my desk without stealing anything?

After Dylan left, Senthil and I talked more. He suggested that maybe Dylan was going through things and when he found the papers in my drawer he had a "freak" reaction. He had probably never dealt with someone who he knew was gay before and flipped out. The pictures that were left on my desk could have been his initial response and now Dylan rejected it and was trying to cover up.

There was no definite proof and it was premature to make any accusations, but deep in my heart I felt uncomfortable. I'm sure Dylan felt too. It's awkward to talk to him about things that concern us both.

This is who I was and these were the problems I would have to face, if not now, then later in my life.

As I was being taken back to my room it became obvious that people in my suite had heard something about what had happened. I could hear them talking, and feel their fear as I followed me. I was scared. Very scared. Once again I felt alone. But I promised myself I would not run, needed to go straight ahead and deal with this thing.

This was a new world and the problems I would have to face, if not now, then later in my life.

I couldn't move. I was frozen by anxiety. I thought I was being watched by everyone, and that they could see me entering my room.

They yelled at me for being so stupid and for listening to what everyone else is telling me. His voice was so angry.

"They told me that there are only two ways of dealing with homosexuals-you can be friendly, or even sometimes gay. And you yourself must be gay. If you are not gay, the only thing to do with gay people is to bash them."

I couldn't move. I was frozen by his words. His voice got louder and he looked directly at me.

"They asked me how I can sleep in this room knowing that there is a fag next to me.

And suddenly he was quiet again.

Almost apologetically, he said, "They want me out of the room immediately."

I guess Dylan's parents weren't too familiar with the room changing policy of Residential Living at Penn which indicated that Dylan would have to wait until October 16, the published lottery date, to qualify for a room change; after all, this wasn't a dire emergency. Dylan's parents were furious. There was no way in hell their son was going to "sleep in that room knowing that there was a fag next to him..." They promptly put a call into the Assistant Dean of the dorm, Steve Feld. He told them he would look into the situation, but that they were going to have to wait through Residential Living.

So they called the Vice Provost, who also directed the LGB Center and then went to talk to Steve Feld. Steve told me that he had spoken with Dylan's parents. He supported Residential Living's decision to deny the room change.

Steve had also spoken with Dylan and said that Dylan seemed okay with everything. He asked me if I was feeling okay about the whole thing. I replied.

"Three weeks ago no one could have told me that I'd be here today and even if they could, I wouldn't have believed it. It was my worst nightmare. But I am here, and I plan on staying. I want to be strong, but I was tired, and I just couldn't get a good night's sleep in the past two weeks. I just kept telling myself that it would all be over soon, that I could get on with my life.

When they took Dylan back to my room the next evening, I found the following note on my bed:

Dan-

I really bad writing this but I don't know what else to do.

Yesterday I lied to you and Steve Feld. I was just so relieved to find out that I was O.K. to live with gay people, and I didn't say anything about my sexuality (every straight person does it at one time or another) and I realized that I could never be actually attracted to a man, no matter what I could feel sometimes, it was just good looking but not loving (I mistook this as being weird). Because of this relief, I didn't feel anything bad for the first few hours. I wasn't sure I would ever be like you. But then the uncomfortableness and unbearableeness set back in last night. But I still knew I was unattracted to any man. So I searched and searched (painfully I thought I was lying to myself but wasn't) and came up with the answer.

Even though I knew I'm perfectly straight, what my dad convinced me of is true, in my eyes, and no one will convince me otherwise. I may be prejudiced in your eyes, but not in mine. No one will change this...

Dylan:"

I decided that this is where it would all end. I could no longer tolerate her. I helped Dylan to get over that and move on with my life.

"What do you want to do?" he asked.

"I haven't slept in two weeks. It's the beginning of my first semester here and already my grades are suffering. I want my life back.

I didn't want to have to deal with my roommate or his parents anyway, and I didn't have to.

"But I'm not moving out of that room," I added. "This is their problem, not mine."

I will go ahead and arrange temporary housing for Dylan until something more definite can be decided.

Two days later Dylan's parents drove down from Massachusetts and took Dylan home "just to get away for a few days." One week later his parents returned to PENN, without Dylan, and moved his stuff out of our room. Dylan had withdrawn on a "medical leave." I didn't know what to feel. I was glad that they were away from me and my roommate or his parents any longer. I couldn't stand to be around Dylan, too. He had become a victim of homophobia.

I was full of unanswered questions that frighten me. I would now know? Would they treat me the same way? Would I have to deal with more homophobic attacks? I was full of unanswered questions that frightened me, but still hoped that everything would end quickly and without any more trouble.

My hopes held true at first. For a week Dylan seemed to be fine, becoming much more comfortable around me. We even went in town together for dinner one evening.

But Dylan had done it again, and was able to come back to the room knowing that there was a fag around me. We even went in town together for dinner one evening.
The many activities and events associated with B-GLAD'98 would not be possible without the cooperative efforts of a great many people. The planning committee would like to thank each of these individuals and organizations for lending their support to our efforts. The fact that this has grown substantially in recent years is evidence that we are building bridges between communities and are helping to create an environment where each individual is respected, valued, and feels safe expressing themselves and celebrating the joy of life.

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MEN SUCK!

by: Michael Hammer

MEN SUCK! MEN ARE SCUM! ALL THE GOOD ONES ARE STRAIGHT! I MIGHT AS WELL BE TOO!

Do you ever wonder how it is that a gay man can find himself tolerating his attraction to other gay men? One of the most common activities that I have come to realize, which occurs between groups of gay men, is the typical bitching and male-bashing that goes on. We all get bitter about ex-boyfriends, old lovers, missed opportunities, and what do we do? We sit around and eat Ben and Jerry’s and smoke cigarettes and bitch about how the world sux and how there are no good men out there.

But do we ever take a step back from things and realize that we are, in essence, the scum that we claim to disdain? I don’t think so. Not even close. He cheats and he’s a bastard. Never call again. He cheats and it’s totally okay with us, cause we understand that he did it for all the right reasons. We lie and we cry about never being able to trust him again. We lie cause we’re “protecting” him. He needs his space (meaning dumps us). We take a few days to watch depressing movies and eat pounds of chocolate and smoke too much and cry our hearts out. But when the time comes for us to end a relationship, we need to move on and do what is good for us. So I’ve kinda come to realize that I, in fact we all, suck. Men are scum. We are men. Doesn’t this mean that we are scum?