

PHOENIX RESOURCE • VOLUME 7 NUMBER 18 • AUGUST 30 - SEPTEMBER 13



**guys in  
dresses  
in flames**

**readers  
in revolt**

**tim miller in  
sex/love stories**

# DIRECTORY

## AIDS REFERRAL

**AGAPE Network**  
PO Box 15826  
Phoenix 85060

**AIDS Information Line**  
234-2752

**Arizona AIDS Project**  
919 N 1st St  
Phoenix 85004  
420-9396

**CAMPA/MALTA**  
297 E Monterey  
Phoenix 85012  
230-1881

**Community AIDS Council**  
PO Box 32903  
Phoenix 85064  
265-2437

**Community Care Center**  
333 E Virginia #117  
Phoenix 85004  
340-1111

**Flagstaff AIDS Outreach**  
PO Box 183  
Flagstaff 86002  
525-1199

**Gay Men's Sex Project**  
c/o CAC  
265-AIDS

**The Names Project**  
PO Box 82111  
Phoenix 85071

**Phoenix Shanti Group**  
1314 E McDowell  
Phoenix 85006  
271-0008

**Planned Parenthood**  
5651 N 7th St  
Phoenix 85014  
George: 277-PLAN

**Sedona AIDS Group**  
c/o Flagstaff AIDS Outreach  
525-1199

**Valley of the Sun Coalition for PWAs**  
PO Box 16847  
Phoenix 85011

**Veterans Administration**  
HIV Coordinator & Educator: Lee Hood  
277-5551 ext 7182

**Volunteers in Direct Aid**  
PO Box 5689  
Phoenix 85011  
938-3932

## ORGANIZATIONS

**Adult Children of Alcoholics**  
963-0984

**Alanon**  
6829 N 21st Ave  
Phoenix 85015  
249-1257

**Alcoholics Anonymous**  
Gay Group Listings  
4602 N 7th St  
Phoenix 85014  
264-1341

**American Gay Atheists**  
Phoenix Chapter  
3003 N Central Ave  
Ste 121 Box 211  
Phoenix 85012  
264-7432

**EAGLE (US West)**  
PO Box 36702  
Phoenix 85067  
351-5463

**Feminist and Lesbian Activist Coalition**  
967-2570

**Gay Alliance of Northern Arizona**  
PO Box 183  
Flagstaff 86002  
525-1199

**Gay and Lesbian Discussion Group**  
870-9597

**Gay and Lesbian Seniors**  
241-1604

**Lesbian and Gay Academic Union**  
Arizona State University  
Tempe 85287  
968-3703

**Lesbian and Gay Community Switchboard**  
234-2752

**Lesbian/Gay Public Awareness Project**  
PO Box 60881  
Phoenix 85082  
994-2100

**Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays**  
PO Box 37525  
Phoenix 85064  
949-9152  
AIDS Related:  
939-7807

**Phoenix Gay Youth Group**  
PO Box 1075  
Mesa 85211  
897-8989

**Phoenix Pride Planning Committee**  
631-0350

**Relationship Discussion Group**  
870-9597

**The Women's Center**  
PO Box 26031  
Tempe 85282  
275-9148  
924-2358

## SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

**Arizona Power Exchange**  
5821 N. 67th Ave  
Ste 103-276  
Glendale 85301  
848-8737

**Arizona Rangers**  
PO Box 13074  
Phoenix 85002

**Arizona Wranglers**  
c/o Cash Inn  
244-9943

**Copperstate Leathermen**  
PO Box 44051  
Phoenix 85064

**Couples of Arizona**  
PO Box 7144  
Phoenix 85011  
631-0657

**Desert Adventures**  
PO Box 2008  
Phoenix 85001  
957-3476

**Desert Valley Squares**  
PO Box 34615  
Phoenix 85067  
968-7184

**Hedonistic Hardcore Hikers**  
PO Box 9751  
Phoenix 85068

**Lesbian Breakfast Club**  
278-1869

**Los Amigos Del Sol**  
PO Box 27335  
Phoenix 85061  
843-1329

**Our Gang Bowling League**  
PO Box 62971  
Phoenix 85082  
468-0334

**Southwest Men at Large**  
PO Box 25951  
Tempe 85285

**Town and Country Social Club**  
849-4544

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

**Arizona Gay Rodeo Association**  
PO Box 16363  
Phoenix 85011  
938-3932

**Camelback Business and Professional Association**  
PO Box 2097  
Phoenix 85001  
266-7202

**Desert Overture**  
PO Box 16454  
Phoenix 85011  
997-4373

**Professional Women's Network**  
PO Box 2970  
Apache Junction  
85217

**Team Arizona**  
PO Box 5950  
Phoenix 85010  
968-4375

**Valley Career Women**  
PO Box 33393  
Phoenix 85067  
242-8906

## POLITICAL ACTION

**AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power**  
PO Box 13274  
Phoenix 85002  
433-4966

**Arizonans for Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights**  
956-6284

**Arizona Committee For Progress**  
PO Box 40374  
Phoenix 85067

**Coalition For Immediate Action**  
PO Box 33233  
Phoenix 85067  
246-8277

**Arizona Democratic Party**  
254-4179

**Arizona Republican Party**  
957-7770

## ARTSPACE

**Alwun House**  
1204 E Roosevelt  
Phoenix 85004  
253-7887

## ATTORNEYS

**Powell and Russo**  
15648 N 35th Ave  
Suite C-112  
Phoenix 85023  
843-5993

**Roger Rea**  
3601 N 7th Ave  
Suite B  
Phoenix 85014  
248-7921

## TRAVEL

**Firsttravel**  
5150 N 7th St  
Phoenix 85014  
266-0566

**Leonard's Travel**  
Lewis Pizer  
820 E Indian Schl  
Phoenix 85014  
274-2893

## ACCOUNTING

**CamelWest Income Tax Service**  
PO Box 11194  
Phoenix 85061  
841-5414

## REALTY

**Blue Ribbon Realty**  
David Atkins  
7330 N. 16th St. A120  
Phoenix 85020  
263-9696  
266-0479

**Blue Ribbon Realty**  
Mario Romero  
7330 N. 16th St. A120  
Phoenix 85020  
263-9696  
252-4191

**Century 21**  
Richard Larsen  
8910 N Central  
Phoenix 85020  
943-7252

## LIVING SPACE

**Gay Roommate Service**  
938-3932

**Royal Villa Apartments**  
1102 E Turney  
Phoenix 85014  
266-6883

**Westways Bed and Bath**  
PO Box 41624  
Phoenix 85080  
582-3868

## TYPESETTING

**Etienne Type Shop**  
PO Box 17298  
Phoenix 85011  
788-5442

## WORD PROCESSING

**Diversified Data Designs**  
PO Box 33233  
Phoenix 85067  
246-8277

## MASSAGE

**Larry Gwinn**  
Metro Phoenix  
971-5009

**Massage Connection**  
456 W Main  
Tempe 85201  
833-7207

## HAIR STYLING

**Eric Bustamante**  
Top of the Mark  
7001 E Main St  
Scottsdale 85251  
945-7008

**Rare Bears Barber Styling**  
6215 N Central  
Phoenix 85014  
274-4570

**The Tivoli**  
6166 N Scottsdale  
Scottsdale 85253  
991-6999

## FLORISTS

**Arcadia Flowers**  
4835 E Indian Schl  
Phoenix 85008  
840-3750

**Briarwood Floral Design**  
6202 N 7th St  
Phoenix 85014  
264-2922

## BOOKSHOPS

**Humanspace Books**  
1617 N 32nd St  
Phoenix 85008  
220-4419

**Changing Hands Bookstore**  
414 S Mill  
Tempe 85281

## FRAMING

**The Framing Center**  
2701 N 24th St  
Phoenix 85006  
957-0877

**Premiere Frame and Picture Gallery**  
1441 N 27th Ln  
Phoenix 85009  
484-0565

## RETAIL

**EuroMarket**  
5017 N Central  
Phoenix 85012  
252-EURO

**Parr of Arizona Custom Swimwear**  
4532 N 7th St  
Phoenix 85014  
230-2133

**Tuff Stuff Leather**  
1714 E McDowell  
Phoenix 85006  
254-9651

## SPIRITUAL ORGANIZATIONS

### Churches

**Casa de Cristo**  
1029 E Turney  
Phoenix 85014  
265-2831

**First Unitarian Universalist**  
4027 E Lincoln  
Paradise Valley 85253  
840-8400

**Gentle Shepherd**  
3425 E Mountain  
Phoenix 85046  
996-7644

**Healing Waters Ministries**  
5555 E Van Buren  
Ste A-10  
Phoenix 85008  
244-1577

**Oasis MCC**  
2405 E Coronado  
Phoenix 85008  
275-3534

**Restoration Church of Jesus Christ**  
1-800-677-RCJC

## Social Groups

**Affirmation**  
Gay Mormons  
PO Box 26601  
Tempe 85285  
396-6950

**Brethren Mennonites Council**  
PO Box 5613  
Glendale 85312

**Dignity/Integrity**  
Episcopal and Roman Catholics  
PO Box 21091  
Phoenix 85036  
258-2556

**Lutherans Concerned**  
PO Box 7519  
Phoenix 85011  
870-3611

**Mishpachah Am**  
Jewish Congregation  
PO Box 39127  
Phoenix 85069  
584-0127

**Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gays**  
275-0506

## New Age Worship

**Goddess Womyn's Network**  
PO Box 17312  
Phoenix 85011  
258-2388

**House of the Dawn**  
2141 E Palm Ln  
Phoenix 85008  
267-1203

**Mecca Center**  
424 E Colter  
Phoenix 85012

**Moon Goddess Coven**  
PO Box 48918  
Phoenix 85075

## BARS

### Mixed

**Cash Inn**  
2120 E McDowell  
244-9943

**Club 5th Avenue**  
6830 5th Ave  
Scottsdale  
946-4188

**Foster's**  
4343 N 7th Ave  
263-8313

**G.B.'s Rendezvous**  
4132 E McDowell  
275-3509

**JC's Fun One**  
5542 N 43rd Ave  
939-0528

**Little Jim's 307**  
222 E Roosevelt  
252-0001

**Marlys'**  
15615 N Cave Crk  
867-2463

**Preston's**  
4102 E Thomas Rd  
224-5778

**Wink's**  
5707 N 7th St  
265-9002

## Women

**Incognito**  
2424 E Thomas  
955-9805

**Nasty Habits**  
3108 E McDowell  
267-8707

**Talk of the Town**  
4301 N 7th Ave  
248-0065

## Men

**Bobby's**  
1810 E McDowell  
258-9477

**BS West**  
7125 5th Ave  
Scottsdale  
945-9028

**Cattleman's Exchange**  
138 W Camelback  
266-0875

**Charlie's**  
727 W Camelback  
265-0224

**Cruisin' Central**  
1011 N Central  
253-3376

**Durango's**  
1517 S Black Canyon Hwy  
271-9011

**Phaz**  
155 W. Camelback  
Phoenix 85013  
274-8505

## Levi/Leather

**Apollo's**  
5749 N 7th St  
277-9373

**Bum Steer**  
4620 N 7th Ave  
279-3033

**Nutowne**  
5002 E Van Buren  
267-9959

**Trax**  
1724 E McDowell  
254-0231

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editor-in-chief  
Robt L. Pela

copy editor  
Lou Clemente

art direction  
Edith Phillips

typesetting  
Margaret DeLorca

production assistance  
Bj Bud

photography editor  
David Parker

national news editor  
Hardie Albright

culture club  
Réy Hoffman

local news reporting  
Chuck Hadd, Jr.

**writers**

Michael Botkin  
Wendy Caster  
Lou Clemente  
Neil Cohen  
Dave Gilden  
Kirby Holt  
Lee Lynch  
Perry Shurtz  
Don Slutes  
Ellen M. Young  
Yvonne Zipter  
Jeffrey Zurlinden

circulation director  
Patricia Simon

national advertising  
Joe DiSabato

regional advertising  
Kevin Ray

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I don't think I'd look so hot in a dress. My legs are lunky and my hips are meager and I'm certain I'd accessorize improperly.

I don't routinely consider wearing women's clothing. Really. But recent viewings of the drag documentary *Paris is Burning* and a dinner theater performance by my pal Neil Cohen (he appeared in a black evening gown and looked stunning) have led me to pondering frocks.

The drag thing has always sort of baffled me. I like evening gowns and big floppy picture hats and I try to work the word "pumps" into every conversation. But I guess I equate men

dressing up as women with gay people pretending they're not. You're either a guy or you're not; you're either queer or you're not. Or maybe I'm oversimplifying.

No. I do not think gay men shouldn't dress as women. And I do not think there is anything questionable about drag. I do not fear my own femininity. I do not hate drag queens. Rather, I am concerned about the perception of non-gay people who equate *drag* with *gay*. When, as a teenager, I told my sister that I am queer, she said, "Does that mean you'd rather be a woman?" Straight people think this way. Unfortunately, *Paris is Burning* goes a long way toward supporting the premise that all of us wear skirts.

The film presents Harlem drag balls as gay male revelry, without clarifying their special appeal to a faction of our

culture. I don't trust non-gay audiences to make that distinction for themselves, and the film maker does not make it for them. (In fact, the film ends with the words, "This *is* gay life, isn't it?" spoken by a thirteen-year-old boy who clearly has not experienced any other variation on homosexual culture.)

I fear that unenlightened hets who see this film won't witness our disparate culture. The sexy dude who accompanied me to a screening of *Paris* thinks I don't give straight folks enough credit. I dunno. The two nice middle-aged housewives who sat next to me at Neil's play never caught on that he was a man in a dress. Even after the show, as they posed for Polaroids with him, they were certain they were visiting with a glamorous stage actress.

I suppose, in a sense, they were.

—Pela

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On the cover: The cast of Jennie Livingston's *Paris is Burning*, a documentary on voguing and the drag balls of Harlem. The film is now playing at the Camelview Cinema in Scottsdale. See related stories, pages 8 and 9.

catching AIDS from your doctor is  
a near impossibility, but try telling that  
to the hysteria mongers

# Nursing Fear

**d**r. Acer's  
patients  
didn't  
contract AIDS just  
because he himself  
was infected. They  
were exposed because  
this Florida dentist  
apparently had  
incredibly lax sanitary  
practices.

With as many as  
five AIDS cases traced  
to his office, Acer's  
story has become  
nationally notorious.  
AIDS hysteria-  
mongers across the

country (notably Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C.) are using this catastrophe (and public relations nightmare) to force the entire medical profession to adopt draconian measures regarding all health care workers.

Yes, it seems outrageous to argue that patients should *not* be informed of their doctors' HIV status—outrageous, that is, unless you consider the simple fact that HIV is extremely difficult to transmit. Even in dentistry or surgery—where work routinely involves sharp implements, soft tissue, and body cavities—common sanitary and safety precautions should safeguard against bodily fluid contact. And most other doctors don't come anywhere close to mingling their bodily fluids with their patients'.

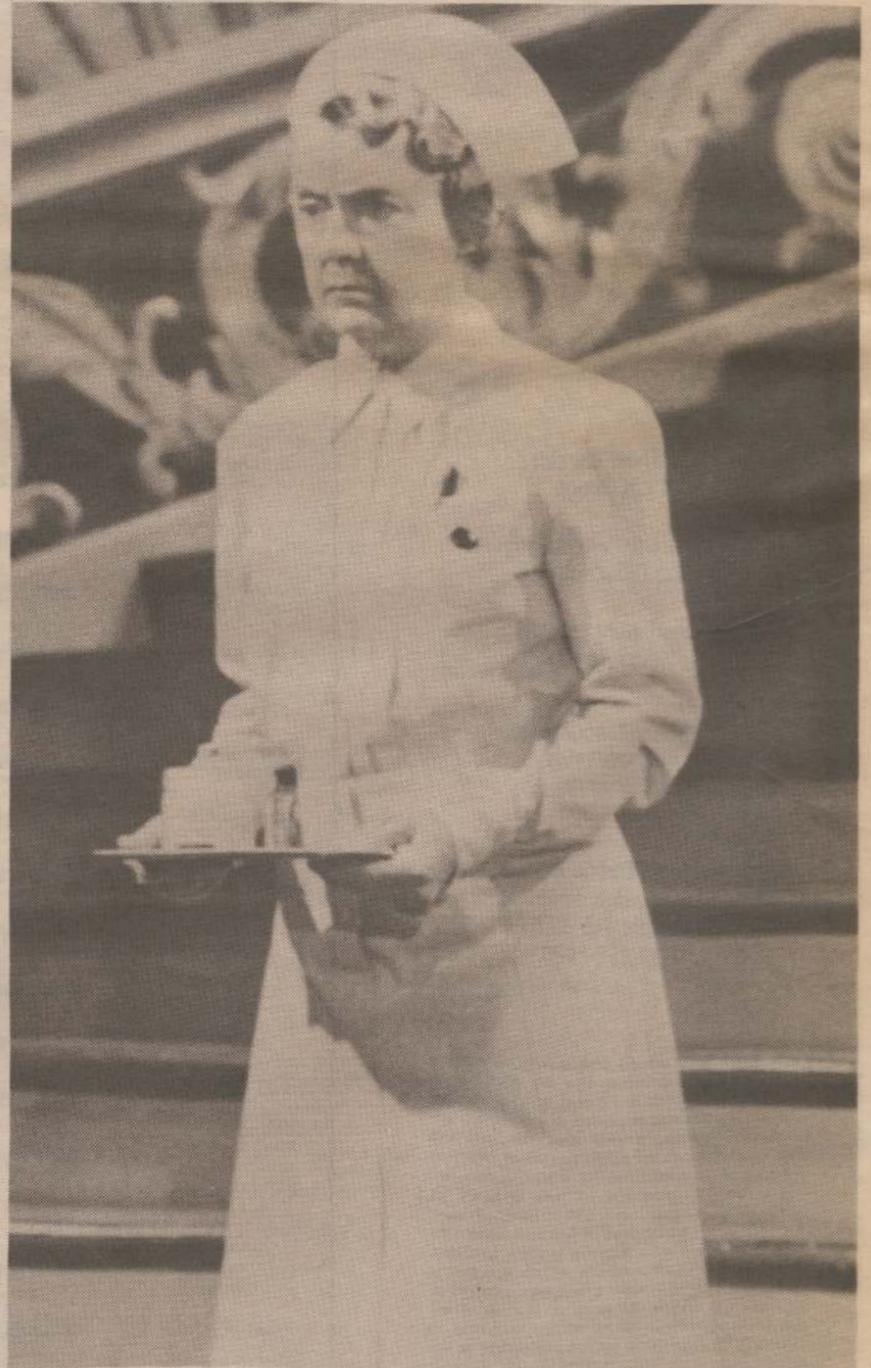
Further information about Dr. Acer reveals that his case is not typical. For some reason—laziness? incompetence?—he failed to observe even basic guidelines regarding the sterilization of implements and the re-use of disposable items. It's unfair and dishonest to penalize the entire medical community because of Dr. Acer's unique irresponsibility. But this is AIDS we're talking about; hysteria and demagoguery are an established part of the program.

The public's skittishness about AIDS explains in part the recent 81-18 vote by the U.S. Senate (on an amendment proposed by Helms) that prescribed a ten-year jail term for any doctor who is HIV-positive and who

fails to disclose it before performing surgery.

Earlier this year the Centers for Disease Control studied the risk of doctor-to-patient HIV transmission. (This study, of course, was entirely theoretical because,

besides Dr. Acer, there are no known cases of doctor-to-patient transmission.) They estimate that the risk of transmission of HIV from a surgeon to a patient was between 1-in-41,000 and 1-in-416,000; the risk of



don slutes

transmission from a dentist to a patient was between 1-in-263,000 and 1-in-2.6 million. As a comparison, the CDC estimates that the risk of contracting Hepatitis B from an infected surgeon is 100 times greater than the risk of contracting AIDS. The CDC also estimates that as many as 85 people since 1981 may have died from being exposed to their surgeon's Hepatitis B, while guessing that possibly no more than 28 have died from HIV exposure during the same period. (By the way, the risk of dying from the anaesthesia during an operation is 4 to 40 times greater than catching AIDS from the surgeon, according to the CDC.) As political commentator Michael Kinsley wrote in a recent article in *The New Republic* magazine, "If you're really interested in cutting back on 1-in-41,000 risks (to take the CDC study's high number for the risk of catching AIDS from a surgeon), you're going to have to spend your whole life at it."

The Senate vote is an example of how the mania for full HIV disclosure within the medical profession creates bad public policy. It disregards the facts about AIDS, while necessitating HIV-testing of all medical personnel, a flagrant violation of privacy rights. Furthermore, HIV tests are expensive and, because health care workers wouldn't likely pay for their tests out of their own pockets, a universal testing policy would undoubtedly drive up everyone's medical costs. Testing every health care worker just once would cost millions; and to be effective, the test would have to be repeated on a regular basis, say every few months.

Once again, hysteria fails us as a basis for public policy. But we can't blame our elected officials—the onus for overcoming AIDS phobia properly belongs with each individual. Until we become immune to the terror and start focusing on the facts, we can expect the current reactionary approach to continue, and for many of the real issues surrounding the AIDS epidemic to be ignored.

## Beware of Geeks Bearing Petitions

Hysteria of a different sort is taking hold in Arizona. A group of citizens going by the wholesome-sounding name "Kids First" (remember, Anita Bryant called her anti-gay crusade "Save Our Children") has launched a petition drive to put the recently passed AID Education measure to a public vote.

The new law requires all school districts to provide instruction on AIDS in every grade. Each district is given the authority to develop its own curriculum within statutory guidelines, which say that information be medically accurate, that instruction "promotes abstinence," and that homosexuality is not portrayed in a positive light. Despite these concessions to conservative sensibilities, Kids First has still found room for discontent. The group objects primarily to younger children being taught about AIDS, even though the law instructs that the curricula be "grade sensitive," which would seem to preclude having kindergartners being taught about safe sex.

The AIDS Education bill was controversial during its inception; it didn't make it last year, when it was first proposed. This year, it just barely passed the Arizona Legislature; in signing it, Gov. Symington performed one of the few courageous acts of his early tenure.

In Arizona, these reactionary petition drives have a nasty way of scuttling worthwhile legislation (e.g., the Martin Luther King holiday). People sign the petitions "because it gives us the ability to decide the issue," then ignorant voters cast out controversial legislation. It's hard to imagine that the AIDS Education law would survive a public vote.

If you come across one of the Kids First petitions, don't sign it. The citizens of this state clearly are not qualified to decide this issue.

*Editor's Note: In Phoenix Resource: The Gossip Issue (August 16), we portrayed that meddling pastime as pointless and unsafe. We believed that, while played broadly, our point could still be well made. Perhaps we were mistaken.*

## Little Pitchers

Your "Gossip Issue" brought (*Phoenix Resource*) to an all-time low. (That issue) says, "If you can't say something nice about someone, lie!" I say, "You guys have nothing to lose but your brains."

Doug DeCross  
Phoenix

I enjoyed reading ("The Gossip Issue") but didn't understand all the disclaimers. If you didn't think people who would read this article would understand it, then you shouldn't have printed it.

Lee Ricker  
Phoenix

We're writing to say that we loved the "Gossip Issue" and we hope you plan to do more of this kind of kinky stuff. Face it, nobody cares about the news or the latest trends in AIDS research. Girls just wanna have fun.

Loren Bryant  
Dominic Pinsanti  
Bradley Ness  
Elaine Keller  
Leslie Petty  
Phoenix

Thank you for printing "Lipstick on my Butt" by David Parker. I roared with laughter. I think he should have a regular (column) in your paper.

M.L. Anderson  
Phoenix

I don't understand how Randy Gorbette can afford to buy crystal chandeliers for his house when Phoenix Shanti is supposedly a non-profit organization.

Name Withheld  
Phoenix

*It is, and he can't. Actually, Randy lives in a tar-paper shack on the edge of town. He eats out of dumpsters. He wears paper sacks.*

—Ed.

("The Gossip Issue") was a terrible blow to our community

and the last thing we needed. Why can't you people just report the good news?

Beth Stoller  
Phoenix

*Because then we would be The Echo.*

—Ed.

I'm writing in response to Robt Pela's response to a letter to the editor which appeared in last issue. (The letter) posed a threat to lesbians and gays in the traditional manner of heterosexual bigotry, and supported that threat with Christian "wisdom" and Bible quotes.

But the real danger was in Pela's response, which typified gay male responses by mentioning a sexual act. This sort of support of what straights think they know about us will get us into a heap of trouble in the long run. Next time, keep your sexual creativity to yourself.

Marian K. Campbell  
Scottsdale

*No problem. I'm so mean, no one wants to fuck me anyway.*

—Ed.

## With Special Guest Don Slutes

I enjoy the commentary and flash of your newspaper. I like its cutting edge. I like its clean look. But make no mistake: *Phoenix Resource* is nothing more than the Robt Pela Show.

Tom Beatty  
Phoenix

*You take that back!*

—Ed.

## Oops!

Last issue, we misspelled David Van Virden's name. We were only speculating about Ed Buck's collection of Petula Clark records. And when we referred to Martha Jones as an "old cow," we were merely quoting a source at the Arizona AIDS Project, where Martha is employed. We like Martha and find nothing particularly bovine about her. Sorry about the confusion.

*Send commentary and letters to the editor to: Phoenix Resource Letters, Post Office Box 5948, Phoenix, Arizona 85010. Please no pipe bombs or marriage proposals.*



# sex love life

tim miller:  
the tiger beat interview

Performance artist Tim Miller is dogged by his reputation as one of the now-famous "NEA Four," a quartet of performance artists whose National Endowment for the Arts grants were revoked last year by NEA chairman John Frohnmayer. Despite such formidable opposition, Miller continues his work with "Sex/Love/Stories," a performance piece which he likens to "having sex with the Twentieth Century."

## Your work is highly sexed up.

In the last six years, my work has been about queer stuff and the cultural response to the AIDS crisis. I've lost friends, boyfriends. There's an emotional and political terrain to that, but there's also something undeniably sexual when you're talking about queers and AIDS.

## What influences your work?

Allen Ginsberg's work. Broadway musicals. Dostoevski. American Model Guild photos.

## How does your work affect the world?

I go to about forty cities per year, where I am sometimes the only loud obnoxious queer for miles. I mean, places like Kansas, some gay performance artist comes in and talks about AIDS and pulls his pants down, there's going to be focused attention on gay issues as long as I'm there. Not that I want to be a role model for anyone living in those places...

## Is the NEA back-peddling, with its financial backing of films like *Paris is Burning* and *Poison*?

*Paris is Burning* is old—it was completed two years ago, so the NEA endorsement of that came before they dumped on me and the others. But (artist) Holly Hughes and I both reapplied for NEA grants and we were both approved, so that's a good sign. Frohnmayer must be obsessing about something other than queers.

Frohnmayer came and saw me perform in Atlanta. I didn't know he was there, happily. I did a piece about his unsuccessful search for a spine transplant.

## In "Sex/Love/Stories," you say that your first boyfriend was a prostitute on Hollywood Boulevard and that your first job was selling wristwatches at May Co.

Both perilously true. The other day I walked by the place where that whole buttfuck scene in "Sex Love Stories" took place. It's gone now. It's all condos.

## If you found yourself alone on an elevator with George Bush, what would you say to him?

I'd probably be yelling at him to get my penis out of his mouth. He is always following me around the country when I'm out on tour, passing me little notes that say, "Meet me in the washroom..."

## You do a bit about how hard it is to find an apartment in New York City.

It's impossible to find *anything* in New York City.

## Is that the ultimate challenge?

No. AIDS is. It's the ultimate thing I deal with in my life. It's the main organizer of my universe, as an artist and as a human being.

## Who will play you in the movie version of your life?

Some proto-starlet in Des Moines who's just gotten his first pubic hair. I mean, he's going to need this long to figure out how to portray me.

## If I were a television sitcom witch and could turn you into the most beautiful woman in the world, but you had to wear the same ugly dress for the rest of your life, would you go for it?

I have to look deep, deep inside myself for the answer to that.

## Ask me a question.

Why would anyone want to publish a gay magazine in Arizona?

Interview by R. Pela  
Photography by Chuck Stallard

Tim Miller will present *Sex/Love/Stories* on September 14 at Kerr Cultural Center in Scottsdale. See the "Culture Club" listing on page 11 for more information.

# Legend Mother

Pepper Labeija is a drag queen. After forty-some odd years of walking Harlem's drag balls, he has seen his work chronicled in Jennie Livingston's just-released documentary on the New York drag scene, *Paris is Burning*. He is nonplussed.



I was raised very conservative, very Catholic. I went to Catholic school. My fascination with women came from the nuns. Most people are shocked to hear that. I idolized my first grade teacher. Sister Mary Eileen. I knew she was a redhead because she had red eyebrows. There was just something really glamorous about all those nuns, something very clean. That long black gown with a long black veil and those rosary beads hanging down. The Sisters of Holy Christ had some bad habits.

#### Nuns?

At first. Later on, it was actresses. Jayne Mansfield, Marilyn, always Liz Taylor. Diana Dors. Then it was models: Maude Adams, Naomi Simms. Finally, I was obsessed with Las Vegas showgirls.

#### By then you were a legendary mother.

But in the early Seventies, there were no houses. Back then it was just drag shows. And the audiences were mostly straight. They wanted to see *drag queens* back then. Feather boas, bugle beads, eye makeup, eye makeup, eye makeup! Nowadays, with the balls and the houses, it's all different. Now everyone's doing drag, only they don't necessarily look like women.

#### What does it mean to be the Legendary Mother of the House of Labeija?

It's like a college fraternity. I try to give the children advice. Everyone wants to be in my house. They all want to be associated with me. It's like a club or a social status. I have reigned the longest. I have the most trophies. I have been walking balls since 1964. I am the only legendary mother who lives as a man.

**The house children in *Paris is Burning* appear preoccupied with fame, yet it doesn't seem likely that they'll ever really achieve it.**

You'd be surprised. One of the kids from my house is a top fashion model. He works

as a girl. Willie Ninja of the House of Ninja was in Malcolm McLaren's "Deep in Vogue" video and Madonna's "Vogue" video. Madonna got all those kids in her video from the drag balls.

**Jennie Livingston says that the drag balls are "full of optimism and spirit." But I saw a lot of sadness in the film.**

You look at the balls, you see life. Life is sad. The movie is about the balls, the balls are about competition. There is competition in life.

#### What does *Paris is Burning* bring to lesbian and gay culture?

Enlightenment, I hope. Most people are ignorant to different facets of the gay lifestyle—gay people included. They're afraid. The movie shows gay people and straights that there is this different thing, this Harlem drag culture thing, and it's not so scary.

#### What will the film do for you?

I'm hoping it will open doors for me. Like Danny Aiello. You know who he is? He got a small role in a picture and it catapulted him to stardom. I want that too. I want to be an actor.

**If I were a television sitcom witch and could turn you into the most beautiful woman in the world, but you had to wear the same ugly dress for the rest of your life, would you go for it?**

Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I have never wanted to *be* a woman. I like the *look* women give. That's what I'm after. That's what attracted me to dressing like a woman. I wanted to look glamorous, and that's what I went for. After I realized I couldn't be no nun.

**Interview by R. Pela.  
Photography by Michael Comte.**

# To Be Real

## Reflections on Paris is Burning

by  
Wendy Caster

**P**ity the poor film maker whose work recognizes, however slightly, racial ethnicity and/or homosexuality. First, she or he must struggle for

years to make the film—all the while not knowing what sort of distribution it will get, if any. And if the film *does* get made and finds its audience, then comes the criticism of the right, the left, gay men and lesbians, and people of color. Their main complaint? The film maker didn't make the film *they* wanted to see.

Jennie Livingston spent five years making *Paris is Burning*, a documentary about the voguing balls in Harlem and the gay men of color who frequent them. The movie is a straightforward documentary in which everyone speaks for himself (women are almost nonexistent in this movie); no narration is used. It is as objective as a film can be, considering that every cut must show some slight point of view. As much as possible, Livingston simply shares what she has seen.

Which is why so many people are pissed off at her.

Some people complain that Livingston, a white woman, should not have made a film about men of color. Others complain that Livingston doesn't examine *why* many African-American and Latino voguers feel that they are not acceptable as they are and that they have to dress up as women in order to be okay.

Meanwhile, a far-right religious group complains that the film sympathetically depicts people who are living sordid, depraved, and evil lives and should not have received any funding from the National Endowment for the Arts; that group has organized a boycott of the movie.

And what does the gay audience think of the film? The night I saw it, at a Gay Youth Alliance benefit, the audience was 80 percent gay male, with a small but solid percentage of men of color. The men hooted and hollered and seemed deliberately to ignore the sadness of the film. Although the voguers are proud and funny and sometimes quite supportive of one another, they are also horribly oppressed men with little opportunity who have internalized the message that they are not good enough as they are. It is clear that many will die young. Interestingly, most of the gay men in the audience didn't seem to consider this. I saw them responding only to the humor in the film.

Would *Paris is Burning* be a better movie if, instead of Livingston, an African-

American man had made it? Perhaps. But Livingston earned the right to make the film by struggling for five years to get the money and staff to keep the project going. And the voguers clearly trusted her enough to talk to her.

I'm undecided whether *Paris* would have been a better film if Livingston had explored the pressures that led these men to think that being gay and of color was the wrong thing to be. This exploration would have been fascinating, but it also would have negated the men in the movie. Livingston presents them as individuals rather than as trends, and she

respected their lives enough to show them *as they are*. Those of us interested in trends and theories can explore them on our own.

I wonder, too, if Livingston shouldn't have editorialized that the voguers were disgusting and evil, as the far right would have it? It's interesting that the far right's ideas so clearly mirror the far left's: *Don't just tell a story, tell the story we want to hear!*

All speculation aside, it is important that *Paris is Burning* got made. As time passes and the furor dies down, this film will exist as a testament to a sad, brave, downtrodden, proud people.

## What She Said...

Tape this to the fridge. Hurry.

**Ball:** A type of fashion show originating in Harlem, where minority men and women compete for trophies in a variety of categories.

**Butch Queen, First Time in Drags at a Ball:** The one cross-over category between **Butch Queen** and **Femme Queen**; younger **ball-walkers** who dress in women's clothes for the first time, primarily for fun; as opposed to **Real Femme Queens** for whom wearing a dress is no joke.

**Category:** The divisions of competition at a **ball**; categories for both **Butch Queens** and **Femme Queens** include: Sportswear, Eveningwear, Schoolboy/Schoolgirl Realness, Executive Realness and Military Realness; other categories include Muscular Body (**Butch Queens** only) Luscious Body and Model-type Body (**Femme Queens** only) Best Dressed Butch (for masculine lesbians) and Best Dressed Woman (for feminine women, gay or straight).

**House:** An organization of **ball-walkers**, a gay street gang. **Houses** can be named after a designer, as in **House of Chanel**; after a **House** founder or **Mother**, as in **House of Labelija**; or simply for impact, as in **House of Ninja**. **Houses** provide support for the **ball-walkers** in preparing for competition, and serve as surrogate families for younger members who are orphaned or rejected by their families.

**Legendary:** Noteworthy in the ball

world, winner of many trophies, as "The **Legendary** Dorian Corey" or "Pepper Labelija, **Legendary** Mother of the House of Labelija."

**Mother:** A leader, often founder of a **House**, either **Butch** or **Femme Queens**. **Mothers** must be very talented, popular, hard-working and wise and compassionate. A **Mother** acts as a surrogate parent to her **Children** both in and out of competition.

**Reading:** The act of verbally abusing, criticizing and humiliating a competitor or rival in a witty and stylish manner; having a "reading session."

**Realness:** In **ball** categories, the ability to pass as something you are not, as in poor for rich, male for female, gay for straight. In life, **Realness** can be a matter of survival, as passing for straight to avoid homophobic violence.

**Shade:** Verbal abuse, criticism and humiliation of a competitor or rival in vicious, direct terms; the verb is "throwing shade."

**Voguing:** A **ball** category in which dancers recreate the poses of models, integrating acrobatic moves and complex expressive gestures. Named for the magazine.

**Walk:** In **ball** terminology, to compete, as to "walk a ball." **Walking the balls** is to **House Children** what street fighting is to gangs.

## art smart

**Eleven East Ashland Gallery:** "3 Artists, 3 Films, 3 Bands" features artists E.G. Boone, John Herman and Jeff Klein, along with Nick Jedd's latest film. Through September 8. 11 E. Ashland (one block south of Virginia), 271-0831 and 253-0480.

**Crismon Farm and Heritage Museum:** Operated by the Mesa Historical and Archaeological Society. Now showing are oil paintings depicting the history of Mesa, including Hohokam Indians, Roosevelt Dam, agriculture and commercial development by Bud Olson. 2345 N. Horne (at Lehi Street). 835-7358 or 834-0931.

**Scottsdale Center for the Arts:** "Larry Rivers: Public and Private," a retrospective of 40 years of the New York artist's work, which includes elements of pop and abstract expressionism, through October 13. Through September 22, paintings that explore religious myths and symbols by Henry Leo Schoebel, assistant professor of painting and drawing at Arizona State University. 7383 Scottsdale Rd. 994-ARTS

**Alwun House:** "Carnivale," an exhibit featuring high-spirited works in a variety of media (monoprints/painted wood sculpture/acrylic on canvas) by John Nelson, through September 8. September 12-October 6: "They're All Different: A Body of Figurative Work" (Human Form); featuring Arizona artists Roald Gundersen, Michael Rider, Matthew Smith, and Ken

Storch. The artists will be on hand for the September 12 opening celebration, an evening of music, song, poetry and performance. \$3. September 14, 8pm. 1204 E. Roosevelt. 253-7887

**Art Walks:** Through September, most of the galleries along Scottsdale's Marshall Way—Main Street, Craftsman Court, Stetson Drive and environs—are open for "Thursday Night Live" art walks from 7pm to 9pm on the third Thursday of each month. Music, dining, browsing, show openings and refreshments are on the agenda. More information by calling 948-1591.

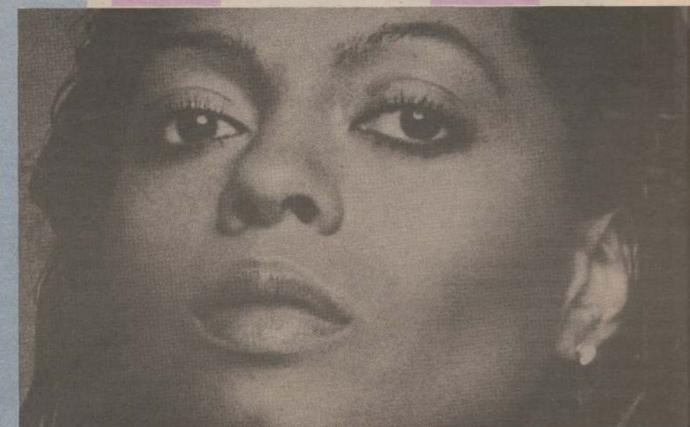
**Metropophobia:** This unusual new book, magazine and audio store currently features a showing of small-scale works in various media by eight local artists. Hours: 5pm to 10pm Wednesday through Friday, Noon to 10pm Saturday and Sunday. 128 E. Taylor. 255-0668

## center stage

**Murder by Proxy:** The excesses of an audience-participation-murder mystery-dinner-theater pageant are not enough for actor/playwright Neil Cohen. His bewigged appearance as a wicked dame (an eerie amalgamation of Tim Curry, Joan Collins, and Dame Sybil Thorndike) rescues this opulent opus from the crush of an overworked genre. Featuring splendid turns by Molly Kellogg (the most beautiful woman in Arizona) and Elaine Boothby as a demon-possessed strumpet. Tickets are \$32.50, which includes a four-course dinner

along with the play. Thursdays through Saturdays at 7:30pm, Sundays at 5:15pm. Ramada Valley Ho Resort, 6850 E. Main in Scottsdale. 423-8737

**Guv, The Musical:** Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8pm, Sundays at 7pm, through September 15. Mill Avenue Theatre, 520 S. Mill Ave., Tempe. \$12 for Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays; \$14



**The Boss is back:** Miss Thing will make her semi-annual Phoenix appearance in one show at the Celebrity Theatre on September 28.

Fridays and Saturdays. 921-7777.

**You Can't Take It With You:** Ethington Theatre Series dusts off this George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart comedy wherein high society takes it on the chin when a young man introduces his wealthy, snobbish parents to their in-laws-to-be: A family of wacky free spirits who cheerfully insist on being themselves. August 30 through September 1 and September 6 and 7. 3300 W. Camelback. 589-2871

**Veronica's Room:** Theater Works presents Ira Levin's popular work, August 30-September 8. Susan Kerner, a young Boston college student, is enticed to the Brabissant mansion by the Mackeys, a charming, elderly Irish couple who are struck by Susan's resemblance to Veronica Brabissant, long-dead daughter of the family for whom they work. Inside Veronica's room, kept intact and untouched by time, they convince Susan to impersonate Veronica for a little while to solace the only living Brabissant, her dying sister who is living in the past and convinced that Veronica is alive and angry with her. But once dressed in Veronica's clothes, Susan finds herself locked in the role and locked in Veronica's room. Or is she Veronica, in 1935, pretending to be an imaginary Susan? Thursday-Saturday 8pm, Sunday 2:30 and 7pm. Tickets \$8, \$9. 6615 W. Thunderbird Road. 486-8636

## appearance

**Tim Miller:** Famed "NEA Four" performance artist Miller will present his ever-changing "Sex Love Stories," documenting our relationship with AIDS, sex, romance, and finding an apartment in New York City. One performance at Kerr Cultural Center, September 14 8pm. Miller will appear afterwards at an after-hours

reception at Alwun House, 1204 E. Roosevelt, from 11pm-2am. \$5 at the door (free with performance ticket stub). Miller's performance will benefit the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power. Tickets are \$10, available at Dillard's.

**Alix Dobkin:** A thunderbolt in feminist circles since the Seventies, Dobkin transcends the usual performer-artist boundary with music, wit and political satire. Saturday, October 5, 8pm at Science of Mind Center, 2838 N. 7th St. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$13 at the door and are available at Changing Hands Bookstore, Humanspace Books, Arcadia Bookstore in Flagstaff, Antigone Books in Tucson or by calling CB Productions at 438-1157. For more information, call 234-3009.

**Peter, Paul and Mary:** From the front lines of the civil rights movement to today's social issues, this trio's commitment is as strong as ever. Their musical legacy includes such songs as "If I Had a Hammer" and "Blowin' in the Wind" and current songs including "El Salvador" and "No Easy Walk to Freedom." Gammage Auditorium at 8pm Thursday, September 12. \$21 (\$22 day of show). 965-3434

**Clint Black with Merle Haggard and Lorrie Morgan:** Veterans' Memorial Coliseum, Friday, September 27, 7:30pm.

**Psychedelic Shack:** "Getting Back to Acid House Basics," a dance party. Saturday,

September 14, 10pm at Sub-Cultural Arts Center, 130 N. Central Ave. 252-0607

**Fugazi:** with Beats the Hell out of Me and Horace Pinker. Monday, September 9, 6:30pm. Silver Dollar Club, 417 E. Madison. 258-0667

**Rigor Mortis:** with Lurch Killz, H8 Inc. and Inferno. Monday, September 9, 9pm. Desparados, 534 W. Broadway. 894-6423

**Santana:** September 2, 7:30pm. \$19. Mesa Amphitheater.

**Moody Blues:** September 7, 7:30pm. \$24, \$17.50. Desert Sky Pavilion.

**KUKQ Q-Fest:** With House of Freaks, Chapterhouse, Book of Love, the Mighty Lemon Drops, Hoodoo Gurus, Dramarama, Dread Zeppelin, the Candy Skins, Pere Ubu, Richard Thompson, Crowded House, the Wonder Stuff and the Meat Puppets. September 13 and 14, 7:30pm, \$9. Compton Terrace. 678-2222

**Bebe and Cece Winans:** September 27, 8pm. \$18.50. Celebrity Theater.

**Diana Ross:** September 28, 7pm. \$30. Celebrity Theater.

**Van Halen:** With Alice in Chains. Desert Sky Pavilion, Sunday, September 8, 7:30pm.

## toe shoes

**Tap Dance:** Former Hollywood instructor Michael McBain, who's taught terpsichorean prowess to Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas and Farrah Fawcett, currently teaches tap classes for all ages on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Phase Four Studios, Tempe's multimedia complex at 1700 West Drake, Suite 1. For details: 345-8377.

**West African Dance and Drumming:** "Uncle C.K." Ganyo, master drummer and former director of the National Folkloric Company of the Arts Council of Ghana, instructs classes in West African Percussion, song and dance from 7pm to 9pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Fee is \$5 per class or \$25 per month; all ages and skill levels are welcome. For details and location, call 253-5920.

**Ballet Folklorico:** Mexico's largest dance company, Ballet Folklorico de Mexico will perform meditative dances derived from vanished Indian traditions. September 18, 7:30pm. Desert Sky Pavilion, 2121 N. 83rd Ave. Tickets are \$35, \$20, and \$15. 230-9112

**Stars of the Bolshoi:** The dancers of the Bolshoi Ballet return to Arizona for one performance. September 27, 8pm. Chandler Center for the

Arts, 250 N. Arizona Ave. Tickets are priced at \$75, \$50, \$25; \$50 for benefit reception. 381-0184.

**Cynthia Gregory and Balletmet:** See this prima ballerina and company when they perform their dynamic repertoire September 28 at 8pm and September 29 at 2pm and 7pm. Theater at the Scottsdale Mall, \$22 evening, \$29 matinee. 994-ARTS

**Open Dance/Aerobics:** Performance artist Michelle Cote will instruct classes on Mondays and Wednesdays 5:30-7pm at the Sub-Cultural Art Center, 130 N. Central Ave. \$25 per month or \$3 per class. 252-0607

**Dance-a-rama:** Voted "Best Underground Scene" and "Best Dance Club" by *New Times*. Underground videos and ambient art on alternating Fridays; Post-Acid House music, European Ambient Music like what's hip in England's "Ambiance Houses." Mutha Gaia and Calvin Martin take you on a musical journey beginning at 8pm.

## other stuff

**MDMA:** A Night of Ecstasy: A dance party not to be missed, featuring mix masters Mr. Happy and Imbruglio. Party all night long beginning at 9pm. Loud music and lots of bare flesh. August 31, Sub-Cultural Art Center, 130 N. Central Ave. 252-0607

**Seventh Arizona Womyn's Music Festival:** Emcee Slique Callahan will present artists including Jess Hawk-Oakenstar, Mary Trevor, Moonshadow, The Melanie Morrison Band, Martie Van Der Voort, Rita Buglass, Pallas Athene, Kaweah, Kathleen Williamson, Diana Gard and many others. Open mike on Sunday 10am to 1pm. Tickets \$35 in advance and \$45 at the gate. A sliding scale/work exchange is available for low-income womyn only. No women will be turned away for lack of funds. September 20, 21 and 22 at the Lavender Patch in Snowflake, Arizona. If you wish to sell crafts, present a workshop, or participate in open mike, contact Dianne Post at 258-7985. For more info contact CB Productions at 438-1157.

**A.M.U.S.E.:** Billed as "A Magically Unfolding Spontaneous Entertainment," this night of comedy is presented by The Improvisational Theatre Society Saturday evenings 8-11pm at the Adobe Oven Gourmet Bakery and Coffee House, 5520 N. 7th Ave. (Missouri and 7th Ave.), \$5 admission. 242-2808

## big screen

**Paris is Burning:** Jenny Livingston's documentary offers the final word on the New York City drag ball scene. Exclusive engagement at Camelview Cinema. See related stories, pp. 8 and 9.

**Married To It:** All about the marital problems of three New York City couples: Rich (Ron Silver and Cybill Shepherd), Real (Beau Bridges and Stockard Channing), and Repressed (Robert Sean Leonard and Mary Stuart Masterson). Could be fun to laugh at the similarities to our relationships; on the other hand, it could be scary.

**Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare:** Director Rachel Talalay promises that this sixth outing for deep-fried Freddy, everybody's dreamboat, will be the last. Sweet dreams.

**Company Business:** Gene Hackman (he's CIA) and Mikhail Baryshnikov (he's KGB) are two over-the-hill agents who put aside their differences when they find themselves on the run together.

**The Butcher's Wife:** Clairvoyant Demi Moore moves to Greenwich Village to be with her new husband—and the neighborhood will never be the same. Co-starring Jeff Daniels.

**Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man:** Two bikers in the year 1996 are fighting to keep a Fifties rock & roll club open. Stars Mickey Rourke, Don Johnson.

**The Fisher King:** Total turn-on Jeff Bridges plays a total turn-off radio shock jock who goes too far and quits his job. Out on the streets, he meets visionary Robin Williams and moves on to a whole other wavelength. Directed by Terry Gilliam.

**Dead Again:** Fast-forwarding a couple of centuries from the days of Henry V, Kenneth Branagh does his star/director thing in modern-day L.A. and gets to wear pants instead of tights. Here he's a jaded private investigator hired to uncover the identity of a mysterious woman (played by his real-life wife, Emma Thompson). Providing local color are Derek Jacobi & Andy Garcia.

**Double Impact:** Jean-Claude Van Damme plays identically tough twin brothers who take on the Chinese mafia in order to avenge the murder of their parents and reclaim their stolen inheritance. Van Damme co-wrote the screenplay. Say "ugh."

**The Doctor:** A surgeon (William Hurt) who has it all—looks, brains, loving wife, great car—gets cancer and learns what it means to be a patient.

by réy hoffman

# CLUB

## some people

Jon Hassell  
Molly Kellogg  
J. Edgar Hoover  
Ramona the Pest  
Dennis Hopper  
Patty Lane  
Kim Moody  
Joyce Maughan  
Larry Gwinn  
Blanche Hudson  
St. Jude  
Wayne Newton  
Daphne Budge  
Zorro  
Bob Mackey  
Pauline Kael  
Stephen Baldwin  
Lady Elaine Fairchild  
Ron Reagan, Jr.  
BeBe Daniels  
Cass Little  
Levi Helm  
Darius Barney  
Walt Disney  
Maximilien de Robespierre  
Andy Brown  
Larry Burrell  
Steve Wilson  
Jane Rule  
The Michelin Man  
Vicki Lawrence  
Minna Mendelson  
Carolyn Warner  
Wendy and Lisa  
Diane Murphy  
Sharon Kowalski  
Ron Gant  
Bonnie Franklin  
Midge Costanza  
Wes Farrell  
Edith Sitwell  
Roger Ramjet  
Elvis

## some calamities

L.A. Law is pre-empted.  
"Chuy" Higuera is free. seepage.  
Judy Carne's career. "Sharing Weekend." Terminator sequels. The Supreme Court. You're out of endive. No more Communism. Miriam Hopkins is dead. He won't diddle you. Jane.



Paris is Burning, a documentary on voguing and the drag balls of Harlem, is now playing at Camelview Cinema in Scottsdale.

# ACT-UP Protests Dentist's "AIDS Free" Ads

## Blurbs "Play on People's Fears," Activists Claim

AIDS activists and a dentist in Atlanta, Ga. have clashed over advertising that claims the dentist's employees are free of the virus that causes the deadly disease.

E. Douglas Henson, owner of Metro Dental, is running television ads that say all those working at his offices have tested negative for the HIV virus.

Members of ACT UP—The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power—and other groups demonstrated in front of one of Henson's offices last week after an unsuccessful attempt to persuade him to drop or change the ads.

Henson said the spots are intended to give clients peace of mind in the wake of national concern over the case of Kimberly Bergalis, who along with four others was apparently infected with the HIV virus by a Florida dentist.

Activists said the ads spread misinformation about AIDS and play upon hysteria about the disease.

"(The ad) says that we agree with the American Medical Association and the American Dental Association that it's virtually impossible to contract AIDS through dental treatment," Henson said in a telephone interview.

"But when our patients expressed concern about the issue, we decided as a group that we would be tested, and we did," Henson said.

"We feel he is playing on people's fears. Testing will not protect anyone,"

said Jeff Graham, an ACT-UP member who participated in the demonstration.

"People can be lulled into a false sense of security," Graham said. "There is a window period of six weeks to several months during which someone might have the virus and be able to transmit it, but isn't yet producing the antibodies that you can test for."

Henson met August 9 with representatives of such groups as the Gay/Lesbian Association Against Defamation and the National Association of People With AIDS. Henson came away from the meeting saying he was threatened with demonstrations at his doorstep if he didn't pull his ads or alter them to include precautions dentists can take to prevent transmission of the virus to patients.

Activists said Henson threatened to run his spots longer than originally planned and get his wife, State Rep. Michele Henson, to introduce legislation calling for mandatory HIV testing of health care workers and patients.

"The bottom line is they don't like any kind of testing or people who advocate it," Henson said.

"Mandatory testing will just become a witch hunt," Graham said. "People will be running scared."

## Court Rejects Suit by Family of Boy Blessed by Pope

SAN FRANCISCO—The family of a boy who died at age 7 of AIDS contracted from blood transfusions can't sue the blood bank or hospital, the state Supreme Court has ruled.

Brendan O'Rourke, who won attention when Pope John Paul II blessed him at a San Francisco AIDS ward in 1987, died in August 1990.

Brendan's family sued the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank, a San Francisco-based blood bank, a hospital and two doctors. But a jury found no negligence in the transfusions, and a state appeals court later upheld that decision, saying the evidence showed the blood bank followed standards of practice that were accepted and proper at the time of the 1982 and 1983 transfusions.

The state Supreme Court voted late last month not to review the appeals decision.

Brendan's father, John O'Rourke, said he told a doctor at Children's Hospital that he was concerned about the safety of the blood needed for his son, who was born 26 weeks premature in October 1982.

O'Rourke said he told the doctor that family and friends would be willing to donate blood. He said the doctor told him hospital policy prohibited family donations, and reassured him about the safety of the blood used.

The first reported case of transfusion-related AIDS occurred at Irwin in December 1982, the appeals court said. The appeals court said Irwin was then following the same practices as other blood banks in screening donated blood, and was not negligent for failing to use a hepatitis antibody test or for failing to ban donations from homosexuals.

The court also said neither Irwin nor the hospital was at fault for rejecting the family's request to donate blood.

The hospital didn't know Irwin allowed family donations if the family approached the blood bank, insisted on the donations and got the doctor's approval.

The court said the O'Rourke family never approached Irwin about the matter, and the jury was entitled to conclude that Irwin had not concealed or misrepresented its policy.

## Arts Journal Takes Literary Road to Understanding AIDS

ALBANY, NY—James Turcotte didn't panic when he found out he had AIDS. Instead, he calmly sat down with his laptop computer and began to write.

Turcotte records his life in New York City in a daily journal. "I would like...to encourage people to write their own journals," he said in an interview. "Otherwise, people feel like they've lived for nothing. With a book, it gives a tremendous sense of expression. It's a great release."

Turcotte binds the books he writes and gives them to friends. Although he would like to have had his journal published, he never wanted to face what he calls "that monolith of publishing."

But thanks to the work of David Waggoner and the AIDS Council of Northeastern New York, Turcotte's work is making it to print in a new journal.

"Arts and Understanding" is Waggoner's brainchild. Last summer, he began talking to writers and AIDS advocates about publishing a journal devoted to AIDS. The content would highlight and preserve the AIDS literature coming out of the homosexual and arts communities instead of focusing on medical or social issues.

Initially, the impetus behind Waggoner's project was to preserve the core of work of those who have died from AIDS. But then Waggoner saw an opportunity to use the journal as a more subtle means of educating the public about AIDS.

"There is a usefulness for someone like Robert Mapplethorpe to get people's attention," said David Bergman, a poet and an English professor at Towson State University in Maryland. "But once you get their ear, you have to provide the kinds of things that allow them to listen. You can't teach until people are ready to learn."

Linda Glassman, the AIDS Council's executive director, said the educational aspect of the journal accomplishes one of the organization's missions.

"If people get to know somebody with HIV disease, their attitudes are completely changed," she said. "The way I learned about people most of my life was through reading. So, I figured that was a way for the general public to learn as well."

On September 17, the journal will make its debut as an insert to a weekly alternative newspaper in Albany called *Metroland*.

Various anthologies, including "Poets for Life," "High Risk" and "The Purple Plume," have focused on AIDS and featured contributors who are HIV-infected. But no one has attempted to begin a periodical wholly devoted to AIDS literature, Waggoner said.

Even though the institutions behind the project are regional,

writers from across the nation have mailed in close to 700 submissions. The artists are published and unpublished, HIV-infected and healthy, homosexual and heterosexual, male and female, famous and not-so-famous.

Bergman, who has written a study of gay American literature to be published by the University of Wisconsin later this year, does not have AIDS and says he feels a kind of survivor's guilt.

"I feel the responsibility to make sure that the work doesn't get lost because there's no one there to make sure it continues," Bergman said.

Mark O'Donnell also sent some poems to Waggoner to include in the first issue. A playwright and short story writer who has been published by *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The New Yorker*, O'Donnell said of his submissions, "You want to do whatever you can to be useful. If I were a doctor I would be doing work in a clinic; I'm a writer and this is my pro bono."

Poet Chris Hewitt has been bound to a wheelchair since he was 9, so his poems mark his activism. Hewitt suffers from a weakened bone condition called osteogenesis imperfecta. His submission, still untitled, is set in a church on Easter Sunday. A man in a wheelchair spies a hollow face sitting in a pew across the aisle—a man dying of AIDS. The poem explores how each perceives the other.

"All disabilities are the same," said Hewitt, who does not have AIDS. "It limits your freedom. It's all relative."

Waggoner said 30,000 copies of the first issue would be distributed nationwide with the help of AIDS and literary organizations. For the journal's third issue, Waggoner is hoping to go international, focusing on AIDS in the Soviet Union.

AIDS activists, including members of ACT-UP and the Gay Men's Health Crisis, say there's room for a project like Waggoner's in the fight for AIDS understanding.

"Everything is a kind of support. Everything is part of the whole pie," said David Eng, a spokesman for the Gay Men's Health Crisis, one of the oldest and largest AIDS organizations.

Robin Haueter, an ACT-UP member, was equally enthusiastic about the idea. "It would be my hope that this journal helps people to understand that AIDS is something that affects everyone," Haueter said. "And if it hasn't yet, it probably will."

Glassman characterized the periodical as a kind of gift.

"All too often people with HIV disease are seen as victims or seen as people who take from society," Glassman said. "They have such a tremendous amount to give. It's a way to give back whatever wisdom they've gleaned."

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## AIDS Assault Case Features Controversial Defense

OAKLAND, CA—The lawyer for a man accused of assault with a deadly weapon for allegedly exposing two women to the HIV virus apparently plans to base the defense on a controversial theory about the virus.

Defendant William Lucas Barker could not have infected the women because HIV isn't infectious and can't be spread through sex, defense lawyer Harold L. Perry told a judge earlier this month.

Perry made the statement during a pretrial hearing in Alameda County Superior Court, where Barker faces trial on two counts stemming from an alleged sexual assault on an 18-year-old ex-prostitute and consensual sex with a 22-year-old woman. Neither woman knew Barker had tested positive for HIV, prosecutors say.

The attorney's argument is based on a hotly-contested theory by Peter H. Duesberg, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley, who contends HIV isn't infectious.

The theory has led to a storm of controversy and has been discredited by a majority of AIDS researchers who insist that HIV is infectious and spread through bodily fluids.

But Perry offered the argument that a conviction in a criminal case requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt. Judge Larry Goodman termed the argument interesting but said the hearing was the wrong place to present it. He suggested that Perry raise the issue during the trial and set another pretrial hearing for October 7.

Most AIDS experts believe that HIV is spread through bodily fluids, such as semen and blood. The virus attacks immune system T-cells until, eventually, the body becomes vulnerable to AIDS-related cancers and infections.

The link between HIV and AIDS is circumstantial—no one can actually see the virus destroy the immune system. But virtually the entire scientific community is convinced it exists.

Robert Gallo, a senior AIDS researcher at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Md., co-wrote a 1988 article defending the hypothesis that HIV causes AIDS. It concluded: "In summary, although many questions remain about HIV and AIDS, a huge and continuously growing body of scientific evidence shows HIV causes AIDS."

In a companion article in the journal *Science*, however, Duesberg concluded that "since the cause of

AIDS is debatable, the control of AIDS may not be achieved by controlling HIV."

He contends AIDS is a collection of many diseases, none of which are caused by HIV. His theory rests on several contentions, including that HIV is found in only one of every 500 T-cells in people with AIDS. He says the mainstream explanation doesn't explain why HIV causes AIDS as long as 10 years after infection.

And Duesberg points out that every other known infectious agent spreads randomly. AIDS remains generally isolated in high-risk groups such as gay men, intravenous drug users, hemophiliacs or recipients of transfusions.

Duesberg's theories blatantly disregard proven findings, according to mainstream researchers who say they find HIV antibodies in almost every case of AIDS, which they contend must be more than coincidence.

Duesberg is a well-regarded expert on oncogenes and tumor-causing viruses, but critics argue that he is not an AIDS virologist. Harold Jaffe, a researcher at the Centers for Disease Control, called Duesberg a "flat-Earther bogged down in molecular minutiae." The National Institutes of Health has recommended Duesberg no longer be funded for research.

Many leading AIDS researchers fear that publicizing Duesberg's theories could undo years of AIDS prevention education. Yet Duesberg remains adamant.

"There is very convincing virological, immunological and epidemiological evidence to reject the hypothesis...that AIDS is a contagious disease," he said. "There is currently no valid scientific basis on which to charge Barker for 'assault with a deadly weapon.'"

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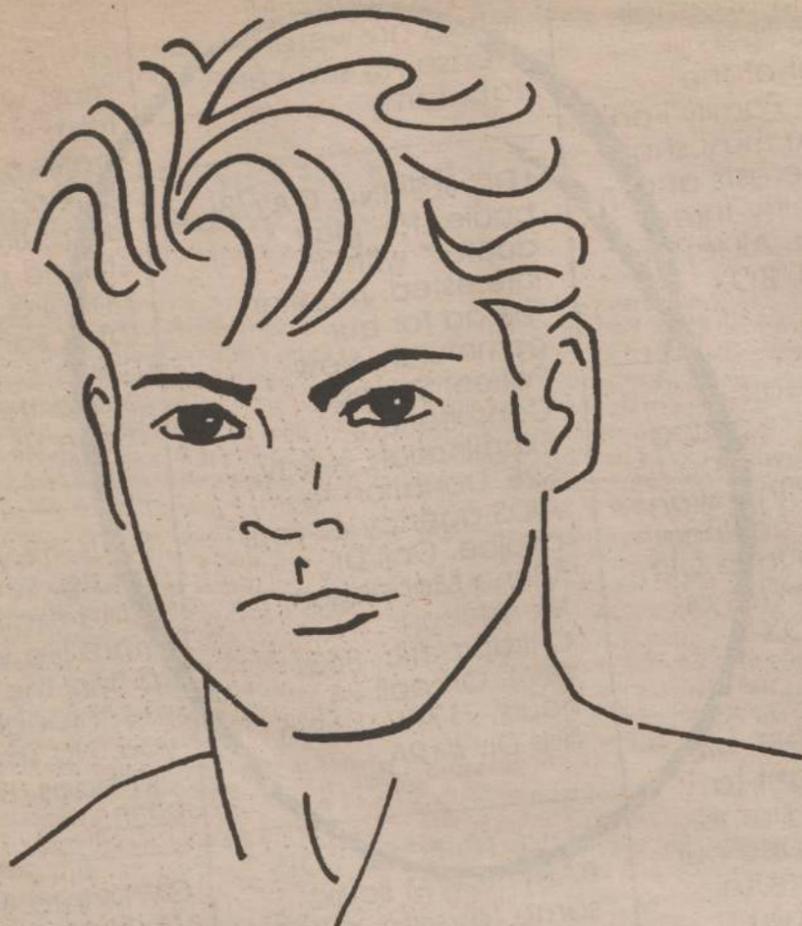
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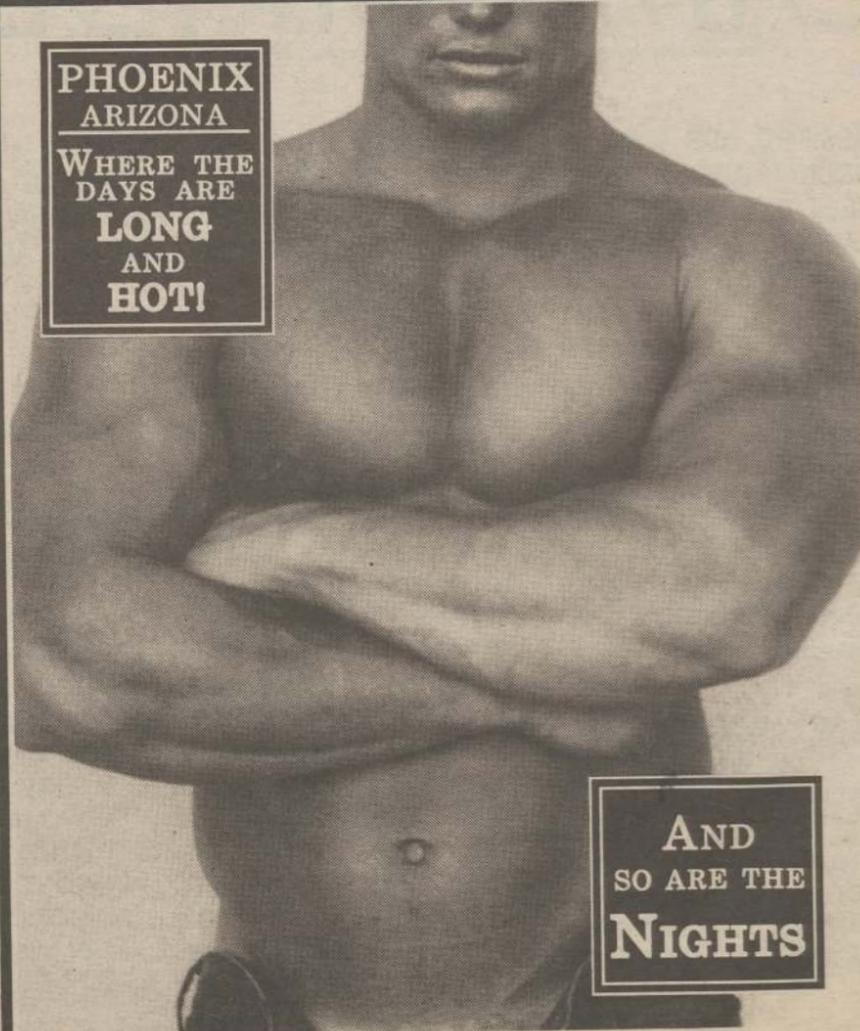
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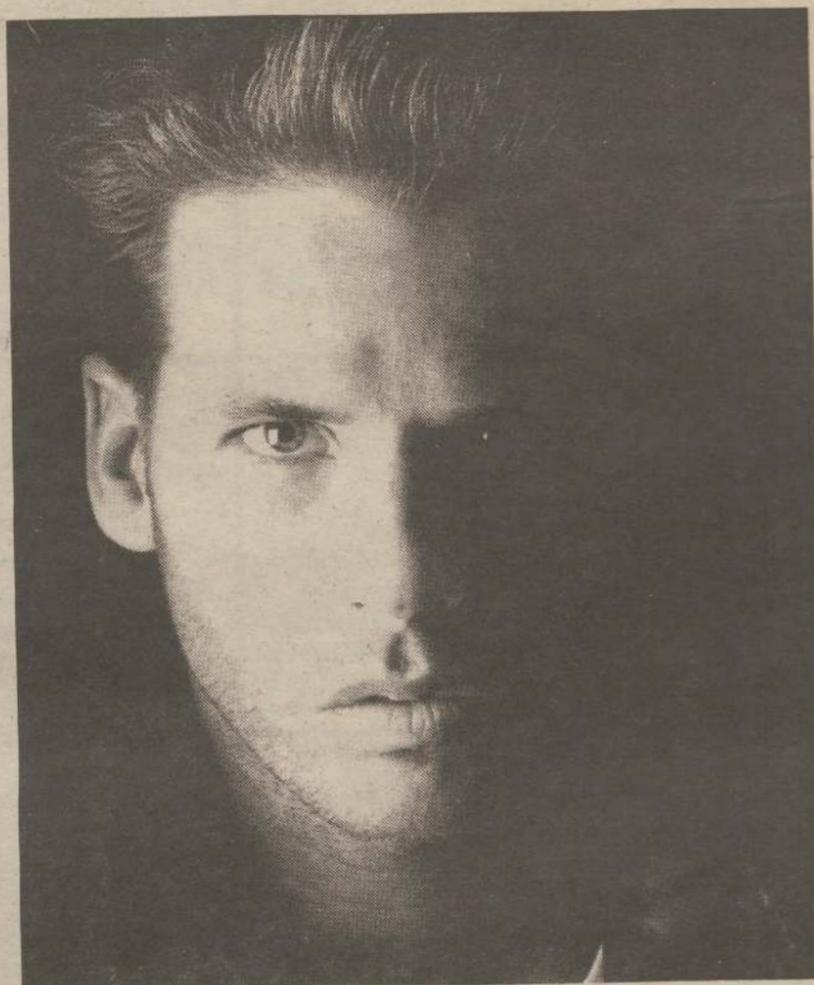
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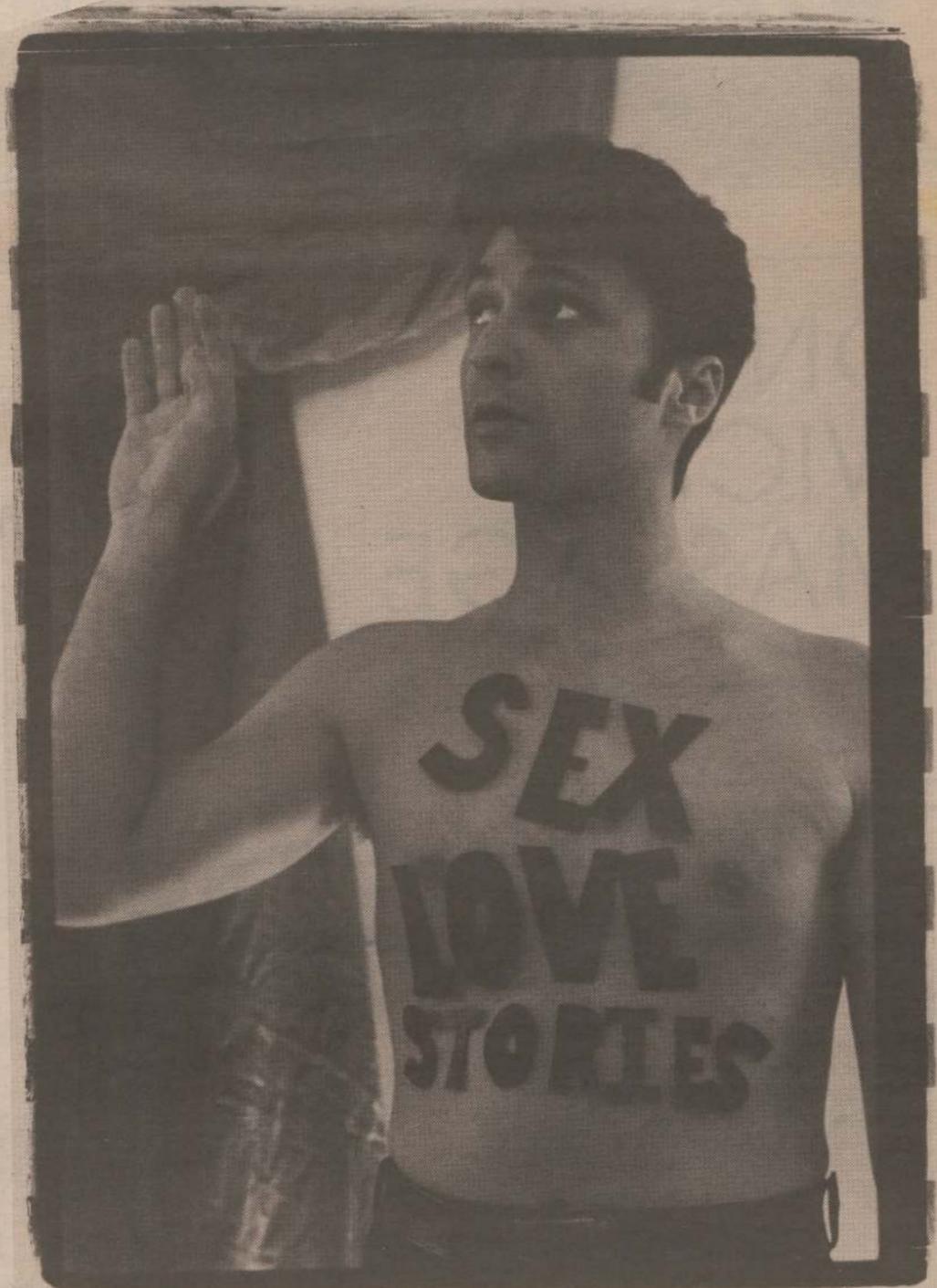
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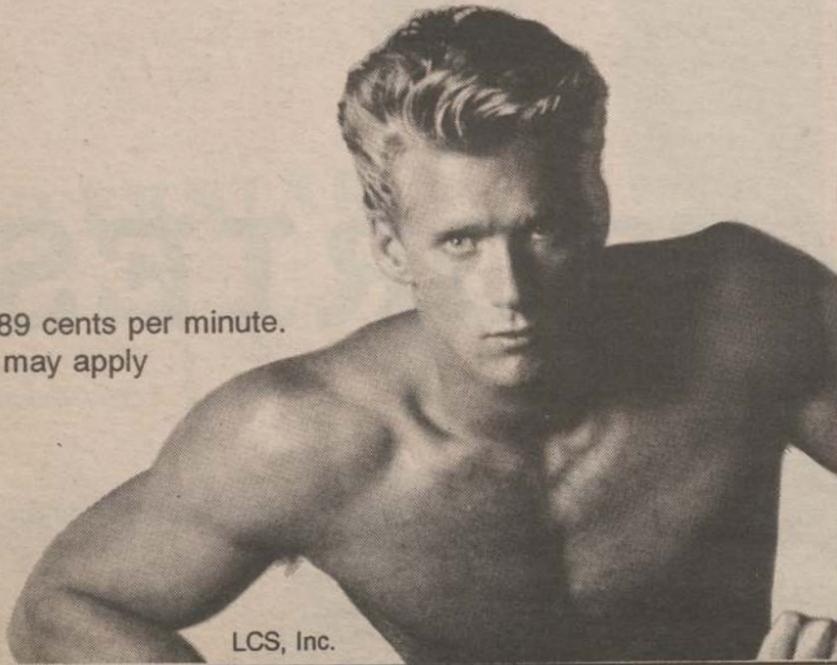
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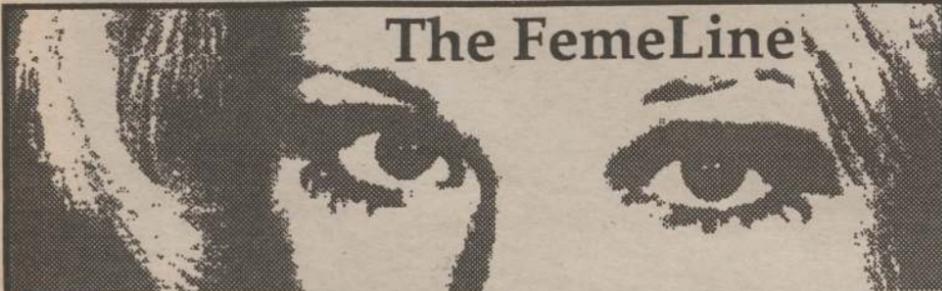
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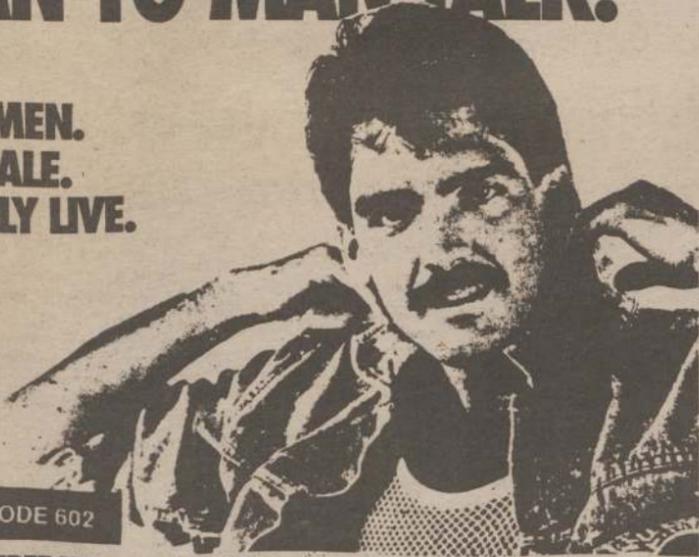
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