

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

IRELAND'S LESBIAN AND GAY NEWSPAPER • FEBRUARY 1996 • FREE

GCN ban attacked

by Derek Keegan and Paul Candon

Gay Community News, Ireland's only lesbian and gay newspaper, has been removed from the George Bar, Dublin's only gay bar.

It is understood the decision not to stock GCN was taken because management objected to some of the contents in the December 1995 and January 1996 issue.

Bar staff said "No comment" to customers who asked for copies of the paper.

A female reader of GCN said that a member of the bar staff took all copies of the paper from the bar and customers a few hours after the Christmas issue was published. When she questioned him, he said: "Cyril O'Brien had just phoned to say that all the GCNs were to be dumped in the bin".

GCN Editor, Cathal Kelly, has asked management of the George to use GCN's pages to respond to any comment they are unhappy with. Pub owner Cyril O'Brien has been abroad during January and has not replied to GCN's invitation.

The paper contained a reader's letter and a review on the social page which was critical of the Halloween Block Ball. The news section ran a story about O'Brien's pub, owned by the same company, following a complaint to the paper by two customers.

The National Lesbian and Gay Federation (NLGF), who publish GCN, have criticised the decision of the management of the George.

"The NLGF deplores the fact that the community is deprived access to GCN," an NLGF spokesperson said. "The current situation is not to the benefit of anyone involved. In the interests of the owner and his customers - the GCN readers - we look forward to an early resolution."

Prominent gay activist Mick Quinlan described the ban as "the section 31 of the lesbian and gay

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Homelessness Seminar



Carol-Anne O'Brien and Kieran Rose during the discussion on homelessness in the gay community. Pic: Kellie Greene

A seminar dealing with the particular problems faced by young lesbians and gay homeless people has met with mixed reactions from agencies providing services in this area.

The seminar was organised by GLEN and hosted by Focus Point. A number of relevant organisations who had been invited did not attend the meeting.

by Paul Candon

The key-note speaker at the event was Carol-Anne O'Brien. Ms O'Brien has extensive practical and research experience in Canada, where she has worked in social services for the past number of years. "There is an important visibility issue", Ms. O'Brien said, "sexuality often remains hidden due to negative experiences in hostels. Street culture itself is often particularly homophobic and for many the sex industry is the only option to make money for accommodation."

DE ROSSA TO MEET WITH GAY GROUPS

Social Welfare Minister Proinsias De Rossa has invited representatives of lesbian and gay organisations to meet him.

The invitation came at the launch of Combat Poverty Agency's report on the effects of discrimination against lesbians and gay men.

Mr De Rossa said: "I hope to have meetings in the not too distant future with representative organisations of gay and lesbian people in order to discuss how we can promote and bring forward proper provision."

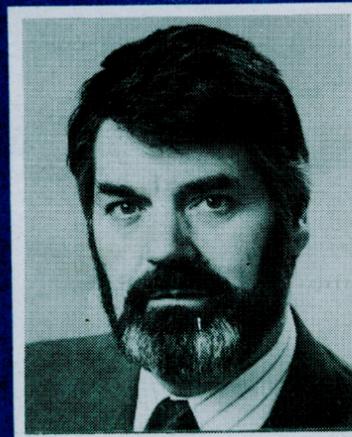
Afterwards he confirmed to GCN that he hopes to have meetings with the representatives in the next few months.

The Gay and Lesbian Equality Network has decided to write to the Minister, on behalf of all lesbian and gay organisations, to make arrangements for a first meeting.

The way in which GLEN will consult community groups and how it will put together a delegation for the meeting with Mr De Rossa were the subject of lengthy discussion at the open meeting GLEN held in January.

GLEN co-chair Chris Robson gave a commitment that the delegation will be gender balanced.

Details of how GLEN will consult with the community before the meeting are not available. A GLEN spokesperson said their concern was to focus the first meeting on the recommendations of the poverty study.



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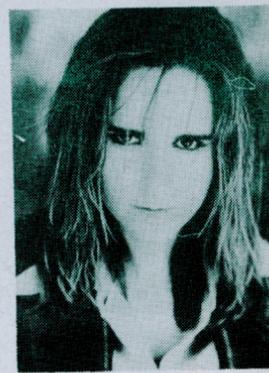
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Table quiz

Gay Switchboard Dublin is hosting a fund-raising table quiz. The event will take place in the George bar on February 11 at 4.30pm with an entrance fee of £20 for a maximum of five per table.

The organisers promise that the prizes will be "startlingly different", and all proceeds from the event will go towards the Switchboard, which is reported to be very short of funds.

Pride Dates

Dublin Pride 1996 will take place on June 29.

Waterford Pride will take place on the first weekend in July.

The national co-ordination meeting will take place on Saturday February 10 in the fully accessible National Students' Centre (The Furnace), Aston Quay, Dublin 2 at 3pm.

Galway Youth

A new lesbian, gay and bisexual youth group has been set up in Galway. The first meeting will take place on February 1 and regular meetings will be held on the first of every month. For further information contact Galway Gay and Lesbian Line on (091) 566 134.

Transgender

Transgender Nation, the Irish association for the transgendered have just held their first "Icebreaker" meeting. Following the success of the meeting, Transgender Nation are now planning to hold bi-monthly functions in a Dublin city centre location. For further information contact the TV line (see listings).

HIV figures

Of the recorded 1,593 HIV cases recorded to August of 1995 332 are among homosexuals/bisexuals and 266 are among heterosexuals/risk undetermined, while the largest group affected by the HIV virus is IV drug users (total number, 769), according to figures released by University College Dublin.

GCN Ban

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community." He said: "This overreaction to criticism is counterproductive."

Beth Wallace, Education Officer with Dublin AIDS Alliance said: "It's extremely regrettable. There is a shortage of availability of space and access to information for gay men and women coming out. Information needs to be accessed wherever possible."

The Distribution Department of GCN have reported a substantial increase in demand for extra copies of the paper from other outlets in the city centre. Books Upstairs have ordered an extra 400 copies of the paper to cope with the demand.

Cassell: apology

Our Christmas Quiz was drawn from *The Cassell Queer Quiz Book* by David Pollard. We apologise to Cassell for not acknowledging their permission to publish the quiz.

RUC ADOPTS CHARTER ON POLICING OF GAYS



Donna Mc Anallan, who has left the Other Place in Cork. Donna started working at the Other Place after she was dismissed as a life guard at the Brookfield leisure centre for being a lesbian. Her appeal to the Labour Court was unsuccessful, but the government promised to change the law as a result of her case.

North's police force stays silent on contents of new policy document

The RUC has agreed the adoption of a policy document on policing the lesbian and gay community.

But the RUC press office has refused to comment on the new charter.

The force took part in a seminar in Manchester on policing and the gay community.

The charter on policing and the gay community was passed unanimously at the seminar.

Mr P.A. MagLouchlainn of the Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (NIGRA) said that this had been expected before the meeting.

Gay activists at the seminar raised the issue of attacks and other hate crimes against lesbians and gay men with the participating police forces.

The conference organisers, the Greater Manchester Lesbian and

by Jim Redmond

Gay Policing Initiative (MLGPI), described the event as historic.

MLGPI spokesperson Ian Wilmott said: "This conference puts the issue of gay hate crime firmly on the agenda."

The RUC declined to comment on the force's participation.

The seminar was attended by up to 60 per cent of police divisions in the UK.

The absence of the Strathclyde division was particularly commented on by gay activists who attended the seminar.

£2000 Grant

Waterford Assembly has received a grant of £2,000 from the Department of Social Welfare.

The grant to the lesbian and gay social group is for office equipment.

Gary Pheasey, Waterford Assembly's co-ordinator, said he was pleased with the grant.

The group had also applied for £900 to enable it to do outreach work with lesbians and gay men in the South East.

GLEN Reports on year's work

The Gay and Lesbian Equality Network held its annual open meeting in January. GLEN told the meeting of the work it has done since the last such meeting in 1994.

The attendance at the meeting was low. Most of those present were Dublin-based lobbyists and activists.

The main issues discussed were the progress of the Equal Status legislation and the report of the Combat Poverty Agency. GLEN Co-chair, Chris Robson, said that both the Equal Status and Employment Equality Bills are being drafted by the Attorney General. He said this was better news than GLEN had expected.

The meeting discussed selecting a delegation from the community to meet the Minister for Social Welfare to dis-

cuss the implementation of the Combat Poverty report.

GLEN also told the meeting that it had lobbied on the Health Insurance Act, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or medical condition, and the Powers of Attorney Bill, which provides for recognition of non-marriage and non-family relationships.

The group also made submissions on the Violence Bill, which provides protection for people in domestic relationships.

GLEN asked the Minister for Finance to address the disadvantages that non-marital relationships experience.

On the international scene, GLEN attended International Lesbian and Gay Association conferences in Helsinki, Riga and New York. GLEN lobbied against human rights abuses in Romania and Albania.

Bill may be watered down

Proposals in the promised Equal Status Bill may be watered down, Equality and Law Reform Minister Mervyn Taylor has signalled.

At Christmas Mr Taylor told the *Irish Independent* that the bill will cover less than many people think.

A senior lesbian activist said Mr Taylor's latest comments on the contents of the bill are the start of a 'damage limitation exercise'.

The only reliable source of information on the planned contents are a detailed briefing paper that Mr Taylor published in November 1994. Since then, publicans and other business interests have campaigned against the proposals in the bill.

Pressure to have the bill published has been mounting. In December a coalition of fifteen civil rights organisations called on Mr Taylor "to introduce the Equal Status Bill immediately"

In January GLEN decided to ask



Taylor: signals watering down on bill.

the Campaign for Equality - of which it is a member organisation - to begin an intensive campaign to get the bill published quickly.

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QUEEN BANS GAY PARTNERS FROM BALL

Lovers not allowed to attend royal staff Christmas party

The British Queen's annual Royal Household Christmas Staff Ball was under protest, after she decreed that gay male staff were forbidden to bring same-sex partners.



Shame on Queen Elizabeth: OutRage! protestors outside Buckingham Palace express their anger.

by Derek Keegan

Outside the gates of Buckingham Palace over twenty drag queens protested as guests arrived.

Dressed in tiaras and sequined gowns the protesters held festive pennants with "HM Queen: Patron of Homophobia" inscribed on them.

Others chanted: "We're here, we're

Scandal

queer and we've come to party".

Stuart Colley of OutRage! said: "It's scandalous that Her Majesty is giving Royal Patronage to anti-gay discrimination. The gay members in her family must be horrified".

"This ban is a seasonal kick in the teeth to loyal gay Palace staff. It's shameful that the monarch of a democratic country is treating her gay employees as second class citizens", he said.

"Good Queen Betty stands exposed as the wicked witch of Windsor", he declared. "Since the Queen has lost her heart perhaps she should also lose her head."

Ex-Greek Premier's Wife in Photo Row

Ex-Greek Prime Minister, Andreas Papandreou is fuming after three of Athens' newspapers published photos of his wife fondling another woman.

Papandreou's wife, Dimitra Liani, appears on the front page of newspapers, nude on a beach in "an intimate pose with another unidentified woman". Mrs Papandreou has denounced the photos depicting the unidentified woman fondling her genitals as fakes.

The publisher of one of the newspapers was arrested on misdemeanour charges that his publication made an 'unprovoked insult' against the Prime Minister's wife. A warrant has also been issued for the other two publishers. However, they are in hiding.

Indian Women

In 11 of India's 13 states, the majority of women have never heard of AIDS. According to the National Family Health Survey, only eight percent of respondents in the state of Assam were familiar with the disease. This and other factors lead Indian health officials to predict 5 million HIV infections by the year 2000, up from the current 1.5 million.

Iranian Man Lashed for Dress Prank

A 31 year old Iranian man was sentenced to 20 lashes after dressing up as a woman for a bet. The man, only identified as 'Mohsen', was dressed as a woman and rode in the women's section at the back of a Tehran public bus to win a \$33 bet with his father.

Mohsen was then attacked by female passengers. He said: "Some women on the bus got very angry and beat me up."

The court decided to whip Mohsen because what he did was "ugly and improper".

Transgender on Rape Charge

In Australia a transgendered man has been charged with rape after having consensual sex with four women.

Twenty year old Sean O'Neill, who was born Sharon Clark, is reported to have a 'fluid' approach to gender.

While he was a teenager he had relationships with four girls of a similar age. Two policewomen brought the charges of sexual assault

before him after he admitted that he had vaginal sex organs. He made the admission following an arrest on minor charges.

O'Neill prefers male pronouns and lives as a man. He has not had any operations to alter his sex.

Although the four girls engaged in consensual sex with O'Neill, they were unaware that O'Neill was actually a lesbian.

WORLD

Police in Paris were told by a gay robbery victim that he could not recognise a man who stole his watch from an identity parade, but he would be able to identify him by "holding his genitals", as they had been fondling each other before the robbery.

VIEW

The Carrick Hotel

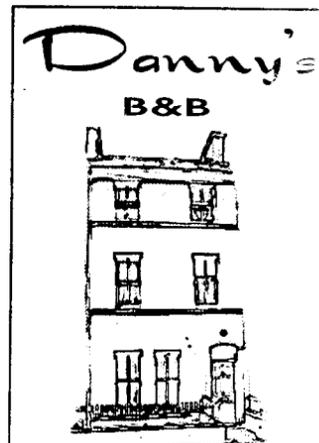
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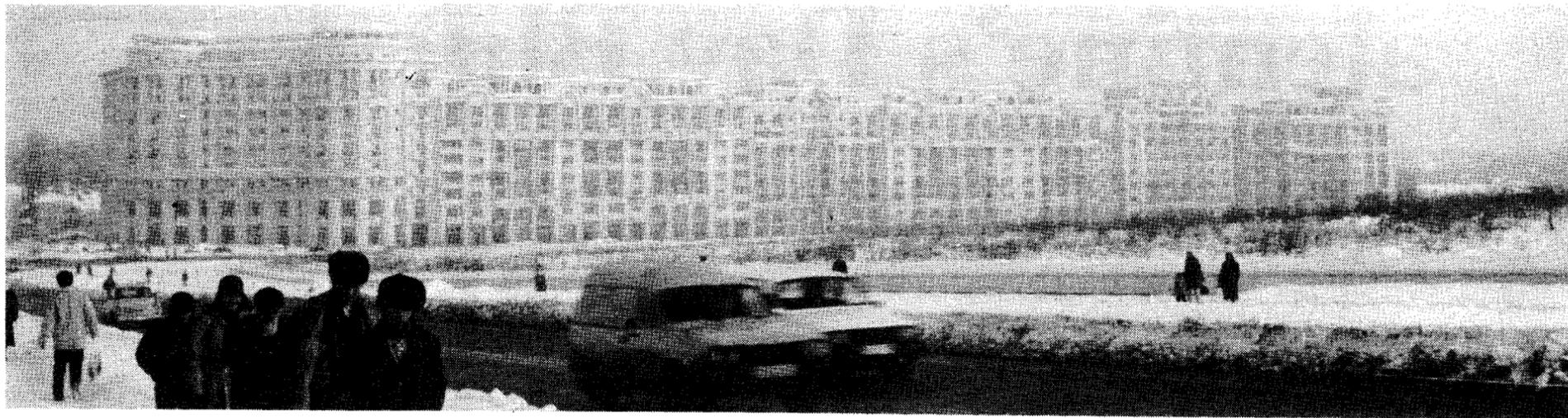
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Looking for Acceptance

Romanian gays are still struggling in the post-Ceausescu era. Tom Gallagher reports on efforts to change Romanian society

Three months ago, as the first snows of winter carpeted the Carpathian mountains of Romania, over fifty people gathered in the ski resort of Sinaia to work out ways of challenging the most rigorous anti-homosexual laws anywhere in Europe.

This was a ground-breaking event in a land where people's personal lives, as well as their political selves, have been buried under concrete bunkers of censorship and silence.

The organisation responsible for holding the seminar are called ACCEPT. It was founded in 1994 in order to work towards the moment when Romanian society will accept an individual regardless of his or her sexual orientation.

Many Romanians anxious to integrate with the west in nearly every conceivable way, draw the line at accepting sexual identities and practices that question the heterosexual norm. The lead has come from the Romanian churches, Orthodox and Western Christian denomination have closed ranks in 1995 to ask the state to continue punishing consensual same-sex relations between adults with heavy prison terms. There was only one dissenter, Bishop Lazio Tokes, the Hungarian Calvinist and hero of the 1989 revolution who argued that the matter should be left up to an individual's own conscience.

Apocryphal stories in the wide circulation suggest that the Orthodox Church double-standards are rife on the question of homosexuality. There is little doubt that the head of the Orthodox Church, Patriarch Teoctist, appointed to his post by the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, is

exploiting the issue to divert attention from a long record of collaborations with the dictatorship.

However, public attitudes are ambiguous. A 1993 survey carried out by the Bucharest-based Institute for the Quality of Life found that 85% of people believed that homosexual behaviour was never justified. But 25% were willing to have homosexuals as neighbours and 30% considered that gays and lesbians should be treated the same as any other human group. More heartening still were the parents who appeared on television to say that they would never disown their children even if they learnt that they were gay.

The Romanian government allowed the ACCEPT seminar to go ahead even though the penal code clearly outlaws associations to promote homosexual identities. In Romania, the law is often discretionary and ACCEPT has some heavyweight allies, not least the Dutch government which financed the entire event through one of its human rights agencies.

Jan de Roy, the Dutch Charge d'Affaires in Bucharest told the conference that fifty years ago, public attitudes were just as liberal in the Netherlands and that change had come as a result of a few individuals having the confidence to oppose the intolerance of the state and society. He promised the support of his government for any realistic efforts by Romanian gays to challenge their dictators in the press and in parliament and he expressed his disappointment that Romania was still unprepared to end discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation despite having been admitted to the

Council of Europe in 1993.

The conference heard testimonies from older participants who had attempted suicide or been subjected to blackmail; almost without exception, most had chosen to live a clandestine life, either with a partner or more likely alone, to escape the attention of a state which in the Ceausescu era, gaoled homosexuals and subjected them to electric shock treatment.

Article 200 of the 1965 penal code ensures that sexual intercourse between two persons of the same gender is punishable by one to five years imprisonment. Amnesty International has a hefty dossier of cases which show that this law is regularly enforced.

In July 1994 a constitutional court ruling modified the law, ruling that consensual acts between adults which were not committed in public or did not lead to public scandal, were no longer subject to any criminal penalties.

Not surprisingly, the Sinaia event showed that younger gays carried fewer burdens. They have more contacts with the west and some have travelled there on scholarships or to work. Some had come out to their families and been accepted. One activist was even accompanied to Sinaia by his mother who said that she had always stood by her son upon learning of his sexual orientation.

There was no overt hostility from the skiers or trade-unionists who shared the hotel and its facilities with ACCEPT. But it will involve a long struggle by ACCEPT and its international supporters before active discrimination becomes a thing of the past. The main opposi-

tion comes from traditionalist forces in society associated with Romanian nationalism and the values of the former communist regime. They have a track record of promoting conspiracies and scares in order to fan insecurity and manage change on their own very limited agenda.

The Romanian press also inflames opinion by publishing stories that link homosexuality with sadistic crimes, thus following in the dishonourable tradition of extremists who earlier this century linked Jews with the ritual sacrifice of babies. In order to challenge public attitudes, ACCEPT plans to set up a national network to monitor and respond to mass media coverage of gay and lesbian topics. It is also ready to contend with the opposition politicians who proclaim their commitment to western-style human rights but make common cause with neo-communists in denying justice to Romanians on the basis of their sexual orientation.

The Romanian social structure makes change difficult. The patriarchal family is the cement that holds together Romanian society and it remains a deeply conservative force. Children are expected to obey their parents until adulthood and the acute shortage of housing means that dependence continues often beyond that point. The shortage economy means that are few places such as bars, jazz clubs, or discos for gays and lesbians to meet.

A surprising number of non-gay Romanians express admiration for the work of ACCEPT because it defies the social cowardice and general inability to form active pressure groups that characterises Romania in the 1990s. Romanian society may prove to be less tolerant than

expected to the concept of otherness in sexual relations. But 1996 will be a testing year owing to the defeat in parliament on November 21 of the new penal code designed to bring the law on homosexuality in line with the previous ruling of the constitutional court.

Even if the bill had been passed, the situation of Romanian gays and lesbians would still have been intolerable: heavy prison sentences await couples engaged in consensual sexual acts deemed to be carried out 'in public' or to be 'a public scandal', terms which are not defined in Romanian law.

But at least a solid organisation for changing the law and public attitudes is emerging. Undoubtedly its chance of success depends on the amount of help they can mobilise from abroad.

The Romanian government depends on the European Union for political and economic assistance as it attempts to break out the isolation of the Ceausescu era. In countries like Spain and Ireland which have recent memories of dictatorship or where same sex relations faced harsh legal penalties, legislators in Strasbourg are in a position to pressure Romania to finally bring its laws into line with most of the rest of Europe. The gay movement in countries which changed the law with help from abroad are therefore in a position to end a tyrannical situation which has produced endless misery for gays and lesbians in Romania.

Tom Gallagher is the author of Romania After Ceausescu: The politics of intolerance published in the summer by Edinburgh University Press.

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Valentine's Day Blues

Pauline Tracey casts a sharp eye over the hearts and flowers

At the outset I'd like to say that I feel particularly ill-equipped to write this article given that I've only ever received two - one of which was from my mother. However, I'm not bitter about the card I feel I'm owed and I can now even look the post-woman in the eye.

Apart from my personal issues around Valentine's Day, I think there is something decidedly cruel about asking somebody who isn't involved to write an article on Valentine's Day, which is very much for couples. After all, us single people have just recovered from New Year's Eve, where at best we were always going to be the second person kissed - though this year I came up with a way around it. I locked one half of a couple in the toilet which was three flights up so nobody could hear her cries for help, and when the magical hour arrived her partner had to kiss me, though it was a pyrrhic victory, because I don't think I'll be asked back next year.

However, although I know the more politically aware of you realise how heterosexist, and couplish, Valentine's Day is and, shying away

from ever being accused of an ism, will not send a card made from a dead tree, give dead flowers or go out to a restaurant and eat a dead animal as a symbol of your undying love, others will need to be convinced that this is not a day to celebrate. So I did a little research.



In fact, Valentine's Day has no significance at all. There were at least two St Valentines, and, contrary to popular belief, neither is buried in Dublin. One was executed because the Roman emperor believed that single men made better soldiers and thus forbade them to marry, but our Valentine, being a priest, went around marrying people left right and centre, which smacks of heterosexism to me. The other one was

an early Christian who wouldn't worship Roman gods - personally, I think Venus and Diana were great, and that the priest was definitely sexist. Another strand of the story is that on February 15 the Romans celebrated a festival called Lupercalia which was meant to protect them from wolves, and during the celebrations young men hit people, particularly infertile women, with strips of animal hide, as this was believed to cure infertility. When the Romans conquered Britain in AD43 the British borrowed the festival - and guess how we got it? Yet another strand is that there is a Norman French word *galantine* which means gallant/lover and this may have caused people to think of Valentine as the special saint of lovers. Again, the earliest English record tells us that birds choose their mate on that day. So Valentine's Day is based on either a homophobic or a sexist

priest, a festival where women were hit with abandon, a mistranslation or the ramblings of somebody who knew nothing about ornithology. To cap it all, the calendar changed in 1582 (and once or twice before that) and February 14 came on what is now February 24 so even the celebrations, if indeed one could celebrate any of those things, are taking place on the wrong day.

However, lest people think that I'm bitter, I decided to do a mini-survey on chat-up lines. What I came up with was: 'My lips are cold - would you like to warm them?', 'Your doc's would look great under my bed' and 'Hey Jimmy, d'you want to go out or what?' (there was a Scottish woman there - apparently 'Jimmy' is gender neutral). I think the

liens are more a sad reflection on my friends than on the noble art of chatting up - maybe FAS could sponsor a course - but nobody can say I didn't try to bring some romance to this article.

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Firstly, we would like to wish you a Happy New Year and say a big thank you to all who supported LOT throughout 1995.

The **Social & Entertainment Group** organised lots of events over the Christmas period, including the LOT Christmas Dinner at the *Ormond*. Although numbers weren't as high as usual, it was a very enjoyable evening. The Christmas Disco and Line-dancing Night also went well. Many thanks to the women who organised these events - we look forward to many more in 1996.

The **Youth Group** have planned lots of activities and outings for the new year, and are at present training new volunteers.

Volunteer training for **First Out** is scheduled for late February/early March. Thanks to those women who have already contacted us - we'll be getting in touch with you soon. Those women who are still hawking about volunteering, COME ON, JOIN US! Ring First Out on 872 7770.

LOT's new first floor offices will be opening as a **Drop-in Centre** from February 1. Ring us on 872 7770, or just drop in, if only for a cup of tea and biscuits or to browse through the library and information stand.

LOT EVENT GUIDE

FIRST OUT

Wed Feb 7 and Sat Feb 17, 7.30 - 9.30

LESBIANS AND CHILDREN GROUP
Contact Lynn or Bernie on 872 7770

YOUNG LESBIAN AND BISEXUAL WOMEN'S GROUP
Sun Feb 11 and Sun Feb 25 at 4.00

VALENTINE'S NIGHT
Celebrate at *Mother Redcap's* on Wed February 14, 8pm - midnight. Admission £3/4

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
LOT Disco at *Mother Redcap's*, Friday March 8, 9.00 pm 'til late. Admission £3/4

For information on all events and services available in Dublin, please phone LOT's Information Line on 1550 122345. Calls cost 58p/minute.

LOT SURVEY FOR STRATEGIC PLAN

Here's your opportunity to have an input! LOT is conducting a survey for its Strategic Plan to get input from those interested in the future direction of the organisation. A questionnaire will be distributed at all lesbian events throughout Dublin, and posted to those on LOT's mailing list. Individuals may request a copy of the questionnaire from the LOT office. The final date of return of the questionnaire is **February 2, 1996.**

New Management Structure for LOT

Last October representatives of all LOT constituent groups were asked to meet with a Management Consultant for a training weekend. The purpose of the weekend was to agree a new working management structure for LOT.

The impetus to explore a possible change in structure came from a realisation that any organisation needs to change and adapt its structures over time in response to increased resources, activities and complexity. Within LOT in the preceding months, it was generally felt that the existing structure of the Steering Group, Co-ordinators and Monthly Meetings had not been working effectively in managing the extensive work of LOT, given how it had grown and developed.

During the course of the weekend a number of issues were raised and discussed before agreement was reached. After 14 hours of intensive work by the 13 women involved, a new management structure was developed, based on the mission statement outlined below:

THE MISSION OF LOT MANAGEMENT

- To provide good and appropriate management
- To provide as stable an environment as possible
- To steer the organisation to its aims
- To provide a support network to the LOT groups
- To use resources well

- To support and develop staff and volunteers
- To present a positive public image of LOT.

At the subsequent Extraordinary General Meeting, held on November 25, the proposed structure was amended and ratified. The new management structure for LOT is summarised as follows:

NEW MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

- LOT will continue to have an **Annual General Meeting** every March (this year's AGM will take place on March 23 1996). The AGM will have the power to decide major policy and overall direction, set reviews and will ratify the annual LOT Budget.
- LOT no longer has a Steering Group and Co-ordinators. In their place there is now a **Members' Council** and a **Management Team**. The Members' Council comprises representatives from each LOT group that has been in existence for at least one year, two representatives of independent LOT members and the Supervisor of the Community Employment Programme. Representatives to the Members' Council will be elected at the AGM. The Members' Council meets every two months and steers LOT according to agreed major policy and priorities. It also makes decisions on new developments.
- The Management Team comprises 4 representatives elected from

the Members' Council. The Supervisor of the LOT Community Employment Programme reports to the Management Team. The Team meets once a week and is responsible for managing the organisation, including staff and resources, on a week-to-week basis. It is responsible for the implementation and operation of agreed priorities and it reports to the Members Council.

•The **Members' Meeting** takes the place of the previous open LOT Monthly Meetings. The Members' Meetings will take place every three months, are open, information-sharing meetings and are provided with a quarterly report by the Members' Council. These meetings have no decision-making power but they can make suggestions to Members' Council, which will duly respond.

I believe the LOT staff and members are much happier with this new structure given how the organisation has grown and developed over the past four and a half years. I see it as a positive development and a tribute to all those involved in devising it.

Finally, on behalf of LOT I would like to thank last year's two co-ordinators, Anita and Susan, and the members of the Steering Group for the hard work they put into managing the organisation during the year.

Margaret McArdle
LOT Management Team



Lesbian Addictions and Recovery Group

restarts Monday January 15, 8.00pm at the *Other Side Café* (then meets every Monday).

Married Lesbian Group

restarts Sunday January 21, 3.00pm at the *Other Side Café* (then every third Sunday of the month).

In a meeting last year a discussion arose as to who the Married Lesbian Group is aimed at. Are there women out there who would be interested in the group but feel that they shouldn't go because they are no longer married to/living with their husbands/partners, or were never married in the first place? If you are a lesbian and interested in the group, come along - we won't be demanding to see a copy of your marriage licence at the door! For further information contact Mary or Soren on (021) 278470 or write to: LEAP, 8 Main Street, Cork.

I am soon to finish working here at the lesbian and gay resource centre as my year is up. I'd like to say thank you to all those people who helped in various ways throughout the year, and to the women who supported the social evenings without fail. I hope you enjoyed them

Soren Mayes



Photo: Kellie Greene

A Pagan Place

emma donoghue writes about an ancient spiritual tradition for women

After five years as a 'recovering Catholic', I still had ritual in my blood. Taizé had good tunes and the Quakers were lovely people but I hadn't found what I was looking for. Occasionally I felt tempted to go back to Mass (particularly at Easter, when the only secular equivalent is chocolate) but after Archbishop O'Connell described homosexuality as 'an affliction' I couldn't see that as an option. Praying on my own and talking to the full moon was all very well as far as it went, but that wasn't far enough. I've always talked to God, but I needed more. Solitary spirituality was turning out to be too much a matter of patting myself on the back.

Nowadays I clang cymbals. (Not every night, just every six weeks or so.) If I was a character in a book I was writing I'd take the piss out of myself on every second page. What a walking stereotype: a lesbian feminist vegetarian who's joined a group called Sisters of Gaia.

But the fact is, joking aside for a minute, it's wonderful stuff. Becoming a pagan, I mean - not just reading the books but being an 'active' or 'practising' pagan, as they used to say about homosexuals.

If you find the word 'pagan' a little weird, it is probably because the only airing pagans get on television is when they are confused with ritualistic murderers on *Taggart* or Satanist child-abusers on the news. All the word means is 'country dweller'.

There is no strict definition of paganism; it's an umbrella term for the nature-based forms of spirituality, which can be found all over the earth. One of the only definite rules you'll hear pagans come out with is the ancient phrase 'Do what thou wilt, an it harm none'. Most pagans disapprove of harming yourself, your neighbour or the earth, and approve of just about everything else, seeing pleasure in particular as a form of worship. If the puritans in the joke forbade sex because it led to dancing, pagans celebrate it for much the same reason.

Terms like 'Neo-paganism' or 'New Age' can obscure the fact that these ways of worshipping are far older than recent religions like Christianity; long before Santa Claus, the people on these islands were celebrating the rebirth of the sun after the longest night. Paganism never quite died out in the British Isles, it only got submerged: think of trick-or-treat ghosts, maypoles, midsummer bonfires, harvest corn dollies (the origin of St. Brigid's crosses), Yule logs ... Fundamentalists who try to ban Hallowe'en do have a certain

point; it's not just a kids' game, it's an eruption of the pagan revelry they have tried to suppress for so long.

Pagans are a varied bunch who can work within one tradition (e.g. Wiccans, who worship the Goddess and the Horned God, or Druids, who always do it outdoors) or put together their own pick'n'mix. I'm on the eclectic side myself: I call God 'she', but I don't mind if her name is Diana, Isis, Astarte or Gaia, and I very much doubt whether she is too fussed either; she's got bigger things to worry about.

Maybe it's because I'm a writer that I don't take words too seriously; they're just different masks for our meanings to wear. When friends tell me they don't 'believe' in or 'worship' a deity, preferring to talk of 'nature' or the 'energy of the universe', I still feel that we are talking about the same thing. Basically, I

I come to think of it. The emphasis is on action rather than intellectual analysis; we have never (thank God) 'gone round in a circle and said what each of us means by the word spirituality'. I've no idea exactly what my fellow-Sisters believe, but I know we sing in tune.

We get together to do rituals at the 'quarter' and the 'cross-quarter' feast days (the year starting with Samhain, then Midwinter Solstice, Candlemas, Spring Equinox, Beltane, Midsummer Solstice, Lamas, and Autumn Equinox). In the summer we meet (unfortunately, Cambridge has no mountains or beaches) where we can build a bonfire. In the winter, we rent a local hall, which means we can't see the stars but on the other hand there's no fear of strangers wandering through.

The rituals last about four hours. They're plays, craft workshops,

Some of the regular parts of the celebration that give it formality and shape include:

- the 'casting of the circle' (we've made this of leaves, of wool, of holly, of ribbons)
- the 'calling of the quarters' (lighting a candle at the East, South, West and North, inviting the elements of Air, Fire, Water and Earth to lend their qualities)
- chanting
- using the drums and bodhráns and cymbals and rattles and bells
- the reading of a relevant myth
- 'Cakes and Wine' (the earliest form of Eucharist)
- Toasts (for everything from world peace to sick friends)
- the 'closing of the circle'

Each festival concludes with a feast. I get an unholy buzz from eating hummous and mince pies cross-legged at half past midnight - shades of Malory Towers, I suppose.

Rituals in the past year have also included a guided visualisation in a graveyard, dancing with a sickle and destroying whatever we wanted to rid ourselves of (I sliced up old lecture notes), making masks with papier-maché bandages, walking a maze printed on cloth, using an oak tree as a living maypole, and (highly messy, this) sculpting our new year's selves out of clay from a quarry. I found Samhain (Hallowe'en) the most moving so far, because we built an Altar for the Dead, lighting a candle for everyone we'd lost as we talked about them and left them food and presents.

But you won't get the picture at all if you imagine us po-faced in appliquéd robes. Although ritual is serious - like music is serious and food is serious - it can produce as much laughter as a trad session or a meal does. The difference between Catholicism and paganism for me is that if candle wax spills all over your hand in a pagan ritual, it is quite alright to laugh. I have never been more than momentarily embarrassed at one of our rituals, and I have never felt pressurised into doing anything I didn't want to. I soon realised that going 'skyclad' (a posh word for nude) is rarely an option in a northern climate, and stopped worrying about that.

As a glance at the swelling New Age sections in Irish book shops will tell you, there's a lot of this stuff about. What makes me feel comfortable in the Sisters of Gaia is that what we're doing feels more local than exotic. Some people are drawn to Aboriginal Drumming Weekends or Zen Buddhism or Shamanic Dance, but I feel more at home and less pretentious doing modern versions of what my ancestors were doing at the same time of year, long before St. Patrick ever arrived to harass the snakes.



Photo: Paul Connell

feel akin to people who search rather than follow, who pat trees as they pass them, who understand why sex can make you cry, who like to throw parties when the weather changes.

The group I've been with for the last year, the Sisters of Gaia, is made up of ten to fifteen women, aged from their teens to their fifties. About a third of us are lesbian or bisexual, as far as I can guess. Being women-only makes it a particularly safe and supportive space, I suppose; we've never discussed it. There's a lot we've never formally discussed in the Sisters of Gaia, now

choirs, prayer meetings and raves all at once. An evening with the Sisters of Gaia, for me, is a space out of time. I turn up with my rucksack of props, start to unwind, and forget about the day that's gone, and the days to come; all that matters is the present. I get my sense of proportion back; with my mind on the huge forces of the cosmos, tiny worries about deadlines tend to recede. This is one of the only spaces in my life where I can be completely irrational (and at times, let's be honest, howl like a banshee).

Behind all the centuries of Catholicism Ireland is still such a pagan country, with its holy wells and rags tied to trees and dolmens and stone circles littering the countryside. I know there are a lot of queers out there who are curious about such things, or have read the books but haven't got around to doing anything about it. All it takes is a few friends, a modicum of planning, and the will to take your spiritual side seriously. Deciding what to do in what order in advance and jotting it down might seem a bit official, but n practice it saves you from those long awkward silences. It also means that instead of murmuring 'wouldn't it have been nice if we'd brought wood and made a bonfire' you're actually leaping over one.

If you want religion with an agreed set of rules that everyone living on your street will find respectable, this is probably not it (unless you live on a remarkable street). But if you want to escape from our highly secular les/bi/gay culture for a few hours and sing to the stars, what's stopping you?

snippets

TALAMH NA MBAN BENEFIT

Advance notice of a benefit gig for Talamh na mBan (permanent site for the Women's Camp) on International Women's Day, Friday March 8. Featuring the ever-popular Camp Vamps, the gig takes place 8.30 'til late at Cork's Blackrock Castle.

LESBIAN LIVES CONFERENCE

The Women's Education Research and Resource Centre at University College Dublin (WERRC) are holding the third Lesbian Lives Conference in the UCD Arts Building on March 2, 9.30am - 5.30pm. The theme is **Politics, Practice and Performance** and will focus on lesbian/feminist/queer politics and culture. It will be co-hosted by LOT.

The list of topics includes visual arts, theatre and performance, music, dance, media and popular culture, disability and 'lesbian culture' along with many others. There may also be exhibition space available for visual art work which would be free to non-commercial exhibitors.

WERRC also welcomes any proposals for workshops, readings or other ideas for the conference by the first week in February. Enquiries to WERRC at 706 8571.



Hell, New England

Boston. Home of culture and east coast gay mecca. Take me to the nearest bar, jet-lag or nay. Living with twelve straight people, it proved difficult finding people to escort me onto the scene. I took myself to a BAGLY (Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth) meeting on a Sunday afternoon and for the first time, I felt the sheer horror of approaching a queer environment on my own - no fifteen friends to stand behind, nobody to protect me from what was to come - an so

I approached, beads of sweat forming not only on my brow, calmly walked past the group of boys standing outside and proceeded to stand behind a corner for an eternity, thinking, "Will I, won't I?" A sad case. It took a huge amount of effort to finally take the bull by the proverbials, as I walked through the now substantial grouping and pushed the door, only to find it locked. The sniggering started. "Downstairs", I was told.

Once inside, I introduced myself to a small group and enquired as to the whereabouts of The Scene. It was, to quote Cher in 'Clueless', "a Twin Peaks moment". They looked at me sideways and left.

Somebody offered to introduce me to an Irish friend of theirs. Quick as you like, I replied, "I didn't travel half way across the world to meet Irish people." Realising that he was dealing with Mr. Tact, he left.

Later, during a male-only meeting, held on a stairs, I attempted to play the Irish puppy-dog, but they were having none of it. Irish or not, it seemed I had unwittingly stumbled on a free masons meeting and nobody was in the slightest bit impressed. I went to the loo, flushed it and watched in

abject terror as it flooded the entire area. Just time to pick up my belongings and run.

A few days later, I discovered by chance, a Gay night in a club called Avalon, while pumping to Greek dance music of all things, in a haze of heterosexual intrigue. One flat-mate rose to the occasion the following Sunday night, being an expert in cadging free drinks from anybody. Once he had escorted me through the doors, I told him to bog off, which he did gladly. Left to my own devices, an Italian-American barman, feeling sorry for me, introduced me to his friends, but it felt vaguely uncomfortable, being the only person in the group wearing sensible clothes. Later, I met a Ru Paul-like and his friend Leo, who whisked me off to the nether regions of the club. Deciding it was time to see how drunk my friend was, I returned to the main area of the club and lost all of my wonderful new friends and my one old friend and, dejectedly, went homewards.

The following morning in work, I described my night to a filing clerk. She had been there too and had thought it was wonderful. When I asked her if there were any other venues I should know about, she did THAT stare and left to make coffee.

Alone and tired of the entire search, the following night, I ended up back in Father's First, the local college flea pit. The next time I travel, I'll do my research beforehand. All that was left was the personal ads in a local rag. But that's another story...

Jim Redmond



February 1, 1994

'Interestingly, when I wrote around to all public representatives North and South, I got two almost identical replies. One was from the Rev. Dr. Ian Paisley of the Bob Martin University - I always thought Bob Martin were pills for dogs with worms - and the other from a Dublin T.D. both demanding the death penalty for homosexuality. I thought that was rather curious.'

David Norris quoted in Hot Press.

February 22, 1986

"The House of Lords in London saw SAS type action from women gay rights protesters, as Peers approved by 202 votes to 122 the controversial clause banning councils from promoting homosexuality. Described as 'a pure Tarzan act' the women threw ropes over the rails of the public gallery and 'abseiled' to the floor."

Clause 28

February 9, 1979

British Rail train driver Eric Newton (who changed his name to Shirley Sinclair) was told he could continue coming to work dressed as a woman. He must, however, change into the regulation uniform before starting work at the Tinsley depot in Sheffield.z

February 13, 1990

An Amsterdam court rejected an appeal by two gay men to marry after city officials refused them a civil ceremony. Lawyers for Frans Stello and Gerard Kuipers argued that homosexual marriages were allowed in Denmark and California and should be permitted in the Netherlands. The two men were not in court to hear the decision. They were on honeymoon.

February 20, 1995

The Diceman, Thom Mc Ginty died peacefully in his sleep on this morning last year. Thom succeeded in creating a positive image of living rather than dying with Aids and inspired everyone with his dignity and courage.

Compiled by Ann E. Holbrook from The National Lesbian and Gay Federation Media Archive.



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“He’s not a homophobic character in a traditional way”

Gerry Stembridge talks to Jim Redmond

Gerry Stembridge is the director and writer of the recent film, *Guiltrip*, playwright of *The Girls of Summer*, *Ceascescu's Ear* and *Dracula* and was director of RTE's *Nighthawks* from 1988 to 1989. His latest play is *The Gay Detective*.

The play is very cinematic, in that it runs from scene to scene.

There is a certain cinematic element, in that there is a parallel in the play with private detective stories we all recognise from the forties. One thing that detective stories do is that they give you a very strong plotline, a very strong narrative line, and I wanted that, to have a good story. I wanted very much to have a format, a lot deeper than a mystery or a thriller or bad deeds, that the play had that anger and rush of action. I like plays that just keep going all the time.

Because it's a thriller, did it come at the same time as *Guiltrip*, or was *The Gay Detective* something you were working on before?

I wasn't working on it before. I was asked to do a play before I shot *Guiltrip*, so it was sort of in my mind. I love mystery stories and murder mysteries and it seemed to me to be a good metaphor also for the story I wanted to tell – the whole idea of how detectives, generally, must to a certain degree, lead secret lives, be involved in deceptions.

The play comes full circle. Do you think there's an answer?

What I'm interested in is how an individual develops their own moral signposts and how you end up going up so many dark alleys and sideways along the way. That exploration is an inevitable part of peoples' lives. The play starts where it finishes, but that's only because someone is telling the story and trying to understand it, the way we all try to understand our pasts.

Looking at the personal struggle, would you see the play as being about a gay man trying to find an identity, with homophobia used as a framework, or a setting?

Possibly in reaction to a lot of gay fiction, where very often the problems are 'the problems of coming out', 'the problem of existing in a culture which is homophobic'; it is very often presented in too politically correct terms, where everything is nice on one side and there's awful people on the other side.

In the sense that everything is good or bad, with *Bent* on



Pic: Kellie Greene

one side and *Angels in America*, for example, on the other?

I would say that *Angels in America* has more complicated features to it. Within the gay world itself, there are many people and types – the difficulty often lies within the person. After someone has come out, the next thing is, where will this life lead me?

At its very simplest, the play describes the mystery that allows us to “go down dark and murky streets”. There's any number of possibilities. To people outside – the character of the superintendent is an example – the life itself is a mystery – “What are they at? Saunas at four in the morning?” What does all that mean? What I'm trying to do is sift through it. In our culture and in most western cultures, everybody grows up with the whole idea of homosexuality never being mentioned. People

must start literally from scratch to work out their own destiny. What I'm interested in is how hard it is to be gay within yourself. I had *Faust* very much in mind, you know, the whole idea of the fella selling his soul. And to a certain degree, the character in *The Gay Detective*, Pat, offers up his sexuality and his personal life to what he perceives as some notion of justice and what I want the play to raise is, is such a compromise worth it? And what is it doing to him? In other words, the superintendent wants to use Pat's sexuality to pursue this particular case and the guy decides that this is possible, because he thinks solving the case is for the greater good.

As it's based on real events, did you find the play difficult to contain?

I often find that I'm listening to the news and my reading of the

situation is quite different to what the media is projecting. The things I'm drawing from are making me believe other things and in the work that I do, I take the thread of real events, but actually create the story I want to tell. This is, in many ways, my own expression of what I've felt about the way in which people behave towards each other in Ireland. The relationship in the play between the Superintendent and the detective is reflected in so many cases between a gay person and a straight person in Ireland. You agree not to make a big deal out of it. I'm very interested in how so much of Irish society covers itself in chat and in talk and in not getting to the point. The Superintendent character represents an awful lot of that. He's not a homophobic character in a traditional way. He doesn't even know what that word means. It's not a conscious thing. I suspect the audience will

find him a very amusing and attractive character.

Particularly the lesbian and gay audience?

There are people in the professional classes. To a certain level they are openly gay, but it's like a separate part of their lives and they might have a whole social life which is nothing to do with that and then an entirely parallel one which is a gay social life.

There's that dichotomy running throughout the play. Did you find that odd?

Odd, no. But it reflects the whole idea of what you were saying about private life and public life.

Especially with those who are in any kind of job which is perceived to be more traditional employment, like the guards. I imagine there are many people in the professional classes who manage to quite happily lead two separate lives and both of them open in their way. I was interested in exploring the whole mechanics of gay society.

Pat seems like a character who is very comfortable with himself...

Yes, but I definitely believe that if you want to get at something that is true, that you often have to go through a lot of unpleasant realities. I'm interested in concepts like loyalty and honesty on a personal level. I certainly enjoyed getting at that through a much more circuitous route.

Was there any problem with using the names of *The George and Shaft*?

I wouldn't imagine so. I'm not saying anything derogatory about them. There's a reason why I did it. The story is a very extreme sequence of events, and yet, as you said yourself, when you look at disparate incidents in Dublin, these things all happened. It's a very simple way of making the audience feel rooted in a certain kind of reality. It does become really about Dublin in the 1990s and it is about those places and it is about those streets and that's why I did it. In films, you do that with a picture, with a location, but in plays, the words are more important. I hope when people come out of the theatre, they will say, “Well, that play went for it.” And it's not a play which holds back. I hate coy plays. I hate plays that hint at something. I want an oomph! and I want the play to be a bit of an assault.

The Gay Detective runs in the Project Arts Centre from February 11 to March 9, 8pm, nightly.

Love Stars '96

With Flora, Fauna and Merryweather, three exceptionally good fairies...

Aries - March 21-April 20

For ages now you've been working your ass off to make things work in your love-life. Mercury has made sure your head was ruling your heart, but now its losing its grip. It's time to let those love juices flow freely. You may be often mind-numbingly boring when it comes to injecting your relationships with a little zest, but divine inspiration lurks under the scientific rocks in your head. Try letting your instincts do the work and love will find the way forward. Fate has a bit of a cross-dressing fetish.

Taurus - April 21-May 20

For Barbra Streisand's sake, when are you going to realise that there's more to relationship than going down the pub? We know you just adore socialising, but if you want to hold onto a lover (or even get one) it's time to realise that quality time means quality love. Mercury has been affecting your metabolism of late, making you pissed after only three pints. Perhaps the stars are trying to tell you something. Dry up and get sexy! Fate shoves three M&Ms up your arse.

Gemini - May 21-June 21

Just why is all this planetary activity working against your nature? Usually you are as fickle as Paula Yates and as manipulative as Mother Teresa, but recently you've come over all loyal and even went in for a bit of nest building. Snap out of it! If you continue the way you're going, in two months or less you will have decided to end it all because your life has no meaning whatsoever. You find it easy to make people adore you, but while this year brings stability in your love-life, your feet will become itchy. Try using your creative skills in the sack as anti-relationship restlessness therapy. Fate cums in threes.

Cancer - June 22-July 23

Enough of this masochism darlings! If you want to get ahead, get dominant. If you're into a little subservient nooky, that's no problem; but letting your lover walk over you outside the sack is just not worth it. Let the world know that you have total self-control and see how positively attitudes towards you will change for the better. Don't run home to mother if at first you don't succeed - just keep trying. Destiny wears a pair of handcuffs.

Leo - July 24-August 23

My Gawd, are you hot in bed? Does Pinocchio have wooden balls? The problem is that although you can satisfy superbly, you often find yourself left dangling. You desperately need to find an equal so dump your current partner if he/she isn't a Gemini or Sagittarius. Mercury has had you running around like a blue arsed fly trying to prove yourself but now it's time to sit back and let others do a bit of the proving. Aquarius is about to usher in the perfect shag. Fate will knit an Aran sweater.

Virgo - Aug 24-Sept 22

Boy, have you got stars in your eyes. It's time to take your head out of the clouds and concentrate on letting go of the things that inhibit you. If this is a lover, give him/her the push without mercy, because you are worth so much more. The coming year could turn out to be a milestone of lurv, when you turn as many heads as Farrah Fawcett did in 1977. Make sure you capitalise on your assets, and choose with care. Fate wears Tweed by Lenthéric.

Libra - Sept 23-Oct 23

Mercury is retrograde and this means that you're going to be even more easy-going this year than you've been in '95. Really, if you get any slower you might as well forget sex altogether. You have the potential to be the lover of anyone's dreams, but you'll never achieve success unless you get your act together and capitalise on your imaginative sense of humour. Love is in the air signs, but what good is love without hot sex? Fate eats with chopsticks.

Scorpio - Oct 24-Nov 22

Glenn Close doesn't have a look in with you these days. Fatal Attraction smacks of an understatement. But don't try to slit your wrists just yet, there's light at the end of the tunnel. Your ideal mate is about to materialise any day now. You need to cut down on your alcohol and drug intake to be aware of just who that lover is. We know you have an addictive personality, but get addicted to something that's good for you for a change. Fate rips your thermal vest off.

Sagittarius - Nov 23-Dec 21

Life is one big Mardi Gras for you these days, especially since you're wearing a mask most of the time. When it comes to love, keeping up appearances is not important. Strip off and exhibit yourself to anyone whose bothered to look. Only then will you find your hearts desire. We know you won't believe this, but will have to leave the office to find romance or hold on to your lover - unless you have a photocopier fetish. If this is the case, you might as well kill yourself. Fate twists your left nipple.

Capricorn - Dec 22-Jan 20

You've got to get over this hero-worship phase. You are not a hero and the minute you realise this you'll be free to worship someone else. Pick that someone else with care, the whole zodiac seems to want to suck your blood at the moment. Perhaps you should stick to your own star-sign, but then again perhaps not - it would be too boring for words. Better advice for '96 would be to take a vow of celibacy and buy yourself a large mirror. Fate has psoriasis.

Aquarius - Jan 21-Feb 19

Well you lucky people, the new dawning of the age of Aquarius took place on January 19 and this means that in most aspects of your life you are going to achieve major success over the coming months. With the sun in our sign love seems to be around every corner and existing relationships couldn't be going smoother. One little warning, your haughty intellectual meanderings are a bit of a turn-off, especially in bed, so work hard at coming down a level or two between the sheets. Fate wears a pair of nylon St Bernard knickers.

Pisces - Feb 20-March 20

You moody gits, it's time to wake up and smell the coffee! Planetary activity in the house of Aquarius suggests you've been feeling a little hard done by of late, but now is the time to look towards the future. Your capacity for lurv is legendary and you have the ability to charm the knickers off a nun, so get working and use that charisma to hook the catch of the bunch. There's plenty of fish in the sea but you're by far the best swimmer, and you'll be surprised at just who fancies their chances with you. Fate carries a large over-ripe banana.



(.....once a month when you're feeling **not quite straight??**)

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Deborah Ballard

Taking the unfashionable view that the year is best reviewed when it's actually over, *Mediawatch* brings you the best and worst of 1995. From the mainstream media, the gay press and unsubstantiated gossip. An entirely personal choice - no appeals, no prizes. A Happy New Year to you all!

Most Supportive Straights: actor Jonathan Ryan, for confronting Brendan McGahon on the *Sunday Show* (June); Proinsias De Rossa for giving LOT a grant and not bottling out of opening their offices when the *Sunday World* attacked him for it (September); St Mary Robinson, for receiving the editors of and contributors to *Lesbian & Gay Visions of the 21st Century* at the Aras (December).

Most Ludicrous Bigot: Brendan McGahon TD (outbreaks all year, but especially on *Kenny Live* and the *Sunday Show* in June and the *Late Late* in November). Also ran: Declan Tierney, TV reviewer of the *Galway Sentinel* (June).

Most sinister homophobe: Joint first: Joe McCarroll (in the *Trib* in

The best of times, the worst of times

August) and the Rev Martin Smyth (on UTV's *Kelly* in October).

Most mealy-mouthed homophobe: Fr Desmond O'Donnell of the Oblate Fathers: "Far too many men seeking priesthood ... have a weak male identity" (June).

Weirdest homophobic remark: "Homosexual orientation is incongruous. What's it for?" Joe McCarroll (August).

Most supportive press comment: "Our advice to parents concerning gay godparents [is to] go out and get one before they're all snapped up" (leader in the (London) *Independent*, August).

Naffest headline: 'Lesbian Lunacy' (The *Sunday World* on LOT's grant, September).

Most out-to-lunch agony aunt: 'Dear Linda' of the *Sunday World* (whenever).

Biggest Wave: Nothing quite on the level of the Emmet Stagg and Fr Cosgrave affairs, but *Mediawatch* nominates the death of Sir James Kilfedder on the day that BBC Radio 4 and the *Belfast Telegraph* revealed that he was one of the MPs to whom OutRage! had written urging them to come out. This led to a wave of vilification of OutRage! in general and Peter Tatchell in particular by the same press whose connivance makes outing possible.



Supportive: Mary Robinson

Best TV Programme: *Audre Lorde: Tribute to a Poet* (on Channel 4's Dyke TV, September); commended: *Kenny Live* on coming out to your parents (January).

Best Radio programme: *Out in the Open's* programme on queer-bashing (Anna Livia FM, October).

Best Newspaper Article: 'Homophobia Hits Women's US Golf Tour' by Graham Speirs in the *Sunday Tribune* (June).

Feeblest effort by the mainstream media: *Out and Away*, or *Fair City* features a gay character -

for two weeks. But good on Alan Smyth for agreeing to take the part of Eoghan, and doing it very well (February).

Best Quote: "The deceit and the lies - we don't call it that, we call it survival" - Anita Thoma talking about young people in the closet on *Kenny Live* in January.

Snidest semi-outing: by Robert O'Byrne in the *Irish Times* (December).

Greatest Achievement of the Irish Lesbian and Gay Community: Joint winners: NIGRA's poster campaign against Darwin Templeton of the *Sunday Life*, after he 'exposed' a leisure centre employee who had been convicted of a cottaging offense (May); Waterford Pride (June); organising against violence against lesbians and gay men (September).

Worst set-back for the community: the failure to achieve an equal age of consent in Northern Ireland and Great Britain (February).

Most embarrassing own goal: LOT talks to the *Evening Herald* (February)

And finally, queerest quote: "Ye're only a shower of wife-swapping sodomites!" - Una Bean Mhic Mhathúna (December).

needles and pins

'Movie Queens were Secret Lesbians', cried the *Sunday World* (January 14) in its profile of *The Sewing Circle* (sic). In this "shocking new book" Axel Madsen "lifts the lid off the gloss and glamour of Hollywood in the '20s, '30s and '40s and reveals (*you've guessed it*) a seedy underbelly".

The *Sunday World* rehashes the



Supposedly: Marlene

well-known same-sex affairs of Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo and Mercedes de Acosta ("they preferred the tenderness of a caring female partner") but then it gets more interesting. Apparently Madsen shows a photo of Joan Crawford "naked with another woman writhing between her legs". Any one who fancied Joan Crawford as a caring female partner might be getting a nasty shock, now.

Katharine Hepburn is a contender, of course, apparently because, apart from having "boyish good looks" and living with women, she was "rigid and depressed"! (I always thought that came of insisting on sleeping on the floor outside Spencer Tracey's door when he was on a bender (so to speak).

Best of all, why would Judy Garland only do it with girls *in the afternoon*? I must order the book at once.

still on the long finger

The *Irish Times* and the *Cork Examiner* both reported (December 12) that an umbrella group of minority organisations, including our own dear GLEN, is calling on the Minister for Equality and Law Reform to introduce the proposed Equal Status legislation at once. The umbrella group is opposing attempts, particularly by the vintners's associations, to weaken the provisions of the legislation. Fintan Farrell of the Irish Travellers Movement put it in a nutshell: "It must surely be within the competence of the legislators to frame ... legislation that protects people from discrimination ... while [allowing] proprietors to deal with under-age drinking, drug-pushing, drunk people or trouble-makers". Quite so.

And finally ...

That photo above will have to go - *Mediawatch* has given up smoking. Your prayers are requested, particularly by her girlfriend.

Merry Christmas, Mr Norris



Supported: David Norris

I was greatly cheered, on opening the *Sunday Indo* on Christmas Eve, to see David Norris in a Santy hat attacking a turkey at a lesbian and gay Christmas Dinner. His account of his Christmas as a Dublin gay man was so delightful that its more serious message slipped down as easily as egg-nog. We are so familiar with the accounts of Christmases past and present written by foreign-born residents of this country, so charmed by their different customs and exotic feasts, that it is troubling to realise that Irish lesbians and

gay men might feel so alienated by an Irish family Christmas that they are creating new traditions of their own. David Norris's Christmas "will not be unlike that celebrated by the majority ... in our community lucky enough to have a comfortable home, a loving relationship and an affectionate family", but he quotes Elaine Frank, in last month's GCN, on the difficulties for those who are not out to their families. He also recalls the years when, before it was burnt out, the Hirschfeld Centre held open house for the gay community on Christmas Day.

It is David Norris's great talent to combine the personal and the general, the anecdotal and the political in a way which makes the straight reader able to accept his ferocious attacks on bigotry. Interviewed by Colette Sheridan in the *Cork Examiner* of December 13, he talked, inter alia, about the (rare) delight of being treated like a couple by one's lover's family, the discrimination suffered by gay Irish men and women, who are unable to obtain entry visas for foreign partners, the responsibility of the Church for the suffering of gay people through "ignorance, prejudice [and] social and legal stigma" and the normality of gay sex: "there is nothing possible between two men or two women which is not also possible between a man and a woman". As Una Bean Mhic Mhathúna well knows!

Male Gayz



Entrepreneurial: Junior Larkin

Welcome to Ireland's second gay free-sheet, *Dublin Guyz*, published by old GCN lag, Junior Larkin. A 20pp tabloid with full colour cover (which is more than GCN can manage), it's aimed at young gay men on the Dublin scene and is loosely modelled on the UK's *Boyz*. Nicely laid out in tabloid style but rather short on content, the first issue had a profile of straight male strippers Chain Gang which looks suspiciously like an ad, an article on 'sexual snooping', music and video reviews, 'Ask Attracta', a crossword and a rather short Christmas listings.

And there's the rub - so small is the targeted market (Dublin's scene) it's hard to see where the money's going to come from to keep *Guyz* on the road.

It seems Junior's diversifying his assets, anyway. I see in the *Sunday World* that he is 'creating his own pop group for the gay community'; 'Gayzone' are to be 'unveiled on March 22 when Larkin opens his

new gay club, Wonderbar'. *Mediawatch*, though open-mouthed at all this entrepreneurial activity, is not holding her breath.

Still, you've got to hand it to Junior. He's managed to get the *Sunday World*, a notably homophobic paper, to publicise gay men's gripes about the way some 'boy bands' were said to target gay audiences without acknowledging them, and to give him free publicity for no less than three gay enterprises.

lifestyles of ...

In December's *Management* magazine Ferdia O'Dowd looks at the increasing numbers of Irish managers who are openly gay. This he attributes not just to decriminalisation but also to recognition by firms that gay managers have desirable qualities - like childlessness. They've also realised that there's money to be made by targeting gay people - "the ultimate dinkies" (dual income, no kids).

Gay dinkies there undoubtedly are, as gay publications never tire of telling their advertisers, but it's not the whole story. As the Combat Poverty/GLEN Report (*Irish Times*, *Star*, December 12) makes abundantly clear, when class, race and gender are taken into account, a very different picture emerges.

So it's that time of the year again when we all live in hope of receiving a valentine or two in the post or maybe even a little romance to come our way. But what is romance? Everyone I spoke to had their own ideas of what romance is, ranging from a smack in the face with a six pack, to a little cubic circona cluster depending on how screwed up they were. The following are just a few of the stories that people told me...

Gary, 22, Accountant

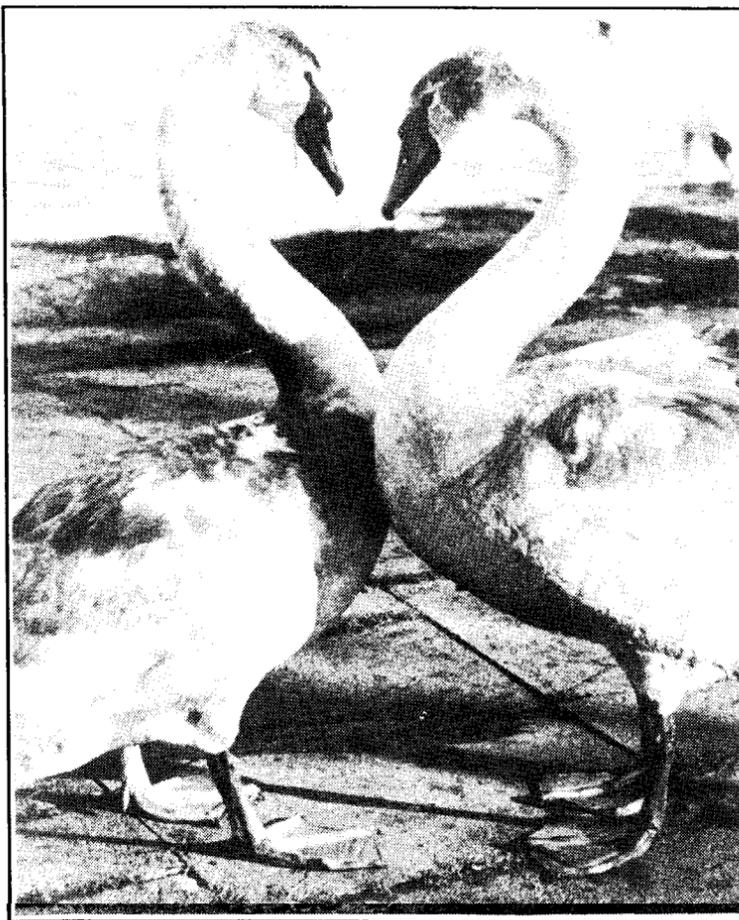
I was going out with this guy named Steve who had this habit of singing love songs to me. I usually have quite an aversion to such things but in his case I decided to make an exception. One day we met up and he seemed a little more upbeat and starry eyed than usual, so I asked him what was up and he said that he had written me a poem. He then handed me a piece of paper and I began to read.

I nearly died - it was all bits of Madonna songs strewn together, I remember a bit of it: it went something like this

I'll remember the love that you
gave me
I'll remember the way that you
changed me

I can't help falling in love with
you
but this used to be our play-
ground
and I'll remember the love that
you gave me

Very naff, eh? After reading it I was quite taken aback; after all he'd left out



ROMANCE

Like a Virgin: my own personal anthem. But it was the thought that I found quite sweet. I gave him a kiss and told him how much I loved it; he wasn't very bright, so I appreciated how much effort he had put into it. So I suppose it was very romantic.

Berto, 32, Artist

I received my first Valentine's Day card ever only four years ago - I was never very popular with the guys due to my lack of hair. When I received it

in the post I was so thrilled that my hands were shaking and when I opened the envelope, to my sheer delight, it had been hand made. Opening up the card there was a Polaroid of some guy's hairy ass staring at me...

Mama Mia! I nearly died, but secretly I was so thrilled that I had a secret admirer with the type of ass that I like. I have still got the picture and have done my best ever since to match it to a face (preferably mine).

Padraig, 27, Spiritual Healer

Valentine's Day is special for me in so many ways. As I am very in touch with myself I find that day to be very emotional for me. It was Valentine's Day three years ago and I had just moved in with Noel. We were very happy, just myself, Noel and Moondust, my dog. That Valentine's morning Noel went to work and I decided to bring Moondust for a walk. I remember being quite concerned about Moondust that morning as I

could sense a purple, pinky kinda aura thingy around him. I should have known that it meant danger. I still blame myself you know!

Anyway Moondust tugged very strongly on his lead and it slipped out of my hand and he darted off into the middle of the road, into the path of a speeding van. Everything went in slow motion. I'll never forget that van, it was big and white and the worst thing was that it was from Interflora.

Noel rushed home from work to comfort me. The next day, unknown to me, Noel went down to the pound and rescued one of those poor abandoned puppies for me as a surprise. He arrived home with a box in his arms. When I opened it I started to cry - that little face looking up at me melted my heart. It also made me realise just how much I loved Noel.

We are still together just me, Noel and Moonbeam.

James, 25, Graphic Designer

This happened to me when I was 20. It was Valentine's Day and myself and my boyfriend went out for a romantic meal and then on to a party at Trinity College, as I was still a student there. We both had quite a few to drink and were feeling very giddy. We

left the party and had a quick romp on the rugby pitch - luckily I'd remembered not to wear any underwear that night so access was relatively easy. It was very exciting as anyone could have come along and my boyfriend couldn't keep his hands off me.

Walking up Dame St we passed by the little park by the entrance to Dublin Castle. He plucked me a prickly rose and got down on one knee, (I would have preferred if he had got down on both them), and confessed his undying love for me. I remember laughing and telling him to get up and to stop being so silly, but I liked it really. I stayed the night with him and the next day he asked me if I remembered what he had said to me the night before. I said "no" as I wanted to hear him say it again: he did. It was the most romantic moment I have experienced to date. Unfortunately he dumped me only a week later, I was very distraught, but I'm over him now. Therapy works wonders.

Garreth O'Brien

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the word cosmetic comes from the greek, kosmos,
meaning harmony, order, cosmos



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CAN WE
QUOTE
YOU ON
THAT?

“

“Matt Dillon's underwear”

Boy George in a US magazine on
how he would like to be reborn.

“I always said if I hadn't been a
woman I'd have been a drag
queen. I think I would have
because I love all that fancy
hair... It's great here in
California. Every year at
Halloween, I can go right down
Santa Monica Boulevard and
nobody even knows it's me.
There's about forty of me walk-
ing around - Dollies every-
where.”

Dolly Patron talking image and cult
status with Jay Leno on NBC's *The
Tonight Show*.

“You're so butch yet you act so
camp.”

The perpetually bemused Judy
Finnegan of ITV's *This Morning
Television* to the wonderfully twee
Mike Flowers the guy responsible
for injecting some *joie de vivre* into
Oasis' popular dirge *Wonderwall*.

“It depends what's in it for me”

Our darrlink Zsa Zsa Gabor when
asked on TV what she thought
about condoms

“So with a name like ATTRAC-
TA you must be kind of
religious?”

“Hmm I worship the phallus.”

Sean Monciffe to the classical Ms
Cox on RTE's late night show *The
End*.

“Would I show my pee-pee? If
I had to. I could. If that's the
hardest thing I had to do on
film. I would be a lucky man.
But I wouldn't want to do any
gratuitous pee-pee showing.”

Actor Keanu Reeves in
Entertainment Weekly talking about
showing his thang on camera.

“Gradually I did see TV's on the
telly. Usually as ugly, frumpy
trannies or drag queens, which
are not TV's I hasten to add,
they're gay men dressed up in
frocks.”

TV comic Eddie Izzard in London's
Prime Magazine defining the differ-
ence between those men who wear
a dress, and those men who dress
UP in dresses.

”

COMPILED BY
KEN MCGUILLAN

With the mist curling over the bog roads, and holy wells nestled in the lush green fields, rural Ireland, the land of saints and scholars, would make a lovely postcard. But is the reality as beautiful? GCN talked to four people from different rural towns about themselves, the effects family and church had on them, and what attitudes they were faced with.

RURAL LIVING



Photo: Kellie Greene

Rolling fields and curling hedgerows don't bring happiness or fulfilment, and if you're lesbian or gay, and living in the 'heartlands', your heart, and your happiness, may suffer more than you can bear.

Some areas have developed a small 'scene' of their own, and there the quality of life for lesbians and gay men has improved dramatically. But in town after town across the country, gay women and men are living in isolation and fear, without anyone to talk to, anywhere to go, and wondering if they have a future to plan.

Jean is in her 40's, married with three children, and living in the area she was born in.

Until I finally got to talk to someone about being gay a year ago, I had seriously considered suicide. I felt very isolated, totally alone. I have a lot of guilt about my situation.

20 years ago I met a woman and we were together for five years. But then she got married, and that was expected of me too - I suppose I thought it would change me, solve my 'problem'. Throughout my marriage I've tried to ignore all thoughts of being gay; I did what was expected of me but it hasn't made me happy. Attitudes don't seem to have changed much - the church still tells people that women like me are wrong, and that's what they believe. When I was at school, 33 years ago, a nun wrote to my mother about me, but it was such a taboo subject that my mother ignored it. Did she even know what was being said? I told my husband a year ago that I

was gay, and our relationship has been dead for a long while, but I feel bad about marrying him; I think I've ruined his life, but at the time, what else could I do? He doesn't say much about it, but I know there's always been stories about me: gossip spreads quickly in this town, and I don't always know how to tell people; I don't want to mess up their lives too.

My eldest daughter knows about me now, and she's very supportive. But I don't want to tell the younger two yet, I don't think they'd understand.

It's a big thing for a country person to come up to the city, so to get to any gay venues takes some organising. A

guy. I put this out of my head because of my mother's expectations for me.

When I came back I was scared because I knew what I felt was wrong. If you're born Catholic you're born guilty, and that's it. I thought I was the only person like me in the area. Finally I needed to talk so much that I told a close friend and she was great, very supportive.

When I did things on my mother's terms we had a good relationship, but when I met a woman, not a local woman, and started seeing her, I wanted to be honest and told my mother I was gay. I didn't want other people telling her; stories had already start-

If you're born Catholic you're born guilty, and that's it

social life isn't so important to me, but I'd like to be able to meet friends and chat, have a coffee ... I don't want to move from here, this is my home. But I'd love to see a network starting up, maybe just to write to other people like me ... I'd like to start something like that.

Siobhán is in her 30's, from a small town, and has recently moved to Dublin.

Growing up was like any country girl's experience: I had a boyfriend and I was going to get married. I'd started my own business and from the outside seemed pretty settled.

I decided to go to America, and stayed for six years. I had suspicions about my sexuality; I knew I wasn't happy and I didn't want to marry this

ed, but she was devastated, she thought I would be lonely - and she worried what the neighbours would say. My eldest sister is the same - she 'loves the sinner not the sin', but my other sister is very defensive for me, and won't tolerate criticism of gay people.

But in this small town everyone was always talking about me - there was never any hostility, just talking about me, staring at me. I had to leave - it would have been a very lonely life if I'd stayed. If only there could be more awareness of sexuality, starting with education, it wouldn't be so hard.

Trisha is in her early 20's, born in the Midlands, and has just returned there after two years in Dublin.

When I met a girl at college (in

Dublin) I knew it was different, and it seemed the most natural thing in the world, but I knew my family wouldn't see it like that. When I go up to see her, my mother thinks I've got a boyfriend. I get on well with my mother but I don't want to start any trouble - my uncles and aunts are really homophobic and make jokes - I have an awful fear of them finding out.

At times I get very lonely, especially when I think my girlfriend has loads of friends to talk to, and I get jealous.

I've never felt guilty, no! The church has no influence on me, and that upsets my mother too. She has this lovely picture of me but it's not who I am.

Social life? There's not much of that here for straight people, never mind gay! I come up to Dublin at least twice a month, and my girlfriend has introduced me to lots of people, but at home I do get lonely.

People here like to gossip and know each others' business, and that doesn't interest me. I'd like to have other people like me to talk to ... I'd like to see that happen here.

The following comes from someone who would only identify themselves as 'Lonely' from the north west ...

It's at times like these I wish I drank. It's at times like these I'm glad I don't. Here I am fast approaching the celebration of my 26th year on this planet feeling as though I have never really lived.

I live in a small town in north west Ireland. 'Bigotry Rules OK!' I look around this small town I live in and see the number of married people in our small community who at night throw their shoes under beds that are

not their own. 'Good on them', that's my motto. I look on at them with a mixture of awe and jealousy. I wonder if I 'became' heterosexual would I fare any better. I couldn't do any worse!

'He's being melodramatic', I hear you say. Let me assure you I'm not. It drives me crazy every month when my copy of GCN arrives and I see the ads for the *The Gym* and realise that being gay isn't a life-sentence in all parts of Ireland. The sexual revolution does continue somewhere on this fair shore of ours.

I'm not thick, you know; I know being gay shouldn't be looked upon as a disability, no matter what the Church might want us to think. But for the first 25 years of my life that's what it was. I was afraid of my sexuality, afraid of the force it held over me. Last year I decided I'd had enough and was no longer going to repress my natural feelings. I told my closest friends I was gay, they were cool with it, much more so than I'd have been if they'd told me. I couldn't bring myself to tell my parents, though. I know they don't have a very high opinion of 'queers'. I can live with that - I have to. I think what I really want is to have gay friends who I can identify with, who I can be comfortable with, who I can learn from. Where do you go to get gay friends in north western Ireland? Dublin isn't easy to get to when you work 6 days a week 51 weeks of the year; no place is easy to get to!

I remember when I first contacted the Gay Switchboard last year I told them where I lived and how I felt like the only gay person in the world. I wrote to them, shared my innermost fears and desires: its been my lifeline.

I've matured over the last year but wonder what's the use if my maturity is never going to be shared - is there a solution?

These experiences mirror those of many men and women up and down the country. Some are more positive than others, but all have one thing in common: they want to talk, to get together even in a small way, just to have contact. The secrecy these people live under needs some release, and not everyone wants to move, or should have to move. If you'd be interested in helping set up a network by post or phone, then write to Jean c/o Kitty at GCN.

Grainne Close
Hayley Fox-Roberts
Kitty McGuinness

safer sex guidelines

HIV can be present in blood (including menstrual blood) and sexual fluids. Therefore, it is advisable not to let these fluids into your own body, mucous membranes (the tissues of the mouth, anus and vagina) or eyes.

The four ways of HIV transmission:

- (1) Unprotected sexual intercourse.
- (2) Sharing of needles with injecting drugs
- (3) Infected blood or blood products
- (4) Infected mother to unborn child.

UNSAFE

Anal sex (fucking) without a condom is extremely high risk. If you fuck without a condom you will probably contract HIV at some stage.

Thinking: "He/she's too healthy looking or loves me too much to have HIV or AIDS".

SOME RISK

Fucking with a condom and water-based lube - quite safe but becomes high risk if the condom is not used properly.

Oral sex between women. If worried, use a dental dam.

Oral sex between men (sucking) - minimal risk but increases if he cums in your mouth. If worried use oral condoms (flavoured).

Rimming (tonguing the anus) - the presence of blood in the anus may present risk for HIV. High risk for all other sexually transmitted diseases.

PREVENTION

Use a condom or dental dam; use only water based lubricants; avoid damaging either the mucous membranes or protection by cutting your finger nails; cover any cuts; don't share sex toys unless covered with a fresh condom; use latex gloves (eg surgical gloves); avoid oral sex if you have mouth ulcers, bleeding gums or a sore throat or if your partner is bleeding or has sores around her vagina

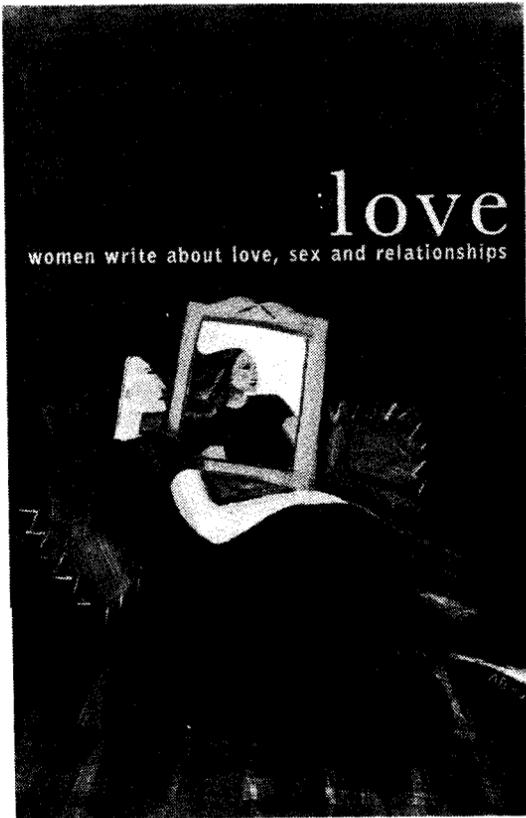
Cupid competitions

two fantabulous giveaways to get you in the mood for valentine's day

Fresh off the Women's Press, 'Room to Love' is the perfect book for Valentines day. Between its covers writers such as Alice Walker, Zora Neale Hurston, Rebecca Walker, Sheila Jeffreys and Lucy Goodison share their insights, understandings, passions and desires about relationships, love and sex. Women's Press have given us five copies of 'Room to Love' for you to treasure. Just answer the following question and the pleasure could be yours.

Who wrote The Colour Purple?

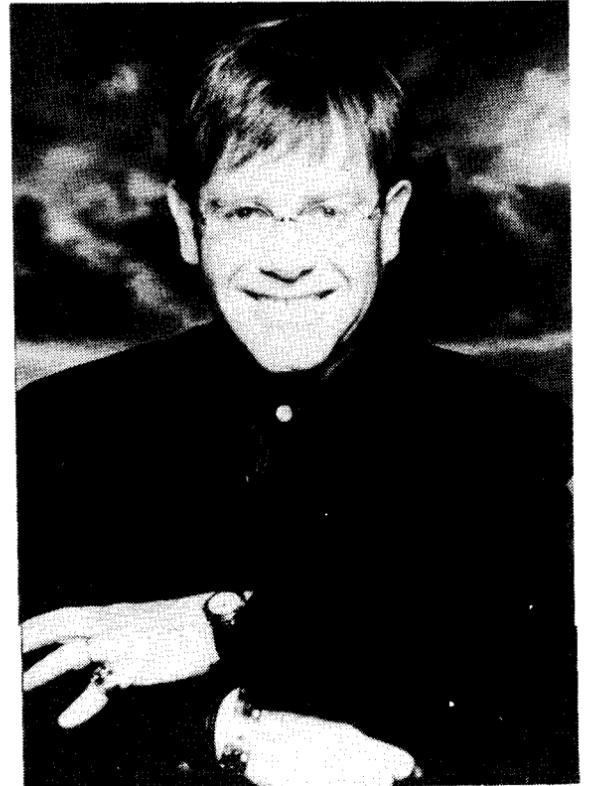
- a) Alice Walker
- b) Enid Blyton
- c) Helen Steiner Rice



Released in a special package just in time for the feast of St Valentine, Elton John's Love Songs Collection is the perfect addition to your collection. Featuring hits from Candle in the Wind to Sacrifice, it showcases the best work Elton has done to date. Polygram have kindly given us five copies of the Love Songs Collection to give away this month. All you have to do is answer the following simple question.

Candle in the Wind was inspired by which legendary Hollywood icon?

- a) Kathy Bates
- b) Meryl Streep
- c) Marilyn Monroe



Answers on a postcard please to Valentine's Competition, Gay Community News, 10 Fownes St, Dublin 2.
Mark your card 'Room to Love' or 'Elton John' accordingly. Separate cards for each competition, please.
Closing date: February 28 1996.

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APPRECIATION

Gerry McNamara

I knew Gerry for the last third of his exuberant life. He had already met Denis Looby and in many ways the creation which I knew was the wonderful partnership of "Denis and Gerry". It is difficult in retrospect to pinpoint the evolution of a friendship, but by 1986 they had become a major part of my life. I can pinpoint that year because that was the year that Gerry told me that he was HIV-positive.

Faced with this reality, Gerry characteristically made himself aware of others who were not as fortunate as he in facing the restrictions and humiliations which AIDS inflicts. He saw them struggling with the accursed disease; he could not destroy the disease; he could, however, on a practical level, help, and he did. He and Denis worked tirelessly with various practical measures such as organising a rota of individuals to drive their cars to and from hospitals, so that the unfortunate patients and their friends or relatives did not, in addition to the horrors of AIDS, have to contend with the horrors of CIE. However, after a period of about two years, as he was not a person who understood the meaning of the word 'detachment', he was advised to curtail this work as it had become too stressful for him.

He then began to channel his enormous creativity into his new career as script writer at RTE. For his friends this was a

golden period because it meant that in his conversation he was constantly trying out some of his many new thoughts. A sentence beginning with the phrase 'What do we think about...' was invariably followed by an outlandish statement with which it was impossible to agree. He would observe your reactions and display complete surprise at your lack of support. The expression '...don't you think?' at the end of a sentence, said with a quizzical smile, cigarette raised at a jaunty angle in the right hand, invariably meant that you had made some *faux pas*, serious in his eyes, relating to, for example, linguistic style or social behaviour. He was not easy to please. However, in more serious moments when he used the phrase "Denis and I think ..." you knew it was something that was important to him.

Inevitably the accursed disease gradually curtailed his creative work as a scriptwriter and then as a journalist. In addition he knew he had to widen the circle of friends and family who had to know that he was terminally ill - most importantly his parents, whom he adored, although often critical. His criticism was not necessarily rational. I will never forget him say in bewildered tones just having just put down the telephone (he loved the telephone): "Can you believe it? My parents are extraordinary. They want to give us a mega-mix." Looking

at Denis for help for what was now the most cataclysmic crisis in his life, he said: "What will we do with it? There is no room in the kitchen. Denis, you must stop them." Any other son would have been thrilled if their parents had offered him a mega-mix - not Gerry.

When AIDS had finally encircled him, he was conscious of the need to avoid the awkwardness, coolness, and even hostility that can be evident at any funeral ceremony, whether it be religious or secular, where AIDS is involved. This was important - of the 'Denis and I think' category. Therefore, he gave detailed instructions as to what was to be done so that all his friends - gay, straight, male, female, ill and not so ill, rich and not so rich, bright and not so bright, would feel included and be a welcome part of the whole. He knew that Denis loved his family and they in turn loved Denis. He knew that their love was not a commonplace, but a rarity. This love, visible, I suspect, to many of us, for the first time, was what imbued the ritual of the mass in a city centre Victorian Gothic church and the subsequent burial. It was a time achingly sad to witness, but throughout beautiful. It was Gerry's last creative achievement, possibly his most important, his 'Jupiter' symphony.

R. John McBratney



Before discussing the 'Lesbian Label' I feel it's important to be aware of the effects of labelling in general. When we label someone we limit them. Automatically there are expectations of how to be, how to do, how to think and how to live. I know because I find myself doing it all the time. For some people having a label means that they exist; but for me the 'lesbian' label does not feel right. Why? Firstly, because it is loaded with so many negative connotations, i.e. you're abnormal, you're a sinner, you're perverted, you're a threat and you molest children. This was what I heard when I was growing up: it was never seen as healthy. You were snubbed and you were thought to be something evil and today that is still with me. I would much prefer to call myself a 'gay woman' or 'dyke', if I were to put any label on myself - but I just see myself as a woman who loves women.

I don't view women as 'sexual objects'; again this is what

the word 'lesbian' conjures up in my head. When I was growing up this was all that people focused in on - the sex part - 'what do they do in bed?' I know the sex part is very important, but that's not all that's involved, when a woman loves another woman.

Secondly, when I hear the word 'lesbian' I think it is very final; you're a lesbian for life! For me, at the minute, I feel my preference or choice is to be with women because I love their company, the emotional bonding and the sensitivity; but this could change. As Della Grace said, talking about lesbians having sex with men, on Camille Paglia's *Without Walls*, 'it doesn't make you bisexual, it makes you adventurous.'

In spite of it all, in society's eyes I will be labeled as a lesbian. However, what is important for me is how I feel about myself and how I choose to live my life. Do I label myself, do I take on the external label and internalize it? If I do, how does it affect me? Artemis offered this advice to readers: 'Think twice before sticking a label and a stereotype on yourself.'

Today I am aware of this label (so loosely thrown around) and the depth of its effects. I believe it's the knowledge and awareness of its effect on me as a person that is the secret to dealing with it. My choice today is to see it for what it is, and refuse to be limited by it and continue to live it up!

Gráinne Close

Overview

Consultation and Representation

The fundamental power differential between those working within groups for the community and those outside structured acceptable frameworks creates situations which can lead to misunderstandings or even abuse. It appears sometimes there is the conscious decision on the part of some organisations to keep the larger community in the dark around their activities, which can lead to a degree of disapproval and hostility. Many groups working for change within marginalised communities are subject to pressures; lack of accountability and transparency are just some of the factors that contribute to this unnecessary pressure. However, if there was to be a widely accepted framework of operating in these communities, some of these pressures could be reduced.

Although group involvement can be inhibiting, it can also be enormously rewarding. Perhaps the more empowering option is to build our own family unit, to intentionally promote accountability within a supportive lesbian and gay community. After all, one of the reasons that lesbians and gay men get involved in community activism is because we all want to be ourselves. Many are disenchanted with what is going on amongst structured hierarchical groups where there seems to be no redress or avenue for feedback. It's not enough to introduce equal opportunity programmes and anti-discrimination legislation into the wider community without practising these policies in our own environments.

As we enter a new era of our history, where our closet is slowly reducing, we need to concentrate

on the services that we are providing to our community; there are several conflicting ways of looking to the future. Other civilisations have their own ways of dealing with human sexuality and the relations between individuals - so why can't we?

Organisations cannot effectively operate in a vacuum. There are many models which are suited for different tasks, e.g. when a group is mandated by the community to carry out certain tasks, they go off and do it, constantly feeding back for input, but basically day-to-day going it alone. This can often be the most efficient way of working, say, for example, around political advocacy. Often we are united in our opposition to inequality and discrimination, but we differ when it comes to deciding a model for combating the many obstacles to liberation. The process is as important as the final outcome; quite the opposite to 'the end justifies the means'. We should no longer be content with replicating existing patriarchal capitalist ways of working. Neither do we need excruciatingly painful levels of process. There are pluses and minuses to most things. To a greater or lesser degree the politics of organisations are in the public realm and because most of them in the lesbian and gay community are still evolving, the changes in our processes will determine our fate. It is worrying that, some people think political consciousness is exclusive! A profoundly disturbing idea! Increasing diversity can lead to ostracism from the community. One way to react to hostility is to create openness which will lead to ultimate victory in all our endeavours.

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Background

In 1992 the Combat Poverty Agency gave GLEN a grant to develop this important research. The CPA is a body appointed by law, so its decision to publish this gives the report added stature – bringing it more into the public eye, and hopefully increasing its effectiveness.

Much attention was paid to the initial research, and now its time to view the results and use them constructively. Some of the reports results had been leaked last year, giving a few groups an advantage in terms of requesting state funding under the recommendations included, and that is a good example of how underfunding and discrimination can result in a dog-fight over support.

The report investigated seven areas of disadvantage, using a sample representation of the lesbian and gay community. One difficulty immediately arose: How to represent a community that, because of discrimination and homophobia, is basically hidden? It proved impossible to fully illustrate conditions of life in the community, and the results may 'represent more the gay community which is "out", or sufficiently "out" to take part in a study' than the community as a whole. Nevertheless a sample of 159 respondents has given a picture of our community on all the issues that relate to disadvantage.

FACT: One-fifth (21%) of respondents are living in poverty.

FACT: Over half (57%) said they found it difficult to make ends meet (rising to 91% for those in poverty).

Findings

The family

The family is the original means of support, and this first chapter examines the 'coming out' experiences of the respondents. Telling family members about your sexuality can be very difficult, especially for younger people. The fear of hostility or rejection can result in isolation. The physical and psychological distress caused by this isolation can hinder school or work performance, and falling behind in this results in lower job prospects, which in the long term means falling down the economic ladder. The final result can be poverty and even homelessness. When the family support network is unavailable, the most important source of support becomes friends and a gay community network, but the community support networks are overstretched and underfunded; and that can prevent their access to the people that most need them.

FACT: 66% said the gradual awareness of their sexual orientation caused them 'some' or 'many' problems.

FACT: 96% had come out to at least one of their friends and most had lesbian or gay friends who could be a source of support.

FACT: Meeting other gay people was a problem identified by many. Those on low incomes or living in isolated areas faced particular problems with network access.

FACT: 72% thought that state recognition for same-sex partnerships would improve their lives.

Education and training

Education plays a big part in our adult economic and social abilities. For many young lesbians and gay men, facing hostility, confusion and loneliness at school or college can impair their learning ability, and may even result in early leaving. Again this leaves them economically vulnerable. Lack of counselling for students, and a lack of

understanding and training for teachers reinforces the negative images students are faced with, and again they can lose their place in the emerging workforce. For those who do not experience these problems at school, and who enter further training, fear of discrimination and harassment can still affect their learning potential.

FACT: 57% experienced

various problems at school, the majority arising as a result of them being lesbian or gay. These problems include depression, poor self-esteem, harassment and bullying.

FACT: 39% of those who experienced these problems at school, college or training schemes left earlier than anticipated because of the pressure this put them under.

FACT: When experiencing these problems, the respondents were reluctant to talk to school counsellors, teachers or supervisors because of literal or perceived negative reactions.

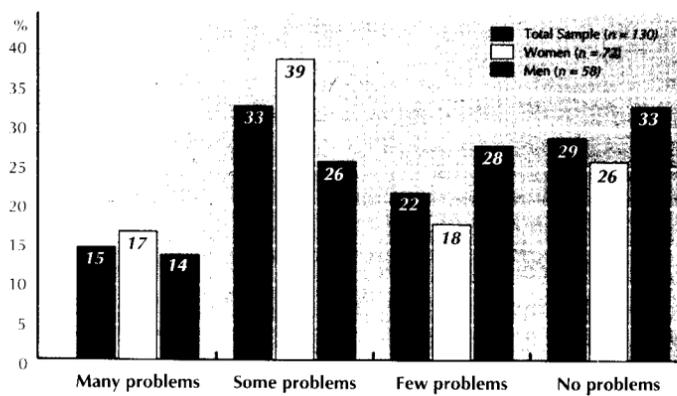
Employment and unemployment

Because of their fear of experiencing either discrimination or harassment many lesbians and gay men choose to avoid disclosing their sexual orientation at work, hiding their personal lives from colleagues at great personal cost. Others choose to avoid jobs in areas where they feel there may be a greater risk of harassment or discrimination, or to enter employment in areas where being lesbian or gay is not a disadvantage. However, in these cases such alternative areas of employment are often insecure or low paid.

FACT: 64% were either working or on fast-track schemes, of which only 16% were out at work.

FACT: Eleven people reported being dismissed from their job because they were lesbian or gay, and another twenty-three resigned because their sexuality could not be reconciled with their workplace.

FACT: Two-fifths of those not 'out' at work thought that discrimination and harassment would follow such a disclosure.



Debunking the rich myth

Gay people are typically seen as rich: single or double incomes, no kids. New research shows that many of us live in poverty – a fact that has been hidden for years. Hayley Fox-Roberts looks at the report and its implications for our community

Have you ever been poor? Really poor; not just run-out-of-money poor, not just wait-till-next-week poor, but so poor that you've nothing to fall back on, no-one to turn to and, worst of all, no way up? If you have not, you are lucky; but if you have you are not alone as a report recently published by GLEN and the Nexus Research Co-operative shows. Lesbians and gay men fall between two traps here – much poverty research does not focus on our particular needs, and a stereotype exists of the well-off, single, childless queer. The report at last highlights our particular problems and provides proof that action must be taken to prevent lesbians and gay men falling further behind socially and economically.

'Prejudice and discrimination must inevitably lead to diminished opportunities and impoverished lives.' So says Kieran Rose, co-chair of the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN); and without his insistence on that fact, the Combat Poverty Agency's research into the effects of discrimination against lesbians and gay men might never have got off the ground. It is the work

of organisations like GLEN, LOT (Lesbians Organising Together), the CPA (Combat Poverty Agency) and others that have made this report come about. Each of those groups is made up of committed individuals too numerous to mention – and all of these individuals have decided that change must be brought about. Each of those individuals realises that change does not happen by wishing, but by action. Even if you have never been in poverty, you probably know someone who has. Maybe you would rather shut your eyes, walk past beggars in the street – how many of those kids with 'homeless, please help' signs in front of them are your brothers and sisters, too afraid, too desperate to come out because the streets, as we know, are a dangerous place to be?

The report's finding makes disturbing reading. But the importance and relevance of the study lies in its recommendations, and the underlying determination by these organisations to turn anti-discriminatory legislation from fantasy into fact.

The Government has recently committed to the development of a National Anti-Poverty

Strategy, under which all government departments and state agencies will be expected to include the reduction and prevention of poverty in their programmes. Under this, those involved in this study of 'poverty in the gay community' hope to establish a Government Task Force dealing exclusively with the very specific needs of lesbians and gay men. The role of this Task Force would include: advising the Government on policy matters in relation to gay and lesbian issues, help develop the lesbian and gay community to deal with combating disadvantage, and facilitating other community and national organisations to respond to the needs in this report. It should also be working towards EU funding for these plans.

If you are in that poverty trap that feels like it is strangling you, take heart that at least the first step has been taken – at last your situation is recognised, and the next thing to be done is for all of us – poor, comfortable, rich – to do something about it.

What can be done? Laws are there for everyone, and made by the people that we voted for. They are important tools for change, and need to be amended to fit the needs of the community. Legislation that comes under the provision of the report include the Employment Equality Bill and the Equal Status Bill.

The Employment Equality Bill will prohibit discrimination on the base of 'gender, marital status, orientation, religion, age, disability, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin. This extends the present ruling against discrimination purely on gender. Most importantly, under this legislation it is up to the employer to prove that their action was justifi-

fied, rather than the victim to prove their discrimination.

The Equal Status Bill will cover all non-employment areas on the same terms.

When changes are made, it is to our benefit, but people are often afraid of being brought to the public eye, drawing more attention to themselves than their harassment or discrimination has already caused. However, support networks do exist, and are continually being strengthened through personal commitment and changes in legislation. Make use of them, they exist for you, and the more they are used, the more provision will be required from State departments. Of course, lawyers cost money but Legal Aid does exist, and although you may have to wait a long while, these are your rights to dignity as a member of the community, and your own self-esteem, that you are fighting for.

Of course lawmaking isn't always positive. The Equal Status Bill has been gathering dust for some years now. Enterprise and Employment Minister, Richard Bruton, has proposed tax reforms that imply further risk of teenage homelessness.

But what can each of us do? Sometimes we're all too afraid, too tired, too involved in our own lives to act. But think: one day you could lose your job, your home, your custody rights, and you'd be glad of support then. Offer your support now through the channels that are open to you in your workplace, in the political system, and in your life. If you can, involve yourself in the work of an organisation or support group – you don't have to be 'out' to do it – or at least contact your local TD and query the delay on the Equal Status Bill, or other legislation that

FACT: Twenty-four people described their current workplace as being hostile to lesbians and gay men.

Services

Discrimination in housing seems to be one of the greater problems for the gay community. The risk of homelessness for young people, already financially disadvantaged, runs alongside difficulty in obtaining mortgages for same-sex couples, harassment from landlords, and being financially unable to relocate in an area of choice that would be comfortable and free from threat. Social and welfare services are also discriminatory in that they have little or no provision for the needs of lesbians and gay men. Discrimination, and fear of it, is also widespread in services such as hotels, pubs and clubs.

FACT: 31% have left home at some time in their lives with no certainty where they were going next.

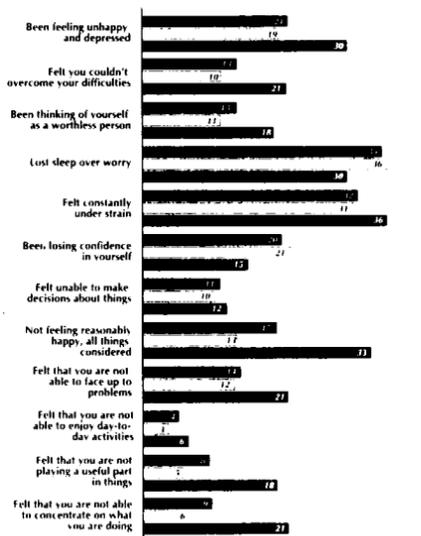
FACT: 11% experienced discrimination in obtaining accommodation, including refusal of mortgage, refusal of tenancy and verbal harassment from landlords.

FACT: 47% would expect to be discriminated against when applying for insurance if they were known to be gay or lesbian.

FACT: 73% thought the proposed Equal Status Legislation would improve their lives.

Health

The issue of health and well being in the gay community has been dominated over the past fifteen years by the AIDS epidemic which has had an overwhelming effect on the lives of gay men and lesbian women (who have often been at the forefront of activism around the issue). This study does not deal with the issues of HIV and AIDS, though these have been shown to have a particularly serious impact on those with low resources. This section of the survey was used to discover the level of psychological well-being within the community, and the possible effects of poverty and discrimination on people's stress levels.



FACT: Many respondents showed signs of psychological distress, particularly those affected for poverty.

FACT: Encouragingly, 62% felt that recent law reforms will have a positive effect on their lives.

Harassment and violence

According to the Irish Council for Civil Liberties "Violence against lesbians and gay men is alarmingly common, and frequently unreported. It can range from strident abuse to full-scale murderous assault". The experience of harassment and violence affects the daily lives of the gay community, and has a demoralising influence on other factors, particularly in terms of behaviour. Not feeling free to show physical affection, mix with members of a community, or avoiding communication in areas which may be the only ones available for accommodation and employment, lessen the psychological well-being of lesbians and gay men, and prevent them fulfilling their abilities and careers as they choose, and can bar them from economic growth.

FACT: 41% have been threatened with violence because they were assumed to be lesbian or gay.

FACT: 25% had been punched, beaten, hit or kicked because they were assumed to be lesbian or gay.

FACT: 81% said that the possibility of anti-gay harassment affected their behaviour.

Emigration

Emigration, like other strategies to avoid discrimination, can have positive or negative effects. For those with resources (money, support networks of contacts, family or friends) the move may allow them to achieve more in a positive environment. However for those without the resources, emigration may result in again an economically deprived situation, without the chance to get out of the poverty trap. These moves also deplete the resources and expertise of the Irish gay and lesbian community left behind, particularly for those living in rural areas. Migration occurs within Ireland as well, with many young lesbians and gay men coming to cities such as Dublin and Cork without means of support, in a vulnerable position which may, at worst, end in their sleeping rough, entering the sex trade as the only means of support, and continuing to live in poverty.

FACT: 59% had emigrated at some point in their lives, over half stating their sexual orientation was a reason for the move.

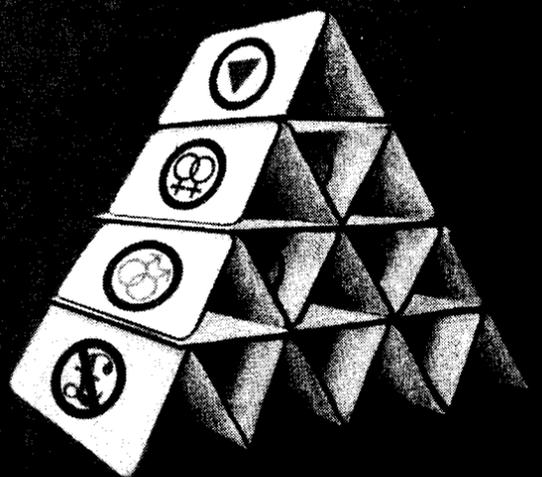
Recommendations

- The introduction of the Equal Status Bill and the amendments to the Employment Equality Act as soon as possible
- The addressing of lesbian and gay issues by the National Anti-Poverty Strategy.
- The introduction of a Task Force as part of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, made up of representatives of government departments, the lesbian and gay community, and others with relevant experience. This task force to
 - (i) fostering better community relations nationally between the gay and other communities
 - (ii) promoting response to the needs outlined in the report from other community and national voluntary organisations
 - (iii) encouraging the community to provide the maximum participation in the Task Force
- Anti-poverty programmes at European and national levels recognising the gay and lesbian dimension of the problem and actively working with the gay community.
- The inclusion by the Department of Social Welfare of the lesbian and gay community within the overall Community Development Programme.
- The introduction of pilot projects in Dublin, Cork and other towns to assess particular needs, such as those of lesbians and young people at risk of homelessness, or the unemployed.
- State funding for lesbian and gay social services, in line with other voluntary services.
- A public information and education campaign to challenge prejudices against various groups and to promote social solidarity.
- The recognition by the European Union of the social exclusion of the gay community, and the encouragement of research in member states.

relates to the present situation.

The report brings into public view what has been very much a hidden problem: the difficulties and discrimination faced by lesbians and gay men. The question now is, what happens next? At the GLEN meeting on 13th January it was decided to reactivate the Campaign for Equality, aimed directly at pushing through the two Bills. Working with the Irish Travellers' Movement, the Forum of People with Disabilities and possibly the National Women's Council, GLEN are illustrating how unity can bring greater effects. Despite concern that 'exclusions' or 'get-out clauses' may render the Equal Status Bill ineffective, many people feel that since the present Government has made a commitment to human rights, it is best to push the bill through now, before government changes, and possibly remove the Department of Equality and Law Reform altogether. The results of the report promise to be far-reaching, with provision for change in all areas of the community, and what has now been started cannot be stopped.

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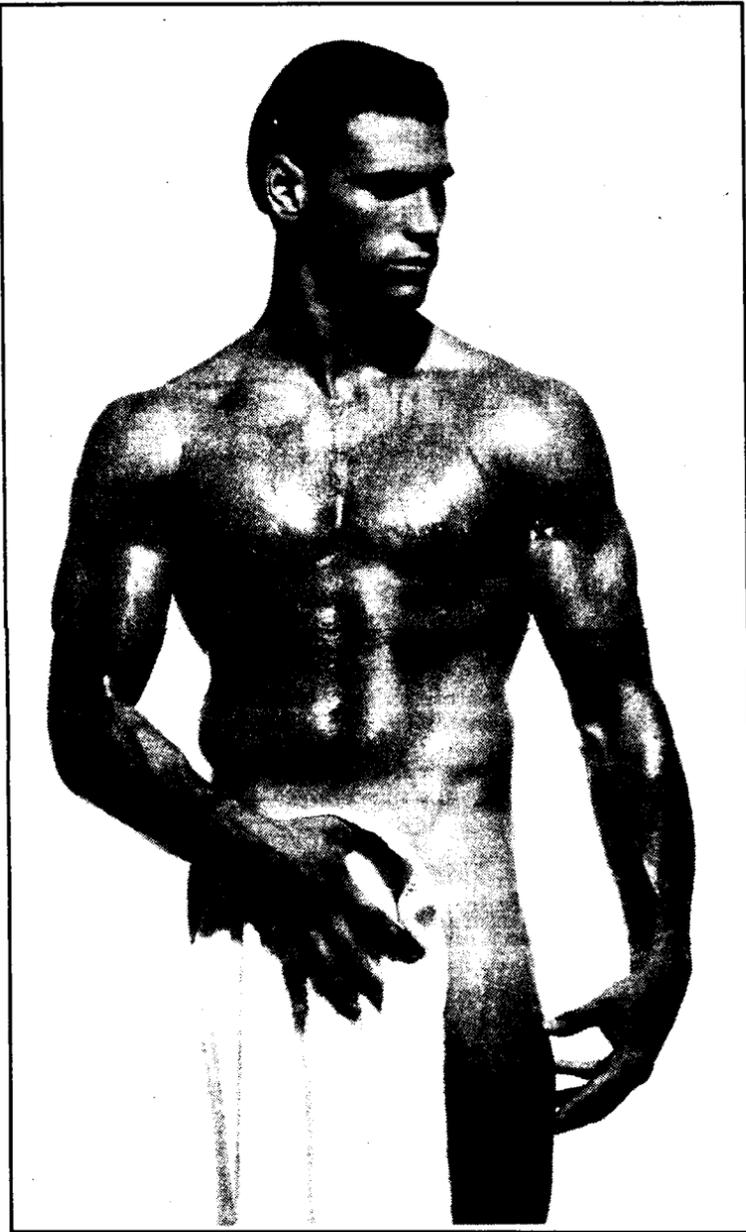


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Photo: Kellie Greene

Come on girls! Do you believe in fun? If so, grab your handbag and head on down to RiRá on a Monday night. I checked it out on the 22nd and had a brilliant time. The clientele consisted of straights, gays, bi's, and the non-decided.

The music ranged from Morrissey to Madonna and from Prince to Blondie so there is something to suit every persuasion. The venue is great with a real chill out atmosphere, and with an upstairs and a downstairs it's even easier to dump the creep you arrived with. So forget the Kitchen and head to RiRá

GET OUT AT THE FURNACE

I went to the Furnace on Saturday the 13th once again and had a brilliant time as I always do. It started at 9, a little too early for me, so I arrived after 10. Hearing Madonna as I walked in the door put me well in the mood for anything that the night might have to throw at me. As usual the music was great with D.J.s Fergal Diva Carroll and D.J. Bounce providing the sounds. The live acts consisted of Ms Dina, now quite used to the venue, and a newcomer by the name of Mark Power - both acts were very well received and entertained us with even more Madonna.

I'm not quite sure at what time the night ended as I was having such good fun it didn't seem important, but I do remember looking at my watch and it was 1.20am and I was

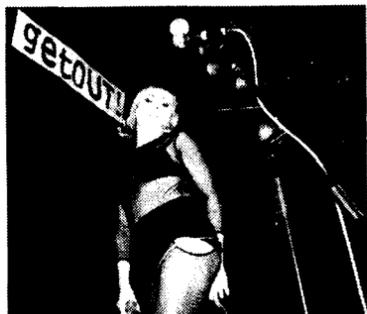


Photo: Kellie Greene

still up dancing.

The next GET OUT will be held in the Furnace once again on the 10th of February. Confirmed for the night are D.J.s Martin Mc Cann and Fergal Diva Carroll and the live performances will be provided by Darren Travis and Shelly from Bird.

Alternative Miss World

Rumoured to be THE social event of 1996, Dublin Aids Alliance and GAG in conjunction with Temple Bar Music Centre present 'The Alternative Miss Ireland'. A pageant of pagan proportions, inspired by the Rose of Tralee, the housewife of the year and Andrew Logan's 'Alternative Miss World', will take place on St. Patrick's Day eve, Saturday 16 March. Apparently, a throng of media types is due to appear and perform, whatever, on the night; the list is so long that I wouldn't know where to start. However, I have it from a very reliable source, close to the core, that several BIG names are expected to support this extravaganza. A gaggle of fabulous judges will dish out the prizes, including the much coveted 'Silver Shillelagh', 'Golden Briquette' and the 'Medusa Crown of Shamrock'. Not since *Riverdance* will so much glamour, platforms, hairspray and lilac satin be let loose under one roof. I believe that they are limiting the number of contestants to about twenty; those eligible to enter include men, women, children and animals. Application forms available from Dublin AIDS Alliance. Tickets for the gig are £15 (£10 unwaged/student or GAG member)

Garters and G - strings in Dublin

Out and about on the town over the Christmas, the first gig I went to was Ms Sugar Cane's Christmas show in the Playground on December 17. GCN had its annual staff party there. Yes, the obnoxiously drunk person on the dance floor swaying his arms in the air while howling along to ABBA was me. But all that's going to change now I've made a resolution. In future I'll have my legs thrashing violently in the air. Ms Cane is quite amusing (if you find a Cockney accent particularly peculiar) Closing the dance floor at 1.30 for a less than spectacular show was an unwise move when all most of us wanted to do was dance, and Sugar, please try to keep your dress on for those of us who have a weak constitution. However, it is refreshing to see live drag acts, but could we have some of our own, please.

After spending Christmas Day with the family I couldn't wait to get out to have a few jars and meet some friends. And where else could a girl go for some fun on a St Stephen's night but the Block. The cover charge on the night was £5 after seven and £7 after eleven, Ouch!! Entertainment for the night came in the shape of Ms Dina Disaster. Taking to the stage under rather unfortunate conditions, let's say she was reverbed to hell and back, the act covered songs from some of our favourite icons - Madonna, Barbra Streisand and ABBA. After treating the punters to six songs the show ended abruptly due to a technical fault. It was by far less than smooth running but it was nothing like her surname and the mixed opinions on the night highlighted this.

On Wednesday 27 I went on my merry way to Drogheda for the Outcomers annual Christmas bash. The venue was again The Westcourt Hotel which has proven to be a popular place for the group, and indeed this night was no exception, with a good crowd turning up for what turned out to be a night of great craic. Ms Dina put a good show on and received a warm reception from the crowd. DJ Paul Murtagh playing the latest chart hits and some camp classics had the floor packed all night. Some of the group who live and work abroad were back for Christmas and were really getting into the swing of things. A special mention to Bernard Gregory who was in high spirits. Bernard, a native of Drogheda, was back home for Christmas from the States. All the best in the new year, sweetie. And a special mention also to Marc O'Donnell who was back from Manchester for the occasion.

On New Year's Eve, busy socialite that I am, I headed to the George again to catch the Chain Gang in action, billed as Ireland's answer to the Chippendales, they certainly combined a great deal of the latter's hamminess with less of their looks. I'd seen the posters, I'd read the

hype, but where was the dropdeadgeorgeous "Italian stallion"? And why were they cavorting mainly with women, with the odd exception. Could it be that the lads were afraid some of us men might divert them from the straight and narrow? Slim chance, lads, we're not really into moving statues and it takes more than a glimpse of a G-string to get us going. We like our men no strings attached. With that over I got down to having some fun. Oh yes and there was a comedian Mr Hollywood; he was funny, very UN-PC, and had everyone in fits.

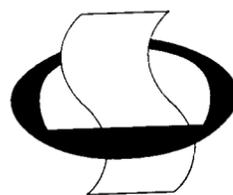
New Year's Night saw the arrival of Diesel to The Playground, the sight of whom in his overalls certainly got my engine running; he just overwhelmed us guys. I didn't know you could do that with a monkey wrench but where there's a hole there's a way - will his dentist approve, I wonder. Well, he had to drag a few guys from the crowd to smear baby oil ALL over his body (poor dears). And then there was that business with the blind-folded guy, the whipped cream, the towel, and of course not forgetting the banana. You're confused? OK, let me explain Diesel picked a guy from the crowd, wrapped a towel around his waist and over the guys head. Off came the G-string and out came the whipped cream. Diesel then blind-folded the guy who by now had a grin on his face like the Cheshire Cat and I'll leave it to your over-imaginative dirty little mind to work out what he did with the banana. Diesel drove the crowd wild with a daring show and the impression I got was that many impatiently await his return to the Playground.

Limerick Lunacy

Limerick discos will never be the same again! The pre-Christmas event raised funds for Gay Switchboard and Limerick Forum, but it is the raising of the roof that will be remembered, as three very dubious looking, bewigged ladies took to the floor. Bless their 'earts, they didn't realise that there was a genuine local celebrity in attendance. Karaoke King Leo took the new 'girls' in, ahem, hand and turned them into (willing) foils for his razor sharp wit. Those from the local scene thought the queens bore a slight resemblance to some of Limerick Forum's leading lights, who had been at the disco earlier in the evening but, coincidentally, seemed to have stepped outside for the cabaret.

The Limerick nights are proving to be great fun, and are growing in popularity. The folks in Treaty Town manage a good balance between a friendly party and an open house. When's the next one, folks?

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Reeling in the Years

Paul Candon looks at gay life in Dublin over the past hundred years

The popular view is that the emergence of an organised and vibrant gay scene is a phenomenon of our own era. The sense of being able to mingle, with freedom with our own is seen as a relatively recent development, part of a world-wide trend which took place in the aftermath of the Stonewall riots in 1969, and the subsequent international Gay and Lesbian Movement.

The sense of 'family' which forms such an integral part of our networks and support systems is very often perceived as one-generational; again it is based in the here and now, with few ancestors who's stories we know of - beyond the examples of the famous from the history books. It is obvious from chronicles, notably of New York and London, that rich gay sub-cultures did exist, yes - even before the world decided to come out in its present form.

So what about the situation here in Ireland? As with many other issues involving marginalised peoples, there is a partially well-founded notion that the area of socialising among lesbians and gay men was a dark and murky wasteland.

The difficulties faced in finding information are immense. The his-

"We've never had it so good..."

tories of ordinary lesbians and gay men were not the subject of many records. Many of those who may have had information us about earlier in our own century are now dead, those who remain still seem

unwilling to talk. In addition, the level of ageism which is prevalent would seem to make the process more difficult still.

Public records serve only to reinforce a grim scenario of prosecution and scandal - ruined careers, public humiliation, imprisonment... This view of our past does little for our self-esteem and needs to be altered.

John Farrell, a writer who has done some research in this area, particularly around Dublin, cites the Monto - the red-light district along the north-side quays of the city as the beginning of the urban scene in Ireland.

The area flourished during the later part of the nineteenth century and proved particularly popular amongst British soldiers. This would not have been entirely 'gay' but would have had an element of men meeting each other for sex, with or without the exchange of money.

This era was characterised by lots of sexual liaisons and fewer relationships. John Farrell spoke of the emerging social scene at this point in time as being elite and exclusive among men of a certain class "it was largely concentrated around the theatre circles, the opera. Suede shoes were the badge of recognition. 'Special friendships' between these men were accepted among their families and contemporaries, but the problems started when they moved outside of this. It was not acceptable for a man from the Anglo-Irish establishment to go

with a stable boy or a gardener, for instance" he said.

He tells me of a discussion with a man called Humphery who remembered the opening of "Parisian-style pissoirs" in Dublin, during the Eucharistic Congress of 1932! Humphery described these public toilets as doing a "roaring trade" at this time - a historic landmark since demolished. The popular social meeting place for men at this time was a hotel called the Beresford - located in the same vicinity.

This embryonic scene seems to have been largely concentrated around the more bohemian set in the city for the next few decades. Hilton Edwards and Michael Mac Liammoir being the city's most obvious and publicly accepted homosexual couples at the time. A number of pubs emerged as being

partly gay in their clientele. The pubs in area around the Gaiety; Rices' and King's both had a sizeable population of gay men of an

evening - this part of town would have been the equivalent to the gay villages which grew in other cities around the world. Bartley Dunnes was the first gay pub as we know it in the city. During the hey-day there were as many as five regular gay-friendly bars to choose from at one point (The Bailey, Davey Byrnes etc).

The most obvious problem at this time, the 1960s, was where to go after the pub. The solution came in the shape of an extraordinary woman called Maria - self-styled "godmother of the variant elves". Maria told me that she met her first "nancy boys" in a restaurant along Baggot Street, struck up a conversation with them and within a matter of weeks had opened her family home to as many as thirty gay men per night.

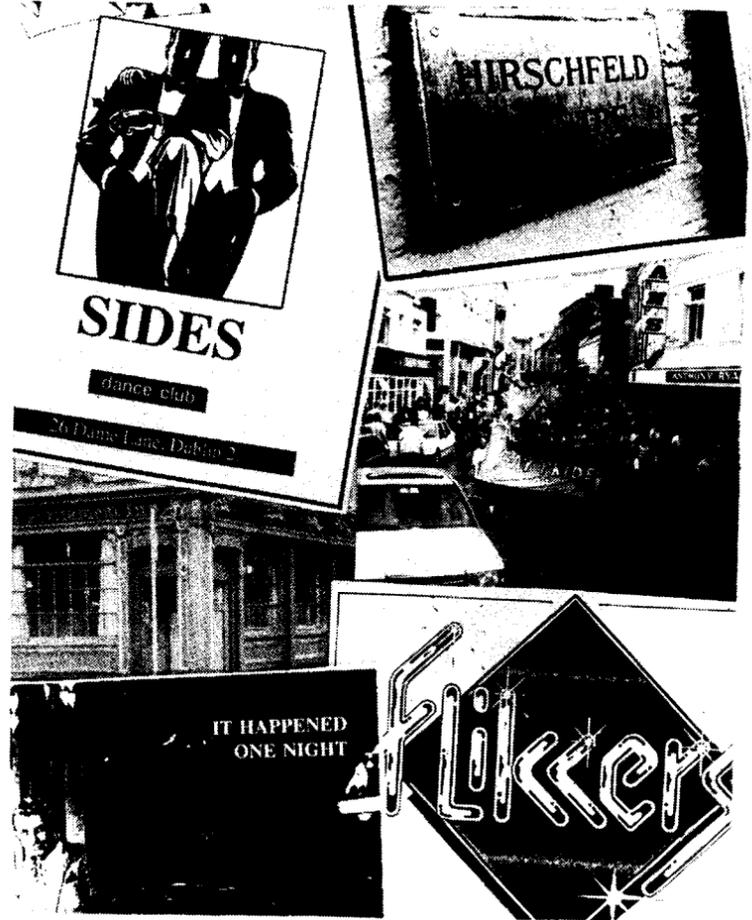
"At this stage I stopped going out myself. I didn't need to any more - they all came to

me" she told me, "the 'club' nights were Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, and people would have snacks and cups of tea" She recalls explaining the situation to her parents, who were also living in the house at the time. "They won't go near me - they go with each other!" she told her mother when she expressed worry about the situation. The house became a popular pit-stop for men on the way back from Palmerston Park, a nearby cruising area.

Needless to say, the neighbours were baffled by Maria's large number of gentlemen callers at all hours of the night! The gatherings usually consisted of sing-songs and party games; "Truth or Dare was the most popular!" she recalls.

She also highlights the more serious side to these soirées; her role

"Suede shoes were the badge of recognition"



as listener and problem solver in a time of many secrets. These parties continued for about ten years until the opening of the first gay clubs in the city. Maria still retains many friends from this time. She continues to go out on the gay scene to this day.

The clubs did finally materialise in the late 1960s and early 1970s. An early club was 'The Good Karma', in Capel Street, which, as the name suggests, embraced a hippie ethic as well as being gay. Liam Ledwich opened Pussy's - a club in North Great George's Street (which later moved to Parnell Square) - he describes the atmosphere in these early venues as "intimate".

He remembers the scene at this time as attracting members of the theatre and showbiz set and recalls seeing the likes of Elizabeth Taylor and Rock Hudson in Bartley Dunnes. All of this was part of what he recalls as a golden era before the advent of AIDS, which he feels has changed the atmosphere on the scene in Ireland, as it has elsewhere.

During the 1970s the Hirschfeld Centre provided a community based focus for the lesbian and gay community. The centre contained a dance floor, cinema and cafe downstairs and was by all accounts a hive of activity, until it was badly damaged by fire in 1984. A number of commercial clubs have come and gone over the years - Sides, Hooray Henry's and FiFi's (the later boasting the country's first dark-room!) - have all had their day.

The women's scene has seen vari-

ous changes from the days of the Barge (No! not the name of a pub - an actual canal-barge moored at Portobello) to JJ Smith's and Damsels - upstairs in the sprawling Parliament Bar. The trend to take a night in a pub for women only events remains part of this scene. 'Ulysses' was a fondly remembered club which was predominately women, with men as guests.

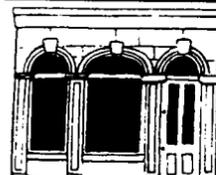
The George, Dublin's only remaining gay bar, has been in existence for the past fifteen years. The Parliament, which closed last year, provided an alternative for many of those years. Many other pubs and clubs have had their day.

The present scene in the city is deprived of the variety of pubs, formerly enjoyed (although the Front Lounge is a recent welcome addition to the category 'gay friendly'), and the popular OutHouse and LOT monthlies provide a vital community-based alternative to the more commercial scene venues. The current social climate does bear some resemblance what has preceded it, in that people go out with the gay friends and socialise in groups in the straight community. People still go to each other's houses and play 'Truth or Dare' after the pub!

Behind this skim of the surface lie ordinary and extraordinary stories of our forebears, not only in the metropolis! The question is how many of them will survive for future generations.

Readers are invited to send their personal experiences of any of the venues mentioned. Similar information from other parts of the country is also welcome for future articles.

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what little secret?

elaine frank looks at the career of melissa etheridge

If ever there was a time or a place to really 'come out', it was definitely Bill Clinton's inaugural ball of 1992. "All my life I've been proud to be a lesbian". Now *there* is style, none of this meek and mild crap, quiet interviews or printed t-shirts. If you're gonna do it, do it with national tv and media watching your every move! Melissa Etheridge's got balls, if you'll excuse the pathetic metaphor, and not just in her public life, but also in a performing career that is leaving audiences crying out for more everywhere.

Born in Leavenworth on May 29, 1961, Melissa Etheridge always knew that music was going to be the one. "Everyone that knew me knew that I was going to be a rock star," she commented last year in *Rolling Stone*, "because I told them that. I always had my head somewhere else, going forward." She attended Boston's Berklee College of Music after leaving school but only stuck it out for a year as she wanted to get back to the clubs. She headed back to Kansas and worked there for a while performing in lounges, slipping the odd original into a set comprised mainly of Fleetwood Mac, Joan Armatrading and Janis Joplin covers. Then, straight from the centrefold of any rock 'n' roll text book, she bought a '64 Chevrolet with the money she earned and on her 21st birthday headed for Los Angeles. LA proved very tough and eventually Melissa headed for Long Beach, California and became a regular performer in the lesbian bars. She played there for a number of years, all the time increasing her fan base. When word of her growing crowds got around, the talent scouts came running and Island Records managed to sign Melissa Etheridge. Her self-titled album was released in 1988, opening the doors to a big career.

Melissa Etheridge is a woman in a male dominated business, and a lesbian in a heterosexually dominated world. If you want to stack the odds against yourself for achieving success, that is certainly a good route to take. In a recent interview with *Hot Press*, her comments on the music industry's perception regarding her sexual preferences were candid. "I believe I had more of a problem being a woman that I've ever had being a lesbian. Anyone who would dismiss me as a lesbian, or any radio station who wouldn't play my records because of my sexual orientation, probably wouldn't play me because I was a woman in the first place."

As a woman, she hasn't bent much to the already laid down moulds of women in music. She has grown in confidence along with her career and her first album was followed in 1990 with *Brave and Crazy*. Her 1992 album *Never Enough*, was seen as something as a departure from her usual style. Her 1993 chart topping success, *Yes I Am* (which put to rest a certain question that may still have been on the lips of some sleeping journalists) boasted three top ten hits, "I'm The Only One", "Come To My Window" and "If I



Wanted To". She mentioned in *Musician* last month, "There were times when I wished I could write a hit, but you can't just sit down and write one. I can't." Sure, Melissa, I believe you.

It seems that with her latest release, *Your Little Secret*, she has found her balance. "I enjoyed making this record more than any record I've ever made. It came smoothly, it was fun, the guys I work with are a blast." Fans will be delighted by her commitment to her rock origins but will also be enticed by the seemingly more personal nature of this release. Melissa has delved a little deeper this time. Don't run out if you are expecting her to be singing defiantly titled tracks like *I want a woman now*, and there are no blatant love songs titled *Julie* (Julie Cypher, her partner of seven years). But perhaps change is on the way. She recently commented in *The Advocate*, "There are enough straight people that know about Julie and me that if I wrote a song called *Julie* they would totally understand." But she still defended the absence of any track that dealt specifically with lesbian issues. "Without being gender-specific in my songs, I think I'm becoming more sensual. Whereas before I might have shied away from feminine descriptions, I feel freer in my

writing - even though I'm not saying 'I love her'. Whether you want her to call a spade a spade or not, there is a certain sexiness about this CD that makes you feel a little bit closer still to the woman that is Melissa Etheridge.

In the January '96 issue of *The Advocate*, Melissa was named as 'The Advocate's Person of the Year on 1995's battles, triumphs and controversies'. Her reaction was confident "Yes, I know why, I'm sort of a gay success story, a very inspirational one. What happened to me is exactly what closeted people fear: they think they'll lose everything if they come out. This did not happen to me at all. In fact, everything came back tenfold." There is no doubt that Melissa has become a lesbian icon, much as this journalist hates the term. Of this she has said, "I have made mistakes, and I think I should be allowed to. If my life can be an example, great, but people should live their own lives and walk their own paths." There have been few articles written that credit her solely on her musical merits (yes, I am also guilty but you are reading GCN) and in case you didn't know, the list is long and extensive. She sold 5 million copies of *Yes I Am*, had Bruce Springsteen feature on her VHI Unplugged special, met the American President,

played at Woodstock '94, wrote songs for soundtracks from successful movies such as *Welcome Home Roxy Carmichael* (1991) and *Boys On The Side* (1995), and the event which is similar to getting the key to the city in the rock 'n' roll world, featured on the cover of *Rolling Stone* in 1995. Having said that, Etheridge's openness about all aspects of her life has certainly had its beneficial effects on her musical career. Had Melissa been holding on to 'her little secret', perhaps she might have become a mediocre performer playing in dodgy venues across America instead of an international star confidently conquering the music world.

She is very happy about having 'come out', and the repercussions that this has had on her career. "I really feel blessed that thing have

worked out this way. It's a big lesson for me. A big lesson. I truly believe in the karmic spiritual sense, that if you clear out yourself, then that's when the good things can come in." There is no doubt that being 'out' would have sweetened the taste of success. "I could really be there for my success. I wasn't closeted and I didn't feel like there was stuff that wasn't being acknowledged. I didn't have to constantly worry and think, 'Well, but if they knew this other stuff about me, then it wouldn't have happened.'"

I've seen Melissa Etheridge perform on two occasions, in New York 1994 at a Lifebeat benefit and in New Jersey 1995 for a full gig. In New York she played along with other stars such as k.d. lang, Sarah MacLachlan and Seal, performing a 30 minute set with her 12-string acoustic guitar slumped loosely around her body. Despite the nakedness of the stage behind her, there was no doubt that this woman could rock. The other occasion was in the Meadowlands Arena in New Jersey where it was in all aspects *her* gig. It was a picture of rock 'n' roll. The three piece band with which she has stuck since they travelled in the back of vans, were all doing their own stuff on stage. The band are all very competent players of their own instruments, individual characters who perform well, but somehow are all part of this bigger picture. And we are talking about a *big* picture. No-one takes away from Melissa Etheridge, the crowd will simply not allow it. She is the focus of all your attention. You can be forgiven for allowing your stare to wander to John Shanks for one of his guitar solos, maybe a few moments checking out Mark Browne's bass guitar solo, or perhaps just looking at the drum kit that Dave Beyer is so expertly playing, but your gaze will *always* return to centre stage.

Melissa Etheridge is an energetic performer, but she could still be the woman next door, she is an honest writer, but her material remains inclusive of all people. She can fill any arena in America and is one of the most regularly featured artists on MTV and VHI. It's now 1996, she has nothing left to prove, no label to shrug off and no jury to sit before. Melissa Etheridge has already arrived and is certainly doing it *her* way.

Melissa Etheridge's new release 'Your Little Secret' is available in most record stores now and she will be playing in the Olympia Theatre, Dublin on February 23rd

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Musclex
 Greg Nero
 Leyland stg£4.99

At last - something for those among us who like their erotica to focus on (as the foreword has it) musculomans in a major way. With descriptions galore of freaky-huge, hard-core body-builders with monstrously massive pecs, mind-boggling bubble-butts, cannonball arms, and barn-door shoulders losing gallons of bodily fluids (all varieties) by all manner and means, both in and out of the weight-rooms, this little opus is guaranteed to have even the most jaded steroid queens creaming themselves beyond their most orgasmic wet-dreams.

A very sexy addition to the meagre selection of horny literature available here, with sex-scenarios ranging from 'vanilla' to the mega-rough, *Musclex* is an ideal one-hander for the studs-with-buffed-bods buffs.

Michael Wynne

In Her Nature
 Karen K Tulchinsky
 Women's Press, Canada

A collection of eleven very enjoyable short stories of Jewish lesbians, their parents, grandparents, lovers, ex-lovers and friends, straight and gay. The stories cover everything from childhood, love affairs, breaking-up and making-up, dating, sex, AIDS and dying.

Although the stories concentrate on three or four women, they are as much about the lives of those closest to them. I particularly liked *A Different Kind Of Love* and *Women Who Make My Legs Weak*, and, to second a reviewer on the back cover of the book, we should all have a mother like Mrs. Rabinovitch. *A Working Dyke's Dream* gives a whole new meaning to employer/employee relationships! Although the cover would not make me rush out and buy the book, I would certainly recommend it to those who fancy some enjoyable light reading.

Penny Shand

From a Mobile Home
 Nuala Archer
 Salmon Poetry £7.99

This is Nuala Archer's fifth collection. Born of Irish parents, she lives at present in America, working as Associate Professor at Cleveland State University.

The poet is a lesbian, loud and clear. Her poems are long, playful and experimental. Perhaps the most successful poem in this volume is *Sheela ^Na^ Giggling ArOund* nine pages long, and a witty exploration of 'l-i-p-s'.

Such titles as *From A Mobile Home: Red Mud Music*, *Kickin' Ass Quietly*, *Azoosal Love*, reflect her poetic style. Some of her poems are set in Dublin, such as *The Wing of an Ordinary Dragonfly*,

'Whose veins are where I cycle & the only sensible map'
 Susan Connolly

chains of desire

The Medicine Burns
 Adam Klien
 Serpents Tail stg£8.99

This is a brave and deeply intimate collection of stories by a young author not afraid to depict situations of raw ugliness, without falling into the easy trap of sensationalism. It is refreshing in a genre too often preoccupied with mythologies of lost or elusive beauty.

In the opening piece we are taken on an overtly Freudian exploration of the protagonist's experience of his mother. The boy has inherited the disfigurement of a club foot from her and this seems to be their closest bond at the outset. There are numerous stock conflicts between the pair, but he concludes by remarking "It had taken this much time to recognise that we did not want to discover each other's secrets but to find ways to communicate with each other".

Other stories concern everything from horrific adolescent acne, to the inevitable tales of the doomed urban playground of debauchery and excess. The latter are largely unnecessary as they serve only to detract from what Klien does best - to write with warmth and compassion about family and interpersonal relationships. In this regard he is reminiscent of the likes of David Levitt and Edmund White.

Again, in the pieces concerning AIDS, he is less successful when he tries to address a dense range of social and political issues than in the final story *India* - a superb and lyrical elegy for a lover who has recently died. This finale is so strong that it renders all that has preceded it a kind of lengthy but necessary prologue.

Paul Candon

Love Bites
 Ed. Amarantha Knight
 Richard Kassak Books

A collection of erotic horror in which women are hungry and men are pretty useless. Vampires having sex leads to one huge problem - seemingly, if you're a vampire, automatically you become the best lover in the world. We're talking years of

unlimited, non-stop passion, eruptions of bodily juices and wild nights of succulent lurve. I'm not about to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their living/dead status, but each of these stories simply blends into the next, making it difficult to tell the difference. Some of the stories stand above the rest, such as Ron Dee's *Soulmates*. The sado-masochistic relationship between the undead Maxine and the soon to be undead Tony gives the impression that pain can only be truly enjoyed by the cold-blooded. It is a powerful and unsettling description of a particularly vicious and short-lived relationship.

Not exactly an opus to political correctness, and not for those easily offended, this is none the less a reasonable enough collection, but for gay/lesbian erotic horror, it might be an idea to look elsewhere, as this will probably appeal mostly to straight men.

Jim Redmond

The Best of Bad Boys
 Ed. Michael Lowenthal
 Masquerade Books stg£6.99

If you are a fan of long explicit stories of the flesh this is a must for you. *The Best of the Bad Boys* is a collection of gay erotic fiction from Masquerade Books' *Bad Boy* line.

The opening story, penned by Aaron Travis, is the tale of Kip, a young bell boy who sleeps his way around the hotel. He runs into Vince, a hitman who shows the eager lad the joys of sado-masochistic sex. After reading about detailed acts of sex using butt-plugs and clamps, I finished the piece with my legs clenched shut from cringing, instead of wide open with anticipation.

Among other stories collected in this anthology is *The Duel* by Lars Eighner. This short simple erotic story tells the tale of two neighbours, one straight, one gay who meet at night to masturbate over the garden fence. They have to follow three rules, no talking, no touching and to make the other come first, hence *The Duel*.



This collection mostly caters for those who enjoy S&M with the majority of the stories seeming to go on forever. Personally, if you've read one, you have read them all.

Derek Keegan

Daisychain
 Mike Halliday
 Queerass Press

Daisychain by Mike Halliday and no, before you put that little error down GCN's fault, that's how it's spelt on the cover. *Bi*. Am I missing some play on words here? Is this some reference to the dollymixture of his and her tales contained within this confusing book that has a visually annoying daisy printed on the bottom of each page - indeed, is dollymixture a witty play on words bi

me? I haven't a clue - OK, there I said it. Perhaps it is because I am not terribly familiar with Australian slang, or the whole insane world of - oh, my god, I am going to say it - youth culture. Or perhaps it's because I am not very familiar with the distressing mental oblivion of drug abuse. And trust me, I'm not talking the odd spliff here. This is insane stuff and very amusing for all that. An oddly disjointed (forgive the pun) book that does seem to belong to the cruelties of the lost - the X generation. It successfully gives voice to the indifferent, even though it seems determined to articulate itself on its own terms. It struck me as being all rather tragic but none the less striking for all that. Rather like a magnificent sunset over a dumpsite. PCC

the therapist's couch

Addiction and Recovery in Gay and Lesbian Persons
 Robert J. Kus
 Harrington Park Press stg£6.99

This is an American collection of eight related chapters from professional carers working with gay and lesbian clients, particularly those afflicted by alcohol/chemical abuse.

The approach is practical rather than theoretical. Chapter one asserts the need for awareness that the problem of being gay in a heterosexual society leads to a higher incidence of substance abuse.

Chemical Dependency and HIV Infection gives an overview of AIDS and, overall, is perhaps the clearest and most readable account of AIDS this reviewer has experienced.

The reality of homophobia and its

role in blocking recovery in gay addicts is explored, and leads to an examination of relationship problems experienced by gay survivors of dysfunctional families.

An Episcopal priest writes on spirituality and the gay community; the down-to-earth experience of the writer makes this compelling reading.

The final three articles are general - covering gay men's groups in AA, an overview of the Lesbian & Gay Alcoholism Professionals in America; and finally a chapter on special problems chemically dependent clients may have, the resources available and where to find them. The problems of rural gay people are also covered.

This book is written with the professional helper in mind and deserves a place on your bookshelf for its reference value alone.

Nuala Murphy

The Equality Complex. Lesbians in Therapy: A Guide to Anti-oppressive Practice.
 Val Young
 Cassell stg£12.99

Most counsellors reading the title of this book would probably respond by saying that when therapy is practised ethically it cannot be oppressive. If this is so, then this book faces us with some interesting facts, such as, that very few training schools deal with lesbian issues, none outside London. The British Psychological Society has twice refused permission to gays and lesbians to set up a group within the Society to look at lesbian and gay issues. When the author herself offered to write a section of a training manual for the British Association of Counselling on lesbian issues, they refused her offer. One of the clearest

things about the book is that the author establishes the heterosexism of the therapy establishment and in particular the invisibility of lesbians both as practitioners and partakers.

This is a thoroughly English book. Part One has chapters on therapy from a lesbian perspective, which, according to Young, "is an equality-based approach applicable to a wide range of therapy-related practices in a multicultural setting". Then follow chapters on the equality complex, heterosexism and counter transference, and lastly the question 'Whose therapy is it, anyway?' Part Two attempts to "integrate themes from lesbian life with the experience of therapy", and in this regard the book contains over sixty pages of case histories, only some of which I found interesting. Overall the book is repetitious and not an easy read. Kay Ferriter

feminism and futurism

Volcanoes and Pearl Divers
Ed. Suzanne Raitt
Onlywomen stg£12.99

This collection of essays is designed for academia, specifically for the 'awkward niche' between Women's and Gay Studies occupied by lesbian-feminist studies. Most are in the area of literary criticism, although essays on lesbian film and theatre are also included, and serve to write the cultural history of lesbians as well as contribute to academic and critical debate.

But *which* lesbians? Despite the best endeavours of the editor, the contributors are mainly white academic women from the UK; it appears that many black women were either too busy or 'did not wish to' contribute. One exception is Shameen Kabir, on *Lesbian Representations in Film*, and Emma Donoghue is an exception to the UK bias. Some of the material is not new; most of Emma Donoghue's useful round-up of Irish lesbian writers, *Noises from the Woodshed*, has appeared before; Kabir refers to no film later than 1987, and Lynne Pearce's essay on Jeannette Winterson stops at *Sexing the Cherry* (quite apart from looking at Winterson solely from a Barthesian perspective).

Nevertheless, this is a valuable resource for lesbians in Women's or Gay Studies. Raitt's helpful intro-



May Daly - wild, wonderful, haggish and wicked?

duction boldly states the intellectual crux for lesbian-feminism - that "identity politics are an ideological contradiction and an emotional and political necessity". Ros Ballaster's refreshing essay on desire between women in 17th and 18th century England (*The Vices of Old Rome Revived*) confronts the impasse between the femino-centric and the homoerotic, Foucaultian accounts of historical lesbianism; she favours the former, as one would expect in this collection, but she has helpful criticisms to make of it, and her essay is outstanding.

Deborah Ballard

**Beyond God the Father:
Towards a Philosophy of
Women's Liberation
Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics
of Radical Feminism**
Mary Daly
The Women's Press

With most book reviews, one searches for the right balance between criticism and synopsis. Books by Mary Daly, however, defy this structure, just as they defy the normal patriarchal structure of language and its usage. Speaking in UCD in 1993, Mary

described herself as a "Meta-Patriarchal Pirate, plundering the subliminal sea of women's forgotten knowledge..." I remember those words, I took note of them, just as the rest of the women in the filled lecture hall did. They spoke of a place beyond the moon, on the other side, a place we could all know and understand if we just allowed ourselves to spiral beyond the stifling world into which we have been trained to fit.

But these words were no mere linguistic ramblings. Daly's assertions about God the Father and Papal Bull (the worst kind of bull) are based in a sound *academated* philosophical and theological background. She pulls together strands of Husserlian Phenomenology and Continental philosophical thought with a radical feminist theology/philosophy, weaving a word web of wonder tailor-made to subvert an age-old Judeo-Christian patriarchal system of oppression with which we in Ireland are still dealing.

The re-issuing of these two seminal pieces of feminist theory forces us to again re-understand our position as women. Why else would they be re-issued if the demand for Daly's work was not as high as ever? As for words to describe Mary Daly, how about WILD, WONDERFUL, HAGGISH, WICKED..? Catherine Morley

Black Tongue
Alice Joannou
Rhinoceurus stg£4.99

Alice Joannou's second collection of erotica is not for the faint-hearted. If you can stomach the torture and self-mutilation, you may yet lose your lunch over the wildly overwritten style. This is a pity, as Joannou interestingly questions the meanings of gender and the construction of sexualities. In the long *Spain 28* a cyborg's erotic dialogue with her surgeon, her twin and herself build into a fascinating interrogation of sex and destiny, and *Love Lies Bleeding* is a gruesome take on Southern misogyny, guilt and lust.

Although most of the exchanges are between men and women, the nature of Joannou's concerns makes for a slippage from heterosexual focus and there are indeed gay characters. But be warned - one-handed reading it ain't.

Deborah Ballard

Mercury
Anna Kavan
Peter Owen stg£10.95

Described by Doris Lessing as a "glittering, hallucinogenic novel ... one of the best inspired by drug-taking", I can't help feeling that the most rewarding way to read this novel would be to be under the influence of drugs yourself. Although Kavan's prose style is accomplished, *Mercury* is a demanding read, being written entirely in the third person with virtually no dialogue, and with the 'action' of the plot being almost completely static. Focusing on the inner isolation of two very damaged people who, after a confusing odyssey into the wildernesses of their respective realities, manage to get it together, *Mercury* consists of a continuum of descriptive passages illuminating the Sartrean alienation of the characters and the somewhat 'surreal' world around them. Ultimately a self-indulgent work that fails to cope adequately or interestingly with its subject matter.

FR

Virgin Territory
Ed. Shar Rednour
Richard Kasak Books stg£4.99

This anthology of women's erotic writing promises to 'redefine erotic and literary territory that has been, until now, uncharted.' As a connoisseur of one-handed reading I'm not convinced. The theme of virgin, or, simply, first experience, sustains itself throughout the book in a variety of interesting ways. We have the first lesbian kiss, the first SM scene, the first bisexual threesome, the first sex club experience, etc. It's a handy peg for hanging the stories together and for providing us, the seemingly insatiable dyke erotica readers, with fresh material. Susie Bright and Lisa Palac are among the contributors and the book has a definite San Francisco 'we are the sex radicals of the world' feel about it.

Now what would *really* amount to 'uncharted territory' would be an anthology of Irish lesbian erotica.

Carole Nelson

positive feedback

Growing Up Positive
Stories from a Generation of
Young People Affected by AIDS
Ed. Ian Lucas
Cassell stg£12.99

After a brief introduction outlining the origins of this book, Ian Lucas simply allows his twelve interviewees to talk for themselves. Most are HIV positive, others work closely with young people who have been infected, some are both.

On the face of it these stories could make terribly depressing reading, however the final impression is anything but. Despite being sometimes angry or frustrated with some care organisations and other people's attitudes, all these young people have discovered inner strengths which have taken even themselves by surprise. Coming from a wide variety of backgrounds they are united by having to embrace the unpredictable, the difficult, and to live their lives as fully as possible.

The editorial 'hands-off' approach means that the book never preaches or even advises. What it does offer is an important perspective for those working within the HIV/Aids field and who, by some accounts, are failing the needs of young people.

It should also give confidence to young people who are considering taking the HIV test or who have just tested positive. Hopefully, these stories will help them to learn from the experiences of people their own age, and enable them to deal with the challenges of growing up positive, with all the self-confidence, humour and originality that is such a natural part of being young. MF

Aengus Carroll

green fingers...

Farewell to Prague
Desmond Hogan
Faber & Faber stg£7.99

Reading *A Farewell to Prague*, the fifth novel from Irish writer Desmond Hogan, is almost like leafing through someone's diary. The narrative as such isn't in the traditional linear form and what the reader is presented with is a disjointed series of moments and experiences, moving between many different locations and situations.

In truth, it's all a bit difficult to start off with - the fragmented nature of the book is hard to cope with, but then again maybe that's not the point. Perseverance, however, does bring rewards, and the beauty and intelligence of Hogan's writing eventually begins to shine through.

The novel is based around the experiences of Des, a peripatetic Irishman who, in between traveling around the world and engaging in various bisexual encounters, returns home to Ireland, sometimes in body, other times in mind.

Ultimately some readers might be left feeling a little disengaged. Heavy going in places and not exactly bedtime reading material, this should be rewarding enough for those prepared to stick with it. David O'Sullivan

**Dublin Where the Palm Trees
Grow and The Love Test**
Hugo Hamilton
Faber & Faber stg£8.99 & 5.99

Abounding in acute, psychological character portraits, in a style of subdued poeticism reminiscent of John McGahern, the pieces in *Dublin*

Michael Wynne



- Angels & Insects - IFC
- Leaving Las Vegas - General

Philip Haas went to A. S. Byatt's novella *Morpha Eugenia* for the source of his film **Angels and Insects**, and Byatt enthusiasts will be pleased to know that the author and director worked closely together on the project. What cinema fans will make of their collaboration is an entirely different matter.

The story is simple enough: William (Mark Rylance), an insect gathering explorer who has survived shipwreck and being cast adrift in an open boat, returns to his rich patron's country mansion, falls in love with Eugenia (Patsy Kensit), marries and then finds that he is more at sea in the world of the Victorian country house than he ever was before.

What the film focuses upon is this complex, self regulating, enclosed society. From the outset we are forced to establish parallels between the insect world and the family into which William has married: clothes co-ordinate with butterfly hues; we cut from the bloated queen ant to the obese, pampered family matriarch; ant eggs are stored in their

chambers and we see undifferentiated children tucked out of sight in the nursery. What may work as literary metaphor becomes clumsy and heavy handed when imported into the visual medium, but to be fair, this only mars the initial third of the film.

Somehow the film manages to survive the crashingly obvious symbolism of the early scenes and although it never really convinces, it is possible to settle into the story and become absorbed by the world of the Victorian aristocracy with all its stilted and simmering passions.

"For five hundred bucks you can fuck me in the ass or come on my face, but don't do anything in my hair, I just washed it." Mike Figgis' *Leaving Las Vegas* is obviously not your typical boy meets girl movie, but then Ben (Nicolas Cage) and Sera (Elizabeth Shue) are not your typical boy and girl.

Ben is filling his supermarket trolley with booze. He's smartly dressed, a charming Hollywood screenwriter, but he's drinking on an epic scale he can't remember whether he's drinking because his wife left him. or. his wife left him because of his drinking. When he



Angels & Insects - stilted and simmering passions.

loses his job the thin dam separating a capable man and a sea of liquor finally breaks: he heads out of town with the single ambition of drinking himself to death in Las Vegas.

He runs into Sera, a self assured hooker, and what begins as a commercial transaction becomes a relationship based on trust and mutual acceptance of the courses each has plotted.

Anyone thinking that this is going to be *Pretty Woman II* is in for a shock. In the lurid world of desert and sleazy neon, sex is vicious and Ben is no bumbling *Arthur*-like alcoholic fool. He turns every tender moment sour, one minute he's the

life of the party, the next he's ruined everything.

Cage is perfect as Ben, a mixture of dead sunken eyes and a big cheesy grin, a visual shorthand for the attractive and repulsive qualities that make up his character.

Shue is easily his match in a performance that combines vulnerability with the brashness of a hardened pro. When love comes into their lives, it is at once wonderful and terribly unfair.

As a whole, the film shares the contradictions of its cast; its tough and tender, romantic and sleazy, terribly trashy and deadly honest. An extraordinary film.

Michael Fitzgerald



- Decadence
- Love and Human Remains
- Not Angels But Angels
- Postcards From America

Decadence (Curzon Video) is a hilarious, sometimes disgusting, look at the English ruling classes and nouveau riche. It concerns the relationship between Stephen Berkoff and his mistress, Joan Collins and Berkoff's wife (also played by Collins), and the private detective (played, also, by Berkoff) she has hired to snare him. With me still? If not, no matter. Really, the story and everything else fades into the background. Lighting, sets and sometimes direction are left alone to allow the vile, but wonderful performances by the two stars shine through. This film is rarely pleasant, but its title lives up to its content - it is constantly funny, base and assured of its own destiny, which leaves nothing to the imagination. Never once stepping back and allowing itself to become diluted by the hope of popularity, *Decadence* is a guaranteed camp classic. There

is no reason for everybody not to see this film. Now.

Based on Brad Fraser's play, *Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love*, *Love and Human Remains* (Polygram) ponders the questions of love and serial murders. Candy (Ruth Marshall) is confused and desperate and is not helped by her professional queer flatmate, David (Thomas Gibson), an ex-sitcom star. Given the scope of the screen, the film also reflects on the relationship between television and life, but this is no simplistic *Natural Born Killers* view of the world. Candy's desperate search for love leads her from woman to man to serial killer, while the entire spate of murders constantly referred to on television are ignored by all and sundry.

The complex relationships explored within the film, such as that between Candy and David are realistic and believable, while the opposing forces of Bernie (Cameron Bancroft) and Benita (Mia Kirshner) come to a disturbing and revealing end, testing the love felt by David towards both of them.

"Why is life so weird?" asks David. "Chernobyl", replies Bernie. Perhaps it's true. Unmissable.

Not Angels But Angels (*Dangerous to Know*) attempts for a short while to be a searing documentary on child prostitution in Prague. The glazed look on the faces of some of these rent-boys tells more of a story than director Wiktor Grodecki could ever manage - in turn, he becomes serious, allowing the boys to tell their stories,

leers at them and then changes track and seems to make fun of his subjects, mocking their hopes of being transported to America by a rich client. All this, interspersed with porn shots and supposed customers practically dribbling at the mouth makes for a sorry and rather annoying sight. Either you make a serious documentary or an extended edition of *Wish You Were Here*. As it stands, the film merely exploits a group of boys already at their lowest ebb, or so it seems. This appeals to the lowest common denominator and its all very sad. Don't bother.

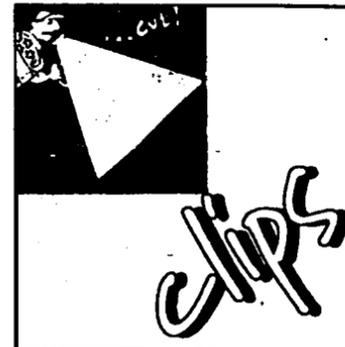
Think My Own Private Idaho and *Stand By Me*, with a dash of *The Wonder Years* thrown in, and you're getting nowhere near *Postcards From America* (*Dangerous to Know*), a film based on the writings

of David Wojnarowicz. *Postcards* is a far more honest and revealing film by far, following the life of David (played by James Lyons, Michael Tighe and Olmo Tighe at various stages) from small-town America to street hustler in the city. As he says immediately after the credits, "There's something in my body is trying to fucking kill me." Mostly made up of fragmented images of childhood, monologues to camera and flashbacks to the 70's, the entire film could be seen as a metaphor for AIDS, although this does not do it justice. A road movie with a difference, David is trying to make sense of a life he can barely remember and of which he can't possibly understand. Not exactly enjoyable, but certainly worth while.

Jim Redmond



Love and Human Remains, ready to whip you into shape!



Now that it's kosher for action men like Wesley Snipes and Patrick Swyaze to don frocks and wigs and play drag (and we mean drag in the dull sense of the word), tougher than tough guy Gene Hackman has signed up to frock up in the Hollywood remake of *La Cage Aux Folles*. Considering the travesty they created when *Priscilla* hit them as a lucrative idea, it's easy to imagine the mess they'll make of *La Cage*, now retitled *Birds of a Feather*. God help us all.

Julie Andrews has reprised her camp as knickers role in the Broadway musical version of the film *Victor Victoria*. Press reports claim that the show, also directed by Andrew's hubbie, Blake Edwards, is even gayer than the original film - if that could be possible. Turning classic movies into big musicals seems to be the trend of the day; after the amazing success of *Sunset Boulevard*, Andrew Lloyd Webber has now turned his attentions to the film *Whistle Down the Wind*. The screen version starred Hayley Mills at the height of her child stardom, and told the story of three children who find an escaped convict in their barn and mistake him for Jesus.

Burn! - The 10th London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival opens on March 21 and continues until April 4 at the National Film Theatre. The opening night screening, for the first time, will be held in London's West End and the film chosen is the long awaited *Jeffrey*. Starring Patrick Stewart (Star Trek fans rejoice) and Sigourney Weaver it tells the story of a gay love affair amid the AIDS crisis. The first major Hollywood production to deal with AIDS and homosexuality since *Philadelphia*, *Jeffrey* was a major hit stateside. It is set to open in Ireland in March.

Other highlights during the London Festival include Adam Rodger's *Rescuing Desire* which traces one woman's sexual journey through the seedy underside of New York, *Frisk* the contentious adaptation of Dennis Cooper's brilliant novel about gay serial killing, and *Bloodsisters*, Michelke Handleman's sexploration of the San Francisco leather dyke community.

arts news • arts news • arts news • arts



An exhibition by mixed media artist Billy Quinn opened at the Temple Bar Gallery on January 18, the first opportunity for Irish audiences to see his work since his return to Ireland last September after 22 years abroad. Traditional Family Values witnesses the emergence into self-esteem of men and women who have been sexually abused as children by members of their families; although text and images are of the gruelling, Quinn's characteristic use of photography, paint, gilding and lettering celebrate courage and self-healing of those whose stories he tells. Launched by John McBratney, who has done so much to bring Quinn back to Ireland, the exhibition runs until February 12. Not to be missed.

The Smashing Times Theatre Company has initiated a community arts project which is called Accessing Theatre for Women. This project consists of a planned series of workshops/seminars, specialised theatre workshops, theatre presentation and group liason activities to be carried out in conjunction with community/women's groups, including Drop-in-well Adults Centre, Ballymun and the Playhouse Drama Centre, Derry. The company's first production of 1996 is a show based on three monologues by Franca Rame, A Woman Alone, Rape and Medea, with each performance followed by a discussion and workshop session exploring through improvisation the themes explained in Rame's work. For further information contact Niall Loughran at 01 478 5388.

Are you, or do you know, a person with a disability who would like to pursue a career in painting, sculpture, design or communications? Art Access - an innovative arts, design and communications education programme wants people with disabilities who are artistic and have a serious interest in these areas to contact them. This unique programme, developed by the National Training and Development Institute (NTDI), part of the Rehab Group, is designed to integrate people with disabilities through personal development initiatives as well as foundation and transition courses leading to participation in mainstream education and work. Contact Finola McTernan on 01 878 0267 for further details



Emma Donoghue's new play, *Ladies and Gentlemen!*, opens on April 17 at the Project Theatre, Dublin, for a three-week run. The play is based on male impersonator Annie Hindle, who lived with her Irish dresser, Annie Ryan, until the latter's death, and examines lesbian and gay self-expression through the cross-dressing tradition of American vaudeville. A Glasshouse production, *Ladies and Gentlemen!* is directed by David Byrne with Olwen Fouere as Annie Hindle and James Barry as the female impersonator Gilbert. Music by Carole Nelson.

'Pride & Diversity' is the title of the exhibition of new and exciting art to be organised by the newly formed OutArt. It will coincide with Pride '96 next June at The City Arts Centre, Dublin. Submissions, in all media, are invited from artists nationally, on the theme of Pride & Diversity. Early involvement is essential. For more details contact: Exhibition Committee: c/o Henry Pym, NCAD, 100 Thomas Street, Dublin 8. Phone: (01) 626 1098 or Louise at (01) 456 3572.

Great news for delitologists (that's postcard collectors), with the latest set of postcards from Britain's leading gay and lesbian card publisher, the Male Room. The set includes additions to the ranges from Matthew Toresen and Ajamu, plus three well known names from the photographic world have joined the Male Room hall of fame - Paul Stanley, David Butt and Jay Eff.

The Male Room makes contributions to the Aids Education and Research Trust from every set purchased. Unfortunately, these cards are not stocked in any Irish outlets as yet, but they are available at £8.00 per set from The Male Room, PO Box 3, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 6XY, England. The image printed here is by photographer Paul Stanley.



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INSTANT CONTACTS

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Postbox

Gay Community News welcomes letters for publication in the postbox column. We invite you to write on any issue of interest to lesbian, gay or bisexual people. We also welcome comments on the contents of GCN. Please be as brief as possible as this allows us to include more views (but if your points need the space, then we will try to include them). It helps us if you use one side of the page only. Please give us your name and address, but we won't publish these if you ask us not to. We reserve the right to edit letters. We will try to include as many views as possible but we cannot guarantee that we will publish every letter we receive. Send your letters to: Postbox, GCN, 10 Fownes Street, Dublin 2.

GAY FAMILIES

Dear GCN
We are currently undertaking a sociological study of lesbian and gay families in Ireland. With a host of Irish politicians recently hinting at changes in the constitution to recognise lesbian and gay men with children as families, we believe this is a subject which deserves to be highlighted. The purpose of the study is to explore the merits of this form of alternative family, not only to the children involved, but also to society.

We are looking for lesbian and gay couples or any lesbian or gay man who is involved in the parenting of a child. Anyone who falls into such a category could be of great help to us. We would like anyone who may be interested in participating in such a study to contact me at the above address. Anyone who does contact me will be sent a questionnaire if they so desire. Anyone else who does not wish to complete a questionnaire can send me an account on how being a

lesbian or gay parent influences both their lives and their children's lives. Total discretion is guaranteed to all, and any information that we may wish to use will be checked with you beforehand.

Your assistance is greatly needed and will be much appreciated.

Yours
Sandra Leo
Flat 4
10A Mc Curtain Street
Cork

UCD LESBIAN RESPONSE

Dear GCN,
I am amazed that Dykes' Forum Writer (Dec '95/Jan '96) takes a swipe at WERRC's May '95 Re-Stating Feminism conference, representing it as a lesbian non-event / non-lesbian event. DFW laments 'the absence of the L-word over the weekend' - then immediately mentions Joni Crone's rousing (and musical) presentation on the opening panel, and Mary Dorcey's moving reading at the end of the conference. Joni and Mary performing at the same event is hardly an 'absence' by any body's book. In any case they were not alone. No less than two of the other opening

night panellists (including Ger Moane) talked specifically about lesbian feminist politics, and two of the three 'keynote' speakers on the Saturday (including Christine Delphy) are lesbian. 'Lesbian Feminist Movement' (led by Ide O'Carroll) was one of the major discussion sessions on the Saturday, and the innumerable lesbians used the 'L-word' in other discussion sessions and spoke up from the floor. Marie Mulholland sang us out and away on the Saturday evening, and about three hundred women then danced to Patricia Carey's terrific disco music until the IFC threw us out.

UCD is not exactly the most lesbian-friendly institution in Ireland (try working there), but I can reassure DFW that the 'L-word' is repeated (in full) one hundred times at morning prayers in WERRC every day. If DFW can't join us then, she could try some of our Thursday night seminars, or the third annual *Lesbian Lives* conference (we've been using the 'L-word' for simply years) on March 2 in WERRC. Not an absence, dear DFW, more an *embaras du choix*?

Yours
Ailbhe Smyth,
WERRC,
UCD,
Dublin

Make a date... 

SATURDAY 27 JANUARY
National Lesbian and Gay Federation Annual General Meeting and Open Meeting. Central Hotel, Exchequer Street, Dublin 2. 2.30pm

THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY
Trinity Lecture Series: Marie Mulholland, Unison trade union Nat'l Lesbian and Gay Committee. TCD, Dublin 8.00pm

THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY
Galway Lesbian and Gay Youth Group inaugural meeting. Venue and time from Galway helplines

SATURDAY 3 FEBRUARY
Gay Health Network meeting 11.00 am - 4.30 pm, 19 Haddington Road, Dublin 4

SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY
Belfast Community Centre fundraising disco in the Limelight bar

FRIDAY 9 FEBRUARY
Bella Luna Women's Disco, Mother Redcaps, Dublin £3.00 9.00pm - 12.30

FRIDAY 9 FEBRUARY
Drogheda Outcomers Meeting, Unemployed Centre, North Quay 7.00-9.00pm

SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY
National Pride Meeting, National Students' Centre, Aston Place Dublin 2. 3.00pm

SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY
GetOut fundraising disco for Dublin Pride, OutHouse etc. Furnace, Aston Place Dublin 2. 9.00pm - 1.00am £3.00/£4.00

SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY
Gay Switchboard Dublin fundraising pub quiz. The George Bar, Sth Great Georges St., Dublin 2. 4.30pm, £5 per person, tables of 4

MONDAY 12 - FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY
UCD Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Society Pride Week, including discos, films and seminars. Full details from Society stand in UCD Arts Block, Belfield, Dublin 4

THURSDAY 15 FEBRUARY
Trinity Lecture Series: Izzy Kamikaze, Trinity College, Dublin 8.00pm

FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY
Queers for Cuba Fundraiser, Mother Redcaps, Dublin £3.00

SATURDAY 17 FEBRUARY
Waterford Assembly Disco, Garter Lane, O'Connell Street, Waterford. 9.30pm £5.00 (£4.00 concessions)

FRIDAY 23 FEBRUARY
Drogheda Outcomers Meeting, Unemployed Centre, North Quay 7.00-9.00pm

FRIDAY 23 FEBRUARY
Dublin Lesbian and Gay Film Club. *Lesbian Lykra Shorts* Meeting Room, IFC, Eustace St, Dublin 2. 8.30pm

THURSDAY 29 FEBRUARY
Trinity Lecture Series: Fintan O'Toole, journalist and writer on 'Sexual Rights / Human Rights'. TCD, Dublin 8.00pm

SATURDAY 2 MARCH
University College Dublin, Belfield Dublin 4, WERRC Lesbian Lives III conference on 'Politics, Practice, Performance' 9.30am - 5.30pm

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

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A new book by W. Walsh. Forward-Dr A Willams

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reluctance to discuss the problems plus poor diagnostic procedures meant treatment would frequently fail. Furthermore, the author reveals how stress, illness, low self esteem, medical drugs, etc affect the male libido and how more importantly, very often all you need is a simple kick-start to give you back your confidence and virility.

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CONTACTS

Lesbian cruising Kerry. Romance! Cosy two berth boat. Beautiful scenery. Training given. Reasonable rate. Also caravan. Write for brochure.
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English couple new to Dublin. Would be grateful for sports group info. Especially karate, football. Who at least accept gays.
BOX NO F3034

Debbie, Trinity Inn 9/12/95 (Levi T-shirt) Please contact Belfast women you met. Take a chance this time!!
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ACCOMMODATION

18-30 non effem to share house in Dublin 15. Private 3 bed, phone, central heated, television, alarmed, all mod cons. Rent discussed.
BOX NO F4049

Male required to share house with two others in the Fairview area. Rent very reasonable. Non smoker preferred.
BOX NO F4048

Thirty something lesbian seeks accommodation Dublin close to city. Non smoking preferred own room. Rent £150 pm. Car parking essential.
BOX NO F4050

Gay male share seaside bungalow 12 miles north Dublin airport own room £40 per week king bus/rail service.
BOX NO F4051

Discreet female/male non smoker to share 3 bed house with one other. Dublin northside. Rent reasonable. Convenient to airport.
BOX NO F4052

Female required to share comfortable two bedroom apartment with one other Dublin 3. £55 pw. Non smoker.
BOX NO F4054
VOICEMAIL 1550 111 671

Writer 50s seeks house share or apt close to City. Off street parking required
BOX NO F4055
VOICEMAIL 1550 111 654

Single room available in luxury house in Monkstown area, all mod cons, £50 pw all inclusive. Ph 01 280 3912
BOX NO F4053

Gay guy wanted to share 2 bedroom house in Booterstown with one other. Rent £160 PM exc. bills.
BOX NO 4056

Male required to share new two bedroom apartment in Inchicore beside canal rent £200 per month (including all bills except phone calls).
BOX NO F4057

Double room in comfortable gay household Terenure area on offer to non smoker. All mod cons. Rent reasonable.
BOX NO F4058

Prof male non smoker wanted to share three bedroom house in Dublin 16 with one other, own bathroom. £40 pw exc bills.
BOX NO 4059

WOMEN'S PERSONALS

Genuine male wishes to offer support to female wishing to have a child in return for involvement in child's upbringing
BOX NO F2047

Gay female (28) recently returned to Sligo. Active genuine fun person seeks similar for friendship possibly more. Discretion assured.
BOX NO F2048

Feminine gay women 21, non scene wishes to seek similar for friendship fun and maybe one to one. Cork/Limerick area.
BOX NO F2049
VOICEMAIL 1550 111 649

Gay female sought by gay male (non-scene) as social partner and friend mid to late-twenties. Limerick area
BOX NO F2050

Kind, caring, loving, non scene, professional female, enjoys life, socialising, sport. Seeks fun, tlc, happiness and laughter. Discretion assured. 30's
BOX NO F2051

Lesbian 35 yrs. Professional seeks feminine gay lady who still believes in love and romance. Lots of tlc and happy times await the right lady. Non scene, genuine replies Dublin only.
BOX NO F2052

Outgoing attractive bisexual female 26 seeks similar for fun times Drogheda area non scene complete discretion assured and expected.
BOX NO F2053

MEN'S PERSONALS

Gay guy will share hot phone sex talk. Cut costs dial direct for horny turn on talk.
BOX NO F5080
VOICEMAIL 1550 111 646

Belfast guy 33 straight acting, kind, sincere, honest. Seeks similar 25 to 35 for genuine friendship and possible 121 ALA.
BOX NO F5082

Wanna wrestle? Guy 34, 154 lbs fit, seeks discreet opponents for friendly bouts. Northern Ireland border area. Genuine replies only please.
BOX NO F5081

Dublin guy looking for tough Dublin "lad" 20 to 30 for loving relationship and fun. I'm 31.
BOX NO F5083

Male 30's, warm, sound, hardworking, PC, not a willy wally liberal, seeks compatible male.
BOX NO F5084

Northern bearded mature guy seeks similar (or dark) experienced man for decently fulfilling and repeatable encounters at my place or yours.
BOX NO F5085

Lonely sincere mature guy non scene, seeks inexperienced, horny guys in 18/22 age group. Would treat the right guy with attention and kindness. Photograph with letter. Total discretion given and expected. Genuine advert. No messers please.
BOX NO F5087

Meeting Somebody

Meeting new friends requires public places, not in your home. It is best to meet in crowded places, e.g. a restaurant or pub. Trust your instincts and don't meet again if you have any doubts. On your first meeting it is best to make your own way to and from the venue. It is best not to accept an offer of transport.

Try to arrange meetings in public places, not in your home. It is best to meet in crowded places, e.g. a restaurant or pub. Trust your instincts and don't meet again if you have any doubts. On your first meeting it is best to make your own way to and from the venue. It is best not to accept an offer of transport.

classifieds coupon

Category

Name

Address

START THE WORDING OF YOUR ADVERTISEMENT HERE - ONE WORD PER BOX

£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00
£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00
£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00
£4.00	£4.00	£4.40	£4.80	£5.20	£5.60
£6.00	£6.40	£6.80	£7.20	£7.60	£8.00*

*Continue on another page if necessary

Select your own Personal Identification Number (PIN) if you wish to avail of voicemail (do not use zero 0)

Basic ad cost (maximum 20 words) £4.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount	£	<input type="text"/>
No of words over 20 @ 40p each	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount	£	<input type="text"/>
Tick here for Bold Type £1.20	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount	£	<input type="text"/>
Tick here to have ad Boxed £1.20	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount	£	<input type="text"/>
Tick here to have ad Boxed & Bold £2.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount	£	<input type="text"/>
Tick here to avail of voicemail £1.20	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount	£	<input type="text"/>
Total amount enclosed		£		<input type="text"/>

WHAT TO DO

PLACING AN AD
Write the wording of your ad in BLOCK CAPITALS. Ensure that you have enclosed the correct amount (postal order or cheque, no cash) to cover the total cost of your ad. Ads are charged as follows: up to 20 words, £4.00. Additional words, 40p per word. Box numbers are provided free.

CONDITIONS
All classifieds must be pre-paid, and advertisers must supply their full name, address and phone number (these are not for publication). Personal ads are published by GCN in good faith, and we ask any reader who feels the section has been abused to let us know. GCN reserves the right to amend or omit any ad submitted. Acceptance of an ad or payment thereof cannot be taken as implying any guarantee that the ad will be published. While care is taken to ensure the accuracy of ads printed, GCN will not be liable for any loss claimed as a result of any inaccuracy.

REPLYING TO AN AD
Seal your reply in an envelope and write the Box No. of the ad which you're replying to in pencil in the upper right hand corner of the envelope. Enclose a loose 32p Irish stamp or equivalent postal order or International Reply Coupon, (please, no cash or foreign stamps!), in a larger envelope, and send to: GCN classifieds, 10 Fownes St., Dublin 2, Ireland. Any replies received without adequate postage shall be destroyed. Circulars will be intercepted and destroyed.

Closing date for classified adverts for the next issue: Monday 12 February

Forward to:

Classified Adverts
Gay Community News
10 Fownes Street
Dublin 2

There is now no charge for voicemail

classifieds

Gay Community News February 1996

Dublin 37/180/67, non-scene, slim, fit, intelligent, sincere, (sometimes cynical), G.S.O.H, sensitive, caring, quite. Interests swimming, walking, films, conversation, travel, c.i.s, ruslan, commerce, computers, going out, staying in, life, the universe and everything. Re-settled Dublin, wishing to meet others, similar age range (30's), similar/different backgrounds and interests for friendship/companionship, personal development, laughter, fun. Please write. Discretion assured. Privacy respected. No hassle. Genuine. ALA.

BOX NO F5086

Dublin artist seeks very hairy male models for drawing/photo work. Good body also helps. Please send reply with good photo to.

BOX NO F5088

Visiting Caucasian master in very secure oriental bondage seeks muscled young stalwarts for demonstration. Grasp new world of sensual release. Have slides, own photography.

BOX NO F5089

French 25, sportsman, non-effeminate, seeks contact with other guys (20-30), masculine, fit dynamic for friendship. Discretion. Photo returned with answer.

BOX NO F5090

Never a dull moment masculine bi-guy (28) seeks younger guy. Must be sincere and competent at the art of good conversation.

BOX NO F5091

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 647

Chinese graduate 29, boyish good-looking, smooth, discreet. London based but visits Ireland regularly seeks active, masculine, professional (35-60) W/E, hairy chested for lasting friendship. Correspond meanwhile.

BOX NO F5092

It's a lottery, well maybe you can win it by answering this ad. I'm 39 average appearance and like swimming, walking, cinema, visiting museums, galleries and I like meeting people.

BOX NO F5093

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 648

Sociable gay man 40ish seeks straight acting younger man to join me regularly for drinks in my local a warm friendly pub. Afterwards imaginative uninhibited horizontal fun, Dublin area. Discreet.

BOX NO F5094

Easy going guy 31, sincere and caring, decent appearance with GSOH. Likes socialising and walking. Seeks straight acting guy 25-36 for friendship, fun maybe relationship. Dublin area ideally.

BOX NO F5095

Unusual hyper-sensitive quite student 23 Dublin techno + ambient artist/sound experimenter, seeks intelligent affectionate mate for inspiration + romance. I got the technology + love. You got the ideas samples + vision

BOX NO F5096

Attractive gay man 29. New to Ireland seeks guy for relationship or friends for socialising, own car, financially stable

BOX NO F5097

44 tall, fair, well-built, quite, loyal, enjoys working out, otherwise music, theatre etc. Interests. Seeks nice man 30 to 40.

BOX NO F5099

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 681

Sincere guy, Dublin 16, area seeking slim young gay guy (students/shy first timers welcome). Lets get together now. Why spend time alone when you can meet someone who cares for you. Discretion assured. Photo appreciated but not essential. Guarantee you won't be disappointed. A.L.A

BOX NO F1000

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 650

Cork gay male 24, 5'10", blond hair, enjoys swimming, playing tennis, seeks guys (18-30) with similar interests in Cork area.

BOX NO F1001

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 651

Good looking masculine, athletic horny, 27 old seeks similar studs, 18-30 safe fun, no strings. Absolute confidentiality. Kilkenny, surrounding counties preferred but not essential.

BOX NO F1002

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 652

19 year old student seeks guy 17-21. I'm horny and well built. Fellow first timers welcome, especially blond. Photo please.

BOX NO F1003

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 653

Rough play and safe SM. Mature master interested in developing close contact with both types to extend interest, confidentiality guaranteed

BOX NO F1004

Dublin based 42 caring, sound, honest, easy going, slightly chubby, very affectionate, into good food, music, travel, sunshine, the sea. Straight acting, non smoker, non drinker (but tolerant of both). Looking for young, straight acting, well built guy. Could be older brother, buddy or whatever turns you on.

BOX NO F1005

Straight acting guy 20s seeks 17-25 Y.O. for friendship/relationship. Kildare area, non smoker preferred, discretion assured and expected A.L.A.

BOX NO F1006

Young 50, living on farm, west of Ireland, like to hear from friends over 50 from any part of Ireland.

BOX NO F1007

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 655

Good looking horny 36. Into music, cinema, gardening, seeks good-looking male who is equally as horny for safe fun. ALA

BOX NO F1008

Experience master (31) seeks sub partner with CP interests. Leather bondage a plus. Photo and details to.

BOX NO F1009

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 682

Horny thirtysomething attractive seeks other guys or couples for safe but fun nights, discreet and ALA. Lets have fun in 1996!

BOX NO F1010

Mid 40's, medium build, quietish, very sincere, loves massage, etc. Seeks guys 30 to 38, slim or medium. Discreet from south midlands area preferably but not essential. Sorry cannot accommodate, can travel.

BOX NO F1011

Gay 42 good looks, big, seeks younger to train. Must be discrete and obedient. You won't be disappointed.

BOX NO F1013

Can you answer yes to the following questions. Are you a professional guy in your 30's well built and appealing seeking a hot and possible long term soul mate? Are you interested in exploring all the senses and even more with a partner? I am a professional Dublin well built and attractive guy in my 40's highly sexed and versatile. Please reply with photo letter and phone only serious replies actioned.

BOX NO F1012

Father Christmas figure seeks helpful elfin boy to handle packages throughout 96! Spirited enthusiasm/dedication is a preferred advantage.

BOX NO F1014

South east handsome county guy 39 years, extremely caring and sincere, non smoker, non effeminate, seeks younger guy 18 upwards. Distance no object. Discretion assured.

BOX NO F1015

Would Shay who replied to box DJ504 please write again supplying definite means of contact. Method suggested was not satisfactory.

BOX NO F1016

Newry gay male 52 very horny submissive and shy, good looking well built, seeks heavy and bulky strict, dominant master for over the knee spanking and much more 18+ any age. Come on fat boys.

BOX NO F1017

Northern Ireland gay man 32 down to earth, S/A, into football seeks similar for relationship. No messers.

BOX NO F1018

Genuine lonely guy (30's) North Leinster. Totally disillusioned with wasters. Seeks friendship and correspondence with similar lonely sincere guys any where.

BOX NO F1019

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 656

Gay meditation/discussion group meets alternate Wednesday evenings. Dublin. Interested new members welcome.

BOX NO F1020

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 657

Dublin male late 50's seeks SM master for lessons in bondage and discipline.

BOX NO F1021

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 670

Meath male (35) seeks genuine friends to share interests including travelling cycling, skiing, eating out. Discretion assured and expected. ALA

BOX NO F1022

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 675

No more long distant lovers! Strictly Cork/Kerry, stodgy, hairy, 34 wants more play at home and away.

BOX NO F1023

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 679

Dublin guy, 20's, seeks 18-28 guy. Must be cute / good-looking, preferably fun-loving, bold, arty, insane and happy. If possible reflective open soulfully innocent, but aware. ALA

BOX NO F1024

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 680

Handsome man 32 years, own home in Dublin seeks butch hairy guy 37-50, non scene for relationship.

BOX NO F1025

Gay man 30's, interests, weight training, healthy, friendly socialising. South Dublin north Wicklow seeks men with healthy minds and bodies

BOX NO F1026

Midland gay guy, 36, 5'3", medium build. Just spent another Christmas/new year solo. Disillusioned with occasional ventures on scene and pissed off with insincerity, "one night only" types. Is this your story too? Are you 25-40 slim, sincere, caring, romantic guy looking for friendship, possibly relationship? Can we talk? If like me you're into "arty" things music, gigs, theatre, cinema, poetry, romanticism, candlelight, intimacy, lost weekends, the country side, then why not give "us" a try. Are we soulmates? If you feel 1996 could be good for us call me soon. This genuine, sometimes lonely /lost guy, promises and expects discretion and honesty in replies, which are welcome from north midlands/anywhere. Lets talk

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 672

Male into sensual lingerie u/w, but not TV, would love to hear from other guys into same. Discreet sincere open mature Dublin own place. ALA phone no appreciated

BOX NO F1027

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 673

Young man. Mid West area seeks 17-22 year old for clean fun, can travel. ALA. Discretion assured and expected. A bientot.

BOX NO F1028

VOICEMAIL 1550 111 676

Horny Dublin guy, 31, 11 stone, slim + muscular, non-scene seeks sub/drom guys 22+ for real action. No time-wasters. All replies answered.

BOX NO F1029

Bisexual male 25 requires bisexual female 23-28 for friendship, maybe relationship, maybe more. Interested movies music, walking, completely confidentially.

BOX NO F1030

London Celt seeks Irish friend. Are you well built, fresh-faced not more than 24 straight/gay? Lets correspond with-view to possible meeting.

BOX NO F1031

21 year old gay guy, Cork. I'm 5'9" in height and good-looking. I would like to meet guy for love and friendship. Must be slim good-looking and sexy 18-28 and easy going from anywhere in Munster. Please send photo and phone number. Thanks.

BOX NO F5098

STUDIO APARTMENT

Luxurious & completely private.
Nightly Weekly & Weekend lets
Rates from £12 p.p.s

Located in Monkstown.
Easy access to City Centre.

Phone John at (01) 280 3912

Using Voicemail

Voicemail is easy to use and totally confidential. You can access responses to your advertisement immediately. Using voicemail eliminates the delays that occur when answers to your advertisement are sent to GCN and then posted on to you.

Placing a voicemail advertisement

To obtain a voicemail number, just fill in the classifieds coupon and supply a suggested four-digit PIN number. We will reply to you to confirm your PIN (for a very small number of advertisers we may have to change it) and letting you know what 1550 number you have been assigned. To leave the message that you want those replying to your advert to hear, you then ring your 1550 number and follow the simple instructions. During the month that your advertisement is published you then ring the 1550 number and use your PIN to access the messages that have been left for you.

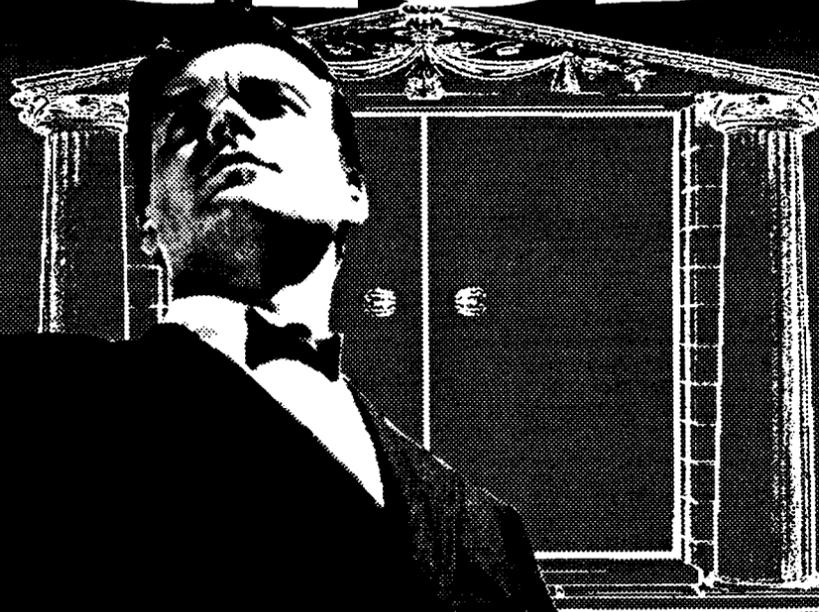
Replying to a voicemail number

To reply to an advert with a voicemail number, just dial the number and follow the instructions given. Please get permission from the owner of the telephone before you dial.

You need a touch-tone telephone to use voicemail. A touch-tone telephone makes a tone sound when any of the numbers is pressed. You will not be able to use voicemail if you get a clicking sound when you press a key. You will not be able to use voicemail with rotary dial telephone. Calls cost 58p per minute. The length of a call will vary, as it depends on the number and length of the messages left for you. However, we promise to deliver the information to you as quickly as possible.

How many of us used a switchboard when we were coming out? They still need our support. Give generously

EXCLUSIVE
MENBERS CLUB



1560 151 690

CALLS CHARGED AT 75p PER MIN (INCL VAT) FUNLINES 2844676

GUYS 2 GUYS • GIRLS 2 GIRLS
GUYS 2 GIRLS • GIRLS 2 GUYS
24 HOUR
CONTACT
Club



1550 190 995

CALLS CHARGED 58p PER MIN (INCL VAT) FUNLINES 2844676

Over 15,000 people will read this space. It could have been selling something for you.
 Ring Damian Penco at (01) 671 9076

PRIVATE GYM
 available for bodybuilders also those wishing to lose, gain or tone up. Personally supervised sessions, your own personal chart checked monthly on your progress which is guaranteed. Facilities including weights, showers, sunbeds and physio.
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 Rates on request.
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VIDEOS

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 OPEN EVERY DAY TIL 8PM

Irelands only contact magazine.
Issue 2 now on sale
 A4 colour - not a photocopy

NATIONAL**Organisations**

NLGF (National Lesbian and Gay Federation)
The Hirschfeld Centre, 10 Fownes St, D2. (01) 671 0939 (12-5.30pm) Publishes GCN, provides information & maintains an archive

Employment Equality Agency
36 Upr Mount St, D2. (01) 660 5966
Deals with cases of job discrimination

Gaeilgeoirí Aerach Aontaithe (Irish Speaking Gay Group)
F/C Roy O'Gealbháin, Ionad Hirschfeld, 10 Sráid Fobhnais. BÁC 2

GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Equality Network)
c/o Hirschfeld Centre, 10 Fownes St, D2. Group lobbying for law reform

Irish Names Quilt (Aids Memorial Quilt)
Eriu Centre, 53 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Workshop Tues 7-9.30 Everybody welcome Phone (01) 873 3799

SECSI
Helpline on sex and sexuality for young people. Phone (01) 872 5033 Sat 2-4 pm.

DUBLIN**Organisations**

Dublin City University, Lesbian & Gay Soc.
Meets Thurs 6pm, Contact Enda Peoples in Students Union Office.

First Out
Confidential support group for women 1st Wed and 3rd Sat each month 7.30pm Contact Lesbian Line or Gay Switchboard Dublin for details.

Hirschfeld Outdoors Group
Meets 11am last Sun of the month at 10 Fownes St, D 2

Icebreakers
Informal meeting for gays and lesbians coming out. 8.00 pm, first Sat every month in city centre hotel. Contact Gay Switchboard Dublin

Julian Fellowship
(01) 492 2843 1st & last Thurs only 7.30-9pm. Support and self development for Christian lesbian women. PO Box 1871, Churchtown, D14.

Kevin St. College Lesbian & Gay Soc.,
Meets every 2nd Wed. Contact Bryan at the Students Union

Lesbian/Bi Youth Group
For women (under 25) meets 2nd & 4th Sunday at LOT 5 Capel St D1 (01) 872 7770

LOT (Lesbians Organising Together)
Umbrella organisation for a number of Lesbian support groups; Drop-in Resource, & Library Mon-Fri 10.00-6.00 5 Capel St D1 (01) 872 7770 Meets 2nd wed each month at 7.00pm. 24-h information line Ph 1550 122345 Countrywide event guide (35p per min. peak)

Muted Cupid Theatre Group
Meets Tuesdays 7.30pm upstairs Rumpoles Bar, Parliament St. D2

Outhouse
PO Box 4767 D2. Gay community & resource centre research group. Meetings in a make a date column.

Outyouth Dublin
Social group for under 25s. Meets 1st and 3rd Sun. Details NLGF or Gay Switchboard Dublin

Raach
PO Box 4625, D2. (01) 492 2688 ex 286 Thu 7.30-9pm only. Gay Christian group, meets twice monthly on Sat in Dublin.

Swimmin Wimmin
Swimming club. Fridays 8.30 - 9.30 Markievicz pool, Townsend St. Adm. £2.00/£2.50

TCD Lesbian, Gay & Bi Soc.
Meets Room 6.26, Thurs. 7.30pm. Also daily from 1.00pm. Contact L.G.B.R.O at students union.

Help & Health

Gay Switchboard Dublin
(01) 872 1055 Sun-Fri 8-10pm; Sat 3.30-6.00pm Carmichael Hs e Nth Brunswick St, D7.

Lesbian Line
Thurs 7-9pm (01) 872 9911 Carmichael House Nth Brunswick St, D7.

A.C.E.T.
Aids, Care Education & Training (a Christian response to HIV/Aids) PO box 3400 Dublin 14 Ph (01) 8787700 Fax (01) 2961123

Live and Let Live Group
(Lesbian & Gay A A group) meets Mon 8pm, Sat 7.30pm, Wed 6.30pm Ph Lesbian Line or Gay S/board for information.

National Transvestite Line
Thurs 7-10pm (01) 671 0939

AIDS Helpline Dublin
(01) 872 4277, Mon-Fri 7-9pm, Sat 3-5pm

Baggot Street Clinic
19 Haddington Rd, D4. (01) 660 2149
Advice, counselling and HIV testing

Cairde 25 Mary's Abbey, Dublin 7.
(01)873 0006 Practical support to people who are HIV+ or have AIDS

Dublin AIDS Alliance
53 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. (01) 873 3799.

Gay Mens Health Project
19 Haddington Rd, D4. (01)660 2149
Tues & Weds, 8-9.30pm. Drop-in, no appointment needed.

HIV Clinic
(01) 453 5245 (direct line) or (01) 453 7941 Ext 2161. Mon 1.30-4.30pm. & Wed 9am-12pm (HIV+ only).

Body Postitive
Eiru Centre 53 Parnell square West D 1. (opposite Rotunda Hospital).
(01) 8720554 Mon-Fri 10am-5pm. Fax No. 8720802

Holistic Health Project
c/o Dublin AIDS Alliance. (01) 873 3799

St James' Hospital GU Clinic
Hospital 5, Rialto Entrance (01)453 5245 (direct line) or (01)453 7941 ext. 2315/2316. Mon & Fri 9am-12.30pm. Tues & Thurs 1.30-4.30pm

New Beginnings
Support Group for lesbians with children. For info ring LOT (01) 872 7770

Parents Support
Support and information for and by parents of lesbians and gays. Contact Gay Switchboard Dublin

Bookshops

Books Upstairs
36 College Green, D2. (01) 679 6687.

Irish Family Planning Association
36/37 Lr Ormond Q, D1. (01) 872 5366

Waterstones
7 Dawson St, D2. (01) 679 1415.

Winding Stair
Bookshop/Cafe, 40 Lr Ormond Qy, D2. (01) 873 3292.

Accommodation

Frankie's
8 Camden Place, D2. (01) 478 3087.

An Tig Mhá (Formally Jills women only)
Self catering, near city centre. 24 Church Ave South Rialto D 8 (01) 8372495

The Horse & Carriage Hotel
15 Aungier St, D2. (01) 478 3537 or 478 3504. Fax (01) 478 4010.

Inn on the Liffey
21 Upper Ormond Quay (01) 677 0828

Eats

Marks Bros
7 Sth Gt George's St, D2.
Young, trendy, Mixed gay/straight coffee shop. Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm

Juice
Sth Great Georges St, vegetarian restaurant. 11am-11pm Mon-Sun.(01) 4757856

The George Bar & Bistro
89 Sth. Gt Georges St, Food served 12-8pm, Mon-Fri.

The Bistro Pizza & Pasta
5 Castlemarket D2. Open till 2am weekends

The Olde New Orleans
Cork Hill, D2. Cajun food. (Gay friendly)

Sinners Restaurant
12 Parliament St. Dublin 2. Gay friendly

Well Fed Restaurant
Dublin Resource Centre, 6 Crow St, D2
Vegetarian food, 12-8pm Mon-Sat

Nightclubs

Lucky Lips, @ Irish Film Centre
Eustace St Dublin 2. Last Fri of each month. 11pm- till late. Women, male friends welcome. £5 (con £4).

Miss Candy's Night Out
The Kitchen East Essex St Sun 11-late

The Playground @ Temple of Sound
Sun 10.30 till late. Ormond Hotel, Ormond Quay, Dublin.

The Block
Upstairs at The George, Sth Great Georges St. D2. 11pm - 2am Fri and Sat
Dance Club with Full Bar

Pubs

The George
Sth Gt George's St, D2

Trinty Pub
Pearse Street D2 Women's Bar every Sat 9pm 12pm. £2

Saunas

The GYM.
14/15 Dame Lane, D2. (01) 679 5128

Incognito.
1-2 Bow Lane East (off Aungier St), D2. (01) 478 3504

CO WICKLOW**Accommodation**

Stoneybroke House
Country Home Accommodation
Ballynamanogue, Tinaahely (0402) 38236

CORK

Organisations

Icebreakers
For gay men coming out Meets 4th sat of month at 4pm Contact Gay Info Cork

L.E.A.P.
(Lesbians for employment against poverty) Self help & support groups, monthly socials, fundraising, archives and a community newsletter Contact Mary/Soren (021)278470/1

West Cork Lesbians
Canoeing, coastal walking dining club for women, etc in west Cork. Contact Lynn @ (028) 33663

Lesbian & Gay Resource Group
The Other Place, 7-8 Augustine St. (021) 278470/1

Queer na nOg (L&G youth group)
Social group for under 25s meets twice monthly for more information contact Emmett (021) 278470

The Other Place
Lesbian & Gay resource centre 8 Sth Main St Cork (entrance via Other Side Bookshop) Contact Donna Mc Anallen (021) 278 470

Help & Health

Cork Lesbian Line
(021) 271 087 Thurs 8-10pm

Gay Information Cork
(021) 271 087. Wed 7-9pm & Sat 3-5pm

Live & Let Live
(Lesbian and Gay friendly A A group) Contact Information lines.

AIDS Alliance Cork
16 Peters St Cork Ph (021)275 837

AIDS Helpline Cork
(021) 276 676 Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Tues 7-9 pm

Southern Gay Health Project
Informs & educates gay men about HIV & AIDS and other health issues Contact Emmett or Ronan (021)278 470/1

Reach
(021) 291 371 Tues 7.30-9pm Gay Christian Group. PO Box 1790 D6.

STD Clinic
Victoria Hospital (Outpatients Dept) Mon 5.30-7.30pm Wed 10am-12pm.

Bookshops

The Other Side Bookshop
8 South Main St Cork . 11-6 Mon-Sat Tel: (021) 278470

Quay Co-Op
24 Sullivan's Quay, Cork. (021) 317 660

Waterstones
Patrick St. (021) 276 522

Accommodation

Amazonia B&B
Coast Road, Fountainstown, Co Cork. (021) 831 115. Twelve miles west of city

Mont Bretia B&B.
Adrigole, Skibbereen, Co Cork. (028) 336 63 (women run)

Danny's Bed & Breakfast
3 St John's Terrace, upper John St (021) 503606

The Crooked Billet
21 Cork St Kinsale Co Cork (021)772 649

Eats

Quay Co-Op
24 Sullivan's Quay. (021) 317 660
Wholefoods store and bakery 9am-6.30pm Sat-Wed; 9am-7pm Thurs Fri
Vegetarian restaurant open 7 days 9.30am-10.30pm (6-10.30 Sun)

The Other Side Cafe
8 Sth Main St Cork (021) 278 470/1
Vegetarian and non vegetarian food in relaxed surroundings. Mon-Sat 10-5

The Art Hive
Art Gallery cum cafe, McCurtain St, Cork.

Pubs

Loafers
Douglas St, Cork Thurs night women only in back bar.

Nightclubs

The Other Place Club.
Augustine St. (021) 278 470/1 Wine Bar and cafe food late every Fri & Sat 1st Fri of month: womens night

BELFAST

Organisations

NIGRA (Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association)
Cathedral Buildings, Lr Donegall St. (01232) 664 111. Meets Thurs 8pm. Also lending library operates

The Drop-In Centre

Cathedral Buildings, Lr Donegall St (next to Spice of Life cafe) Sat 1.30-5pm, ring bell marked CF.

Northern Ireland Gay Christian Fellowship
PO Box 44 Belfast BT1 1SH Meets 2nd & 4th Sun at 3pm in Cathedral Buildings, 64 Lr Donegall St

Belfast Butterfly Club
PO Box 210 Belfast BT1 1BG. Group for transvestites and transsexuals. Meets 1st & 3rd Tues 8pm-11.30. Produces "ITV Magazine".

Help & Health

Cara-Friend Phoneline Belfast
(01232) 322023. Mon/Tue/Wed 7.30-10pm

Lesbian Line Belfast
(01232) 238 668 Thurs 7.30-10pm

Northern Ireland AIDS Helpline
(01232) 326 117 Mon, Wed, Fri 7.30-10pm Sat 2-5 pm.

GUM Clinic (STD Clinic)
Royal Victoria Hospital, Mon-Fri, 9-11am. Mon, Wed & Fri, 2-3pm. (01232) 320 159. Social Worker 240 503 ext 2450. Health Advisor 328 222.

Pubs

Crows Nest Bar
Skipper St (off High St) Mixed Clientele,

The Parliament Bar, and Disco (upstairs), Dunbar St.

Nightclubs

Limelight
Ormeau Avenue. Disco Mon 9pm-1.00

Pink Beach Club
At the Orpheus, York St (Fri/Sat).

Safe & Sexy
The Garage. High St. Bangor Sat 9 pm till late.

GALWAY

Organisations

PLUTO
UCG Lesbian, Gay & Bi Group, Wed during term, 8-10pm, All welcome. Details from Gay/Lesbian Lines

Help & Health

Galway Gay Help Line.
(091)566 134 Tue/Thur 8-10pm. PO Box 45, Galway

Galway Lesbian Line
(091)564 611 Wed 8-10pm. PO Box 45, Galway

AIDS Help West
Ozanam House, (091) 662 66 Helpline Mon-Fri 10am-12noon. Thu 8-10pm (education, Cairde, Body Positive, Family Support Group)

Live and Let Live
Lesbian and Gay Alcoholics Anonymous group. Every Friday at 7 pm. Contact Lesbian and Gay Line Galway for info.

Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Youth Group
Contact Gay/Lesbian Line for info.

Nightclubs

Liberaton
The Shamrock Bar Salthill. 11 till late, full bar £3 before 11.15pm £3.50 after. Contact info lines.

Bookshops

Charlie Byrne's Bookshop
Middle St (091) 561766

Pearls of Wisdom
4 Quay St

LIMERICK

Organisations

Limerick Forum
Social meeting for gays, lesbians and bisexuals. 2nd & 4th Wed of month 8.30pm. Details from the Gay Switchboard.

Wimmins Night Out
First Sunday of each month. Contact Limerick Lesbian Line for information.

Help & Health

Gay Switchboard Limerick
(061) 310 101 Mon, Tues 7.30-9.30pm
PO Box 151 GPO Limerick

Lesbian Line Limerick
(061) 310 101 Thurs 7.30-9.30pm

Limerick AIDS Helpline
(061)316 661 Mon/Thurs 7.30-9.30pm

Red Ribbon Project
(Formerly Limerick Aids Alliance) 94 Henry St Limerick (061) 314 354.

Transvestite Line Limerick
(061) 310101 Fri 7.30-9.30pm

DERRY

Organisations

Foyle Friend
37c Clarendon Street Derry
Ph (01504) 263120 Drop in Thur 8-10pm

Help & Health

Gay, Lesbian & Bi-Sexual Line NW
(01504) 26 7500 Thurs 8-10pm
37c Clarendon St, Derry

The Rainbow Project 58 Strand Road
Derry BT48 7AJ (01504) 268464
Fax 01504 268464

Nightclubs

Hennesseys
64 Strand Road Derry
Mixed gay, lesbian & bi-sexual disco every Thurs from 10pm-1.30am. Disco run on behalf of The Ian Mc Kellan Fund

Magee University
Gay, lesbian & bi-sexual disco every 2nd Friday. Contact Foyle Friend or Rainbow for information.

Accommodation

Floresces
Shalom House B&B Ballyraire
Letterkenny (074) 26759

Bookshops

Bookworm
16 Bishop Street (01504) 261 616
Very good selection of gay books & mags

DROGHEDA

Organisations

Outcomers
Meets 2nd & 4th Fri 7-9pm, Resource Centre for the Unemployed, 7 North Quay. Contact Gay Switchboard Dublin for information.

Drogheda Social Group
Meets the first Friday at the Resource Centre. 7 North Quay, 7.30-9pm.
For gay men lesbians and their friends.

DUNDALK

Organisations

Dundalk Outcomers
Iomlanú Centre, meets 4th Friday of month at 7.30pm.

WATERFORD

Organisations

Waterford Assembly
Social group meets fourth Tuesday of month, Waterford City 8.30pm. Contact Gay Line South East. P.O Box 24 G.P.O., Waterford.

Help & Health

Gay Line South East
(051) 79907 Wed. 7.30-9.30 pm

Parents Support
Support and information for and by parents of gays & lesbians. Contact South East Lines

STD Clinic
Waterford Regional Hospital, Ardkeen, Waterford. Direct phone (051) 54149
Mon 2.00-4.00pm. Thurs 10am-12 noon

Accommodation

The Monkey Puzzle
Holiday hostel Upper Branch Rd
Tramore Co Waterford Helen/Shane (051)386754

Eats

Haricots
O'Connell St., Waterford Vegetarian & wholefood restaurant.

WEXFORD

Organisations

GLOW
Gay and Lesbians Out in Wexford. Meets third Sun of month, 8-9pm Contact Gay Line South East for further information.

KILKENNY

Eats

The Motte Restaurant Inistioge, Co Kilkenny (056) 58655. Limited B+B. 15 miles from city.

BRITAIN

Organisations

London Lesbian/Gay Switchboard
(0171) 837 73 24 (24hrs)

Cairde
(071) 837 2782 • 837 33 37
Social and support group for Irish lesbians in London. Meets 2nd and 4th Sun of the month 6.30-8.30pm at London Friend, 86 Caledonian Rd, N1.

Irish Gay Helpline
(0181) 983 4111 Mon 7.30-10pm
Address: BM IGH, London WC1N 3XX
Information and befriending service

Positively Irish Action on AIDS
21 Old Ford Rd, London E2 9PL
Advice, information and referral service for Irish people affected by HIV/AIDS.

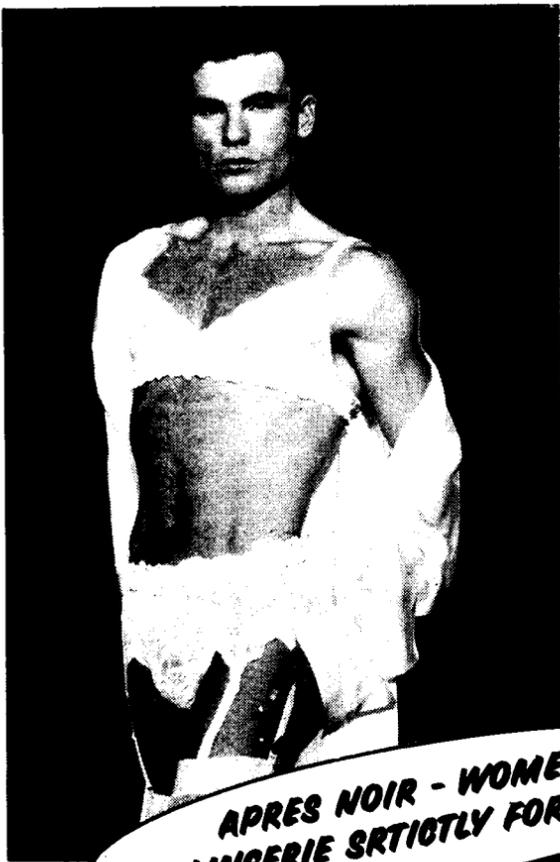
Amách Linn
Irish Lesbian & Gay Men in London
Meets last Tues of each month 7pm
c/o Hammersmith & Fulham Irish Centre
Black Road London W6 9DT.

USA

Organisations

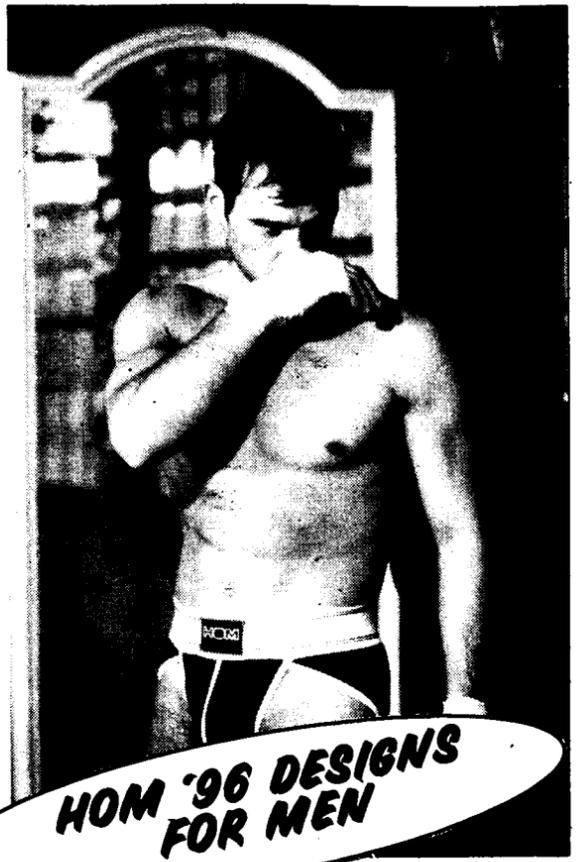
ILGO (Irish Lesbian and Gay Organisation) Contact number 212 9677711 ext 3078.

BASIC INSTINCTS



APRES NOIR - WOMENS LINGERIE STRICTLY FOR MEN

DROP IN AFTER DRINKS ON SUNDAY OR LATE NIGHT TUES/WED/THUR AND DISCOVER HEAVEN !!



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Dublin 2
(01) 671 2223

Monday - 10.30 - 6.00pm
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10.30 - 8.00pm
Friday, Saturday 10.30 - 6.00pm Sunday 12.00 - 6.00pm

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Date: 1996

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