



Give the People Light and they will find their own way.

The Wisconsin Light

Mayor Norquist Receives Unique Valentines From Queer Nation

By Terry Boughner

[Milwaukee]- Six members of Queer Nation Milwaukee held a special "Valentine's Day Party" for Mayor John Norquist in their continuing effort to "stay in the Mayor's face" since his veto of city funds for Milwaukee's Gay Pride Parade.

The "party" took place in the reception area of the Mayor's office at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, February 14.

Earlier, Queer Nation members had sold Valentine's Day cards to be delivered to the Mayor. The cards contained verses such as "Roses are red, violets are blue. We need a Mayor other than you" and "I've got a vote, and I'm gonna use it. Because of your veto, you're gonna lose it!" The cards were described enthusiastically by Tim Grair, a Queer Nation member, as "pink, festive, with lots of naked cupids."

Over 100 of these cards had been purchased and signed by members of the Lesbian/Gay community. The cards were then delivered to the Mayor. Many were on poster board. Some were loose.

In addition, Queer Nation brought black painted carnations which Grair described as "smelling heavily of paint."

After they had delivered the cards and flowers, Queer Nation members chanted: "As long as it's a straight fest, John thinks it's a great fest." This chant was also used by the Queer Nationals when they demonstrated at the Mayor's speech at the close of Winterfest in Cathedral Square February 9.

Most of the major media were in attendance for the Valentine's Day event. Television coverage was positive, with reporters clearly amused by the Gay group's antics. Grair said that the reception by the Mayor's staff was friendly.

Grair said that Queer Nation is now receiving the Mayor's schedule on a regular basis. It is quite likely that the Queer Nationals will continue their campaign to "stay in the Mayor's face." Grair said that anyone can pick up a copy of the Mayor's schedule by simply requesting one from his receptionist at City Hall.

Dinkins Pressures Hibernians; Wants Gays In St. Pat's Parade

By Jamakaya

[New York, NY]- Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist, who recently vetoed city funding for the annual Gay Pride Parade, is not the only big city mayor grappling with controversy over Gays and parades. Mayor David Dinkins in New York is too. But unlike Norquist, Dinkins is distinguishing himself in a completely different way.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians stands accused of discrimination by New York City's Human Rights Commission for excluding the Irish Gay and Lesbian Organization from participation in the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Representatives of the Ancient Order will be called before an administrative judge to answer charges that their action is in violation of the city's civil rights laws.

The Commission's charges were initiated at the behest of Mayor Dinkins, who marched in solidarity with the Gays and Lesbians in 1991 after a last minute compromise allowed for their inclusion in the parade. Dinkins and the Gays were heckled by hooligans along the parade route.

"The City of New York has an obligation to uphold the law," said Mayor Dinkins at a press conference January 24. "Discrimination is ugly and destructive and we will work to put an end to it."

The complaint states that the annual parade is a place of "public accommodation" and therefore subject to the provisions of municipal laws which

Dahmer Imprisoned For Life; Community Expresses Relief

By Terry Boughner

[Milwaukee]- After eight months, the case of serial killer Jeffrey L. Dahmer has been brought to a conclusion. Milwaukee's Lesbian/Gay community, like the rest of the city, state and nation, has listened and watched with a mixture of horror, fascination, profound pain and deep perplexity as to how what Dahmer himself called a "holocaust" could have happened.

On the evening of February 14 my spouse and I went out to the bars. At that point, the case was in the hands of the jury which was soon to decide whether Dahmer was sane or insane. It was Valentine's Day, but no matter where we went, people were talking about "the Dahmer nightmare."

I would go up to someone I knew. At first, they would shake their head or smile and say they were bored by it all. They didn't want to talk about Jeffrey Dahmer anymore. Then, usually without a pause, they would start to talk about the case.

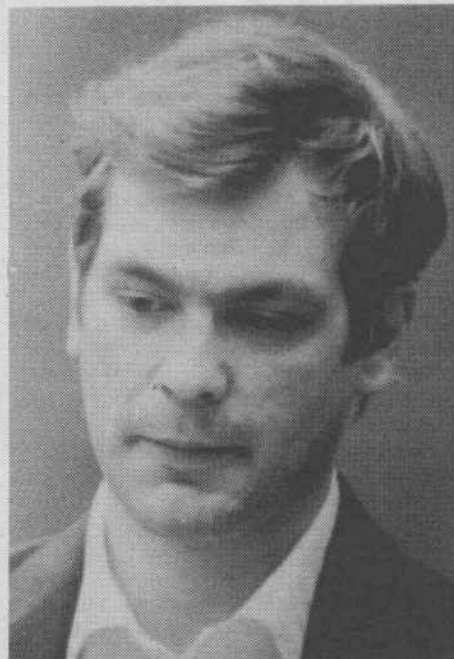
Sorrow, Anger, Relief

There was a lot of pent up emotion, a lot of sorrow over what had happened. Miss Goldie Adams pointed to the spots in Club 219 where Dahmer had stood. She said she'd known some of the victims and mourned "deeply" the loss of good friends.

Larry, a young Black man, warned that if Dahmer was declared insane, the African American community would be enraged.

There was a lot of anger no matter where we went. Though this is a very subjective impression, the feeling I got from people was that Dahmer, Gay himself, had betrayed and smeared the whole Gay/Lesbian community by what he had done. Perhaps that's the reason I found nearly universal agreement that Dahmer had to be found to be sane — personally responsible for what he had done — and sent away forever.

The next day, Saturday, February 15, the verdict was brought in. Dahmer was declared sane on all 15 homicide counts. On Monday, he was sentenced to life in prison. Opinions on the verdict and



Pool Photo

JEFFREY L. DAHMER

sentence varied.

Cindy Van Vreede expressed satisfaction with the verdict and sentence. "I'm happy," she said. "I'm glad he's going to prison." Then she added, "I'm glad it's over. There's a sadness to it all." Her voice reflected the sorrow she felt over the terrible things that had happened.

Michael Lisowski, director of Gay Youth Milwaukee who knew "Demetra" Straughter, one of the victims, said that he was "satisfied" with the verdict and expressed the hope that Dahmer would be studied and evaluated by those qualified to do so.

Sue Burke said that she too was pleased with the verdict and sentence. "A thousand years is a long way away," she added, referring to the earliest time Dahmer might expect parole.

Time for Healing

Another woman agreed, saying "the verdict was exactly appropriate." She spoke of the need for healing in the community and the sense of relief she felt now that the trial was over.

Joan Lawrence said she thought the "whole thing was a side-show and a circus." Lawrence added that she wasn't convinced by the jury's decision. "If he wasn't insane," she said, "I don't know who is." Lawrence suggested that lawmakers ought to review the current definitions of mental disease and insanity.

Doug Nelson, Executive Director of the Milwaukee AIDS Project (MAP) said,

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A Hate Crime That Wasn't: Racism, Homophobia In The Dahmer Case

Commentary by Jamakaya

One of the major unresolved issues of the Jeffrey L. Dahmer case, in my opinion, was the failure — no — refusal by all parties involved to recognize the killings as hate crimes. I know I hold a minority opinion on this, but hear me out.

I believe that downplaying the possibility that the murders were hate crimes is part of the larger collective denial by the powers that be in the City of Milwaukee that racism and homophobia had anything to do with the case.

Denial, Denial, Denial

In his opening statement at the trial, Defense Attorney Gerald P. Boyle asserted: "This is not a case about homosexuality... This was not racial." On several occasions District Attorney E. Michael McCann also said that the crimes were not motivated by hate.

Dahmer himself indicated in his confession to police and in his statement before Judge Laurence C. Gram Jr.: "I did what I did, but not for reasons of hate."

By Jamakaya

[Milwaukee]- Serial killer Jeffrey L. Dahmer, who preyed on members of the Gay and minority communities, was sentenced to 15 consecutive life terms in prison on February 17 after a jury determined he was sane when he committed 15 grisly homicides.

Dahmer will not be eligible for parole for 936 years.

In remarks to Judge Laurence C. Gram Jr. before sentencing — the first public comments he has made — the killer expressed regret for the "holocaust" he created. Dahmer said he now understood he was "sick," asked forgiveness from the victims' families, and said: "Only the Lord Jesus Christ can save me from my sins."

High Drama in Courtroom

Two days earlier, the atmosphere in the courtroom was emotionally charged as Judge Gram read each of the verdicts. The jury was asked whether Dahmer was suffering from a mental disease at the time of each crime. One by one, as each of the counts was read and the name of each victim was recited, the answer was "No...No...No...No..."

Cries of relief came from the victims' families who, since the murders were discovered last July, have demanded



Morry Matin

DISTRICT ATTORNEY E. MICHAEL MCCANN

justice for their loved ones. A relative of victim Anthony Sears chanted "Thank you Jesus, thank you Jesus" as the verdicts were read.

Family members crowded around District Attorney E. Michael McCann as he attempted to leave the courtroom. Many embraced him and thanked him for successfully prosecuting Dahmer. McCann himself wiped tears from his eyes.

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Joan Vitale Strong

MAYOR DAVID DINKINS

bar discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Although the origins of the parade stem from Roman Catholicism, over the past 230 years the St. Patrick's Day Parade has become a major public event celebrated by the entire city.

The Dinkins administration wants the Ancient Order of Hibernians to develop a new set of guidelines that will allow admission of the group in this year's parade. But the Hibernians are expected to argue that First Amendment protections of freedom of speech and association permit them to choose who will participate in the event.

Norman Siegel of the New York Civil Liberties Union has offered to represent

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NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

March on D.C. Welcomes Bisexuals

[Washington, D.C.]—The 79 member steering committee of the April 25, 1993 March on Washington decided after many hours of debate to include bisexuals in the title of the march. The official name adopted for the event is "The 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation."

Debate over the title dominated the first meeting of the national steering committee which met in Los Angeles in January. The steering committee consists of 4 delegates from 17 different regions of the country along with 12 representatives of national organizations. Delegations from the various regions are required to be 50% female and 50% people of color.

In addition to the title, an executive committee to handle the day to day decisions between quarterly meetings of the national steering committee was chosen. Committees were also formed to work on specific areas: fundraising, media, outreach, rally planning and direct action.

Most participants reportedly left the meeting enthusiastic about the march. Veteran organizer Robin Tyler said that the 1993 march and "Stonewall 25" in 1994 (the huge political and cultural event to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion in New York City) would usher in "a decade of resistance."

To get involved in planning for the march, Wisconsinites can call Michael at (414) 265-8500.

Lesbian Partner Granted Adoption

[New York, NY]—On January 30, Manhattan Surrogate Court Judge Eve Preminger approved the adoption of a six year old boy by his mother's lesbian partner, the first such adoption in New York state. The mother is a physician and professor of pediatrics; her partner has a doctorate in Psychology and teaches at a private school. The couple has been together 14 years.

In her decision, Preminger said: "No provision of New York law requires that the adoptive parent be of any particular gender. The fact that the petitioners here maintain an open lesbian relationship is not a reason to deny adoption...Concern that a child would be disadvantaged by growing up in a single sex household is not borne out by the professional literature examined by this court."

The adoption grants the boy, identified as "Evan," several significant legal protections. It obligates the adoptive parent to support the boy and makes him eligible for the adoptive parent's medical insurance and Social Security benefits. The adoptive parent would also be eligible for visitation rights should the couple's relationship end. She would also retain custody of the child in the event his mother died.

Evan was conceived through artificial insemination. Because the sperm donor relinquished any claim to the child, there was no opposing legal interest in the adoption and the ruling cannot be appealed.

Powell Reinforces Military Ban

[Washington, D.C.]—Under questioning by Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) about the U.S. military's ban on gays and lesbians, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Colin Powell denied that homosexuals constitute a security risk but reinforced the Pentagon's view that homosexuality "is inconsistent with maintaining good order and discipline."

Powell made his remarks February 5 in a hearing before the House Budget Committee. "It's difficult in a military setting where there is no privacy," said Powell, "to introduce a group of individuals — proud, brave, loyal, good Americans, but who favor a homosexual lifestyle — and put them in with heterosexuals who would prefer not to have somebody of the same sex find them sexually attractive."

"I think that's a very difficult problem to give the military. I think it would be prejudicial to good order and discipline to try to integrate that into the current military structure," said Powell.

NGLTF Launches Election Initiative

[Washington, D.C.]—The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) has launched an initiative to push gay and lesbian issues to the forefront of the 1992 Presidential election campaign.

The NGLTF Lesbian and Gay Presidential Initiative will present the Gay and Lesbian agenda to the candidates, secure their support, inform gay and lesbian constituents about the candidates' positions and use both parties' conventions as media forums for gay, lesbian and AIDS issues.

The initiative, called "VOICE '92," is a collaborative project between NGLTF, the Human Rights Campaign Fund and grass roots gay and lesbian groups. Briefings, press conferences, demonstrations, delegate meetings, media kits and more will be produced by VOICE '92.

To get involved, contact NGLTF at (202)332-6483. Or write to NGLTF at 1517 U Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

Meanwhile, members of Queer Nation chapters from throughout the northeast have been beating NGLTF at its own initiative. Queer Nationals were a constant presence in the New Hampshire primary where they showed up at rallies and press conferences for all of the candidates demanding to know what their positions were on gay rights and AIDS funding. Hundreds of angry activists broke windows and held a die-in outside Bush headquarters February 15. The only candidate who responded favorably to the gay militants in a supportive and good humored way was Democrat Paul Tsongas.

Quickies...

[Los Angeles, CA]—NBC reportedly lost up to a half million dollars in advertising revenue when advertisers pulled their spots from a January episode of *Quantum Leap* which focused on a Naval cadet dealing with his homosexuality.

[Baltimore, MD]—The Gay and Lesbian Community Center and the Baltimore Justice Campaign are sponsoring a billboard campaign to raise consciousness about gays and lesbians. The billboards now appearing around Baltimore feature six gay men and lesbians along with the message "You Already Know Us!" The phone number of the Community Center is also included.

News Briefs are compiled by Jamakaya from mainstream newspapers and wire services, organizational press releases and gay and lesbian papers from across the U.S.

REACTION

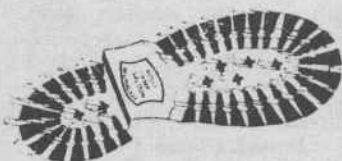
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"The Dahmer murders and trial have been so cathartic and stressful for our community. I have enormous sympathy and compassion for the victims and their families. Although the verdict fits the crime, I am saddened by Dahmer himself and the horror of his life. It causes me to wonder if our society had made mental health services available throughout life whether all of this could have been avoided and the life of Jeffrey Dahmer would have been much better."

"As it stands," said Nelson, "this has been a nightmare for all of us and we must pull together and go on building a better community."

There seemed to be, as far as I could discover, a general attitude of weariness, a feeling of relief that the "Dahmer

nightmare" as many referred to it, was over. Most agreed with Nelson that it was time to get on with the healing and to the building of a better community.



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Will Mayor Norquist Appear At The Masquerade Ball March 1?

[Milwaukee]—The Milwaukee Lavender Network will hold its next meeting on Monday, February 24 at the Counseling Center, 2038 N. Bartlett Avenue, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The Lavender Network is composed of Lesbian and Gay activists, leaders of organizations and individuals interested in working to further the Lesbian/Gay cause of civil rights. Its main purpose is to build bridges of understanding between diverse gay and lesbian groups in Milwaukee through networking and communication.

The Lavender Network believes strongly that by working together the Gay/Lesbian cannot be defeated by anyone. Born during the crisis over the Dahmer murders last year, the group hopes to forge a continuing network of gay groups and individuals working toward common goals. The group is actively seeking representatives from all Gay/Lesbian groups and encourages anyone interested in becoming active to attend.

Lavender Network Set To Meet At Counseling Center February 24

[Milwaukee]—Mayor John O. Norquist (or a reasonable facsimile thereof) will be serenaded by the Fest City Singers (FCS) at the 1992 Mardi Gras Masquerade Ball at the Mitchell Park Domes, Sunday, March 1, 1992. The Masquerade Ball is a fundraiser for Milwaukee's Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee.

In a mini-production entitled *The Sleeping Mayor — A Fairy Tale for Fairies*, the Singers will confront Hizzoner concerning his veto of the Milwaukee Pride Committee's request for city festival funds for the annual parade and rally.

This musical roast was specially written for the occasion by Fest City Singers' Artistic Director Peter Mortensen to satirize the Mayor's hypocrisy. Such songs as "I Gotta Veto," "It's Not Where You Start But Where You Finish," and "Pennies From Heaven" will be under the baton of Music Director Charles Golden.

Details and ticket forms for the Masquerade Ball, which will be held from 6 p.m. to midnight March 1, are on p. 12 of this issue of *Wisconsin Light*.

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Group For Gay/Lesbian Couples Now Forming In Wisconsin

[Milwaukee]- An organization for Gay/Lesbian couples is now forming. This will be a social organization for male and female couples throughout Wisconsin.

The organization will sponsor social events and activities. Organizing members range in age from their early 20's to mid-40's. Older or younger couples are encouraged to get involved. Organizing members range in occupation from college students to physicians and other professionals. Some members have been together for as long as 15 years and others for less than 6 months.

The organizers believe that this organization will be a valuable resource to

a segment of our community that has been mostly ignored. They hope not only to serve the community as a social organization, but also to serve as a model and resource for Gay/Lesbian people.

The organization is in the formative stage. Organizers hope to recruit members who would have an interest in attending and planning events. The group is planning its first social event for March. This event will be a wine tasting party. Those interested in becoming members or wishing more information may write to: P.O. Box 21651, Milwaukee, WI 53221 or call John at (414) 425-9778.

Madison To Host MILMAIDS VII Bowling Tournament April 25

[Madison]- Madison will be the site of the Milmaids VII (Milwaukee- Madison Against AIDS), a Nine Pin tap bowling tournament. On Saturday, April 25, 1992, bowlers will converge on the Sun Prairie Lanes, 430 Clamar Drive, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, to raise money for the Madison AIDS Support Network (MASN).

This year's tournament will once again feature split shifts to accommodate up to 320 bowlers. Cost is \$25 which includes bowling, buffet, T-shirt, prizes and a donation to MASN. Cash and prizes are currently being solicited from the business community.

The Awards Ceremony will take place

at the Club 3054, E. Washington Street in Madison. Guests and significant others may attend the awards banquet for a \$5 donation.

This is a singles handicap tournament. Five bowlers will be assigned to each lane. Bowlers must specify which shift (A.M./P.M.) they wish to bowl in.

1st Shift Registration — 9:00 a.m.; 1st Shift Bowling — 10:00 a.m.

2nd Shift Registration — 12:00 noon; 2nd Shift Bowling — 1:00 p.m.

The deadline for entries is April 11, 1992. For more information call Joe Feighley at (414) 271-8889.

Performer's Playground: Workshop For Theatrical Players Planned

[Milwaukee]- Both the novice and experienced performer will welcome the "Performer's Playground," a series of workshops designed to promote in every player a sense of "ownership" of their performance regardless of technical skill.

Conceived by Peter Mortensen in response to his experience as both a performer and teacher/director, the aim of the workshops is to provide a safe and stimulating environment for the participant to "play" in the theatre.

Each six-week session will seek to develop further the ideas explored and "played with" in the previous session. This will be accomplished by moving from simple improvisations and theatre games, through the addition of text and character development, to scene work. In addition, each three-hour class will include one hour of dance technique.

The "Performer's Playground" is geared to all levels of experience and interest: from those who want to create a convincing Whitney Houston impression to those who want to persuade the landlord that the cat is "just visiting."

In order to guarantee maximum "playtime" for all participants, enrollment will be limited. For further information on time, dates, and place, call (414) 264-4620.

Gay Families Topic At UWM March 5

[Milwaukee]- The Gay and Lesbian community at UW-Milwaukee will be hosting a discussion of Gay and Lesbian families on Thursday, March 5.

Societal views of what constitutes a family (marriage) will be examined by Stacey Olier, Ph.D. Two Milwaukee area attorneys, Steve Byers and Deb Procknow, will discuss ways to legally protect partners and why this type of protection is necessary. The Forum is free and open to the public. Comments and questions are welcome. The discussion will be held in E240 of the UW-Milwaukee Student Union at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call the GLC office at (414) 229-6555.

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Losing someone to AIDS can be overwhelming.

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MEDICAL
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PARADE

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the Hibernians. He told the *New York Times*: "A march is a First Amendment activity which is constitutionally protected, and accordingly, marchers can choose who they want to associate with."

"It's a big mistake," said Siegel of the legal action, "and it will come back to haunt all of us."

At least one Gay attorney, who is also a member of ACT UP, agreed. Bill Dobbs said that forcing the Ancient Order of Hibernians to include the Gay group against their wishes might potentially require the annual Gay Pride Parade to include anti-Gay organizations.

Dinkins said he still hoped that legal action could be averted and a negotiated compromise reached.

If the issue cannot be resolved before the March 17 parade, the Human Rights Commission plans to seek an injunction to order the Gay group admitted.

In an editorial, the *New York Times* opined: "The Irish of New York were the victims of discrimination for centuries. That makes it all the more deplorable that organizers of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, persist in preventing a Gay Irish organization from marching as a unit in the celebration on March 17."

"The best solution isn't in court or in a city hearing room, but in the hearts of the Hibernians. They would be doing their city and their history proud by changing their minds and letting the St. Patrick's Day Parade conform to its reputation as a celebration all can enjoy."

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A benefit for the Milwaukee Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee June 14 Parade/Rally.

Dykes To Watch Out For



Give the People Light and they
will find their own way.

The Wisconsin Light



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GAY AND LESBIAN
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EDITORIAL

Society's Homophobia Contributed To The Horrible Dahmer Nightmare

The trial of Jeffrey L. Dahmer is over. The experts have all been heard from; the words have all been said. But of those words, among the most understanding were those spoken by Judge Laurence C. Gram Jr. in his wrap-up message. Echoing Dr. George Palermo, the court appointed psychiatrist who testified earlier in the trial, Judge Gram told the court he thought that Dahmer was a "homosexual who had never come to terms with his homosexuality." We at Wisconsin Light believe that in this unfortunate denial are at least some seeds of the tragedy that has hung over Milwaukee like a dank, noxious fog for the past eight months.

While it's easy enough to blame society for a variety of ills, real or imagined, the blame this time is justified. We believe that in the case of Jeffrey Dahmer, society as a whole must assume some of the burden for what Dahmer himself has called a "holocaust."

Imagine, if you will, this scenario. Imagine that we live in a society that is fully accepting of Lesbians and Gay men. Think what it would be like if vulnerable Gay and Lesbian adolescents were not pummeled constantly with uncounseled messages telling them they were "sinners," "freaks," "abnormal," "faggots," "queers" and generally worthless human beings.

What would it be like if Lesbian and Gay youth could reach maturity knowing that they were not alone? What if they could grow up without alienation, reach adulthood without fear? What if they could have the support of their friends and families? What if they were allowed access to the vehicles of dating to learn about forming relationships? What if they could learn about love? And what if they could marry, settle down, build homes, and form families openly without being afraid? What would it be like?

But things are not like that. Instead there are bigots, their mouths dripping venomous hatred and corrosive ignorance. We "choose" to be what we are, they say (a blatant falsehood). We must not "flaunt it," they tell us. "Stay in the closet," they say, because we don't want to see you. All you want is sex, they preach. You "queers" can't have families, you couldn't want love. These things, these words, these attitudes blasted at us by ranting ministers, raving radio talkshow hosts, political leaders, school board members, parents, friends, families and others, can and do cause damage and terrible pain.

Most of us, thankfully, get through it somehow. By the skin of our teeth as Thornton Wilder wrote, we manage to make it without hurting ourselves too badly — or hurting anyone else. But Jeffrey Dahmer did not make it, and that is the tragedy now written in blood.

We hold no brief for Jeffrey Dahmer — and no sympathy for the reprehensible things he has done. But it behooves us all, Gay, Lesbian and straight, to understand him if we can. We believe that part of the understanding lies in Judge Gram's words. A person who cannot accept him/herself; a person who is not allowed to accept him/herself, is an injured human being. That injury, that festering wound can have terrible consequences. In the case of Jeffrey Dahmer, it has.

We at Wisconsin Light think that along with Dahmer, homophobia itself must stand red-eyed and glaring in the dock. There we must see it, all of us must see it, look at it hard, understand it as the demon it is. The thing is, that while Jeffrey Dahmer will be put away forever — and rightly so — the devil of homophobia will continue walking freely on our streets, stalking us all, committing its mayhem with every step. Dahmer is sick, but homophobes are hardly healthy. The sooner we understand that, the sooner we can come to terms with this terrible thing. If we don't understand it, then there will be no healing in Milwaukee, only scars and the seeds of future tragedies.

The Real Power of Gay Pride Lies In Respecting Our Diversity

Commentary By Christopher Lubus

There is an individual in this community who is being asked to remove himself from the Milwaukee Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee (MLGPC) because of the way he looks. Incidentally, this individual's appearance is part of his sexual orientation — not all of us can pass for straight without denying something basic to our self-identity.

There are people within our community who say he cannot represent us because he presents a negative stereotype to straight Milwaukee. He is not a stereotype. He is a human being and should be treated as such. He is also a hard worker and, if allowed to continue on MLGPC, will contribute much to this year's celebration. He is not getting paid for this work and, judging by the empty positions on the MLGPC Board, volunteers are not easily found.

More to the point, why is this individual's appearance important? Do we really want straight-acting, straight-appearing people to represent us all of the time? It seems as if those who

LETTERS

Open Up!

TO THE EDITOR:

Another closed door meeting. More empty promises. Have we learned nothing? Mayor Norquist promised to "publicly speak out" against Queerbashing "at the first good opportunity." [Wisconsin Light, February 6-19, 1992 issue] The Mayor has made many public speeches since that promise and has yet to even hint that there are Lesbians and Gays in the City of Milwaukee, let alone that we have serious problems that have not even begun to be addressed. When will a "good opportunity" arise? When he finally speaks to us? We already know about Queerbashing. Mayor Norquist has the power to educate the rest of the city. When will he use it?

I have a hard time believing that the Mayor would agree to keep any promise involving an open meeting with the Lesbian and Gay Community and apparently so do the so-called leaders who organized this closed-door meeting with the Mayor — otherwise the meeting would have been more open to divergent points of view.

Why were Queer Nation/Milwaukee and ACT UP/ Milwaukee specifically excluded? Perhaps these so-called leaders were too embarrassed to let the Mayor know that there are people within the Lesbian and Gay

community who are more than just miffed with his cavalier dismissal of our rights and our citizenship.

I have been told that it is "inappropriate" to let our elected officials know when we are angry with them. If we are to be afraid to voice our anger with the Mayor for fear of reprisals, then what separates our government from that of the now-defunct Soviet Union?

Democracy works, not because of the lese majeste of our officials, but because we, as citizens, demand our rights. Offering to sand the club before the Mayor beats us with it is not

can pass for straight are concerned that they may have to wait along with the rest of our community until we all get the rights and respect that are our due. As someone who has a personal interest in obtaining these rights (specifically the right to marriage), I know first-hand all of the traps and pitfalls on the road to obtaining these rights. However, if after nearly seven years together, we finally are allowed a legal marriage but cannot share that right with our entire community, then that marriage is a sham.

We need to renew ourselves in the spirit of Stonewall. We need to stand up for each other instead of attacking ourselves. Until we can work together despite apparent differences, we will never move forward. The Power of Pride is not in our singularity. The Power of Pride is in our diversity.

Community who are more than just miffed with his cavalier dismissal of our rights and our citizenship.

I have been told that it is "inappropriate" to let our elected officials know when we are angry with them. If we are to be afraid to voice our anger with the Mayor for fear of reprisals, then what separates our government from that of the now-defunct Soviet Union?

Democracy works, not because of the lese majeste of our officials, but because we, as citizens, demand our rights. Offering to sand the club before the Mayor beats us with it is not

demanding our rights. A veto by any other wording would still smell of discrimination.

Our Community needs real change. We've had closed-door meetings and all the broken promises that came with them. For me to believe any promise the Mayor makes to our Community, I will need to see him address our needs in front of the "straight" press with the entire City of Milwaukee watching — not behind locked doors with a select few people who are predisposed to believe him.

— Timothy S. Grair
Milwaukee

Gay La Crosse

TO THE EDITOR:

On January 28, a group of Coulee Region Lesbians and Gay men founded the La Crosse Lesbian and Gay Association (LLGA). Our organization, based on social democratic principles, is committed to providing the Coulee Region Lesbian and Gay community with opportunities for socializing, political action, community service, and education; we are committed to providing our community with an active voice on the issues that concern us.

As a socializing and community service organization, we invite all area Lesbians, Gay men, and supportive individuals to join us and participate in our social, educational, and community service events. As a group that provides the Lesbian/Gay community of La Crosse with an active voice, we support and encourage our members to be politically active.

At our February 4th meeting we adopted a Statement of Principles which outlines our collective philosophy. We are an independent Lesbian/Gay affirmative organization. Our commitment is to work towards justice and equitable treatment for our people in a positive and responsible manner. We will only endorse those groups and political candidates and deal with those issues that advance the quality of life for the Gay community. We invite Coulee Region Lesbians/Gay men and supportive individuals to contact us for further information by calling (608) 784-5896.

—Darren J. Foster
LLGA Press Liaison
La Crosse, WI



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QUEER VALENTINES—Tim Grair and other members of Queer Nation/Milwaukee delivered specially designed Valentines to Mayor John Norquist on February 14 in their continuing effort to "stay in the Mayor's face" since his veto of Gay Pride funds in January.

Loey Nelson, Pat McCurdy Set For 'Make A Promise' Dinner, March 21

[Milwaukee]— Singer/songwriter Loey Nelson, a Milwaukee native and nationally-acclaimed recording artist, will headline the 6th Annual Make A Promise dinner March 21 in the Pfister Hotel Grand Ballroom, 424 East Wisconsin Avenue. Comedienne Jo Ann Dearing, also from Milwaukee, and folk/blues musician Pat McCurdy will share the spotlight.

Proceeds from the Make A Promise dinner, targeted at more than \$40,000, will benefit the comprehensive AIDS care and education services provided by the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) through the Milwaukee AIDS Project (MAP) and the Southeast Wisconsin AIDS Project.

Tickets for the Make A Promise dinner are available at a cost of \$75 for preferred seating and \$45 for general seating. Sponsorship tickets may be purchased that will enable persons with AIDS/HIV to attend the festivities.

Loey Nelson, sister of Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, will headline the Make A Promise show by offering music with a country, swing, pop, and folk mix. A critically-acclaimed debut album introducing Nelson's original songs was released in 1990 under the Warner Brothers label.

"I'm extremely honored to be asked to perform for such a world-felt cause," Nelson said. "You can be sure that I will search my heart for the most sincere expression of my commitment to joining others in understanding and ultimately defeating AIDS, a disease that has already taken too many lives."

Jo Ann Dearing has won national acclaim on the stage and television. Her accomplishments include a number of network and cable performances, including appearances on "Hard Knocks," "The Rich Hall Special," and



LOEY NELSON

her own slot on Showtime's "Comedy Club Network." She also recently co-starred in the comedy/action film *Suburban Commando*, with Hulk Hogan, Christopher Lloyd and Shelley Duvall.

Pat McCurdy has recorded two albums under the RCA/Millennium label, *Yipes* and *A Bit Irrational*. The seven-time WAMI award winner has opened for the Beach Boys, Cheap Trick, Jefferson Starship, and others.

Elegant cocktail and dinner music at the Make A Promise event will be provided by Ariel and Northern Lights Chamber Winds.

For further information on the 1992 Make A Promise dinner, call the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin at (414) 273-1991.

WYOU-TV Sets Schedule For Month of March

[Madison]— The following is a list of the programs scheduled for "Nothing to Hide" on Madison's WYOU-TV for March, 1992.

March 4 — "Looking for Langston" — the memorial tribute to Langston Hughes, African-American Gay poet.

March 11 — "Real Eyes Realize Real Lies" with Jay Hatheway.

March 18 — Sam Day's Conversations with folks pushing back the boundaries of oppression.

March 25 — The 15th Annual Women's Conference sponsored by the University of Wisconsin system at UW-Whitewater. Part 2 of "Women and Politics in Guatemala."

Owner of Gay Club In Arizona Defends 'Dahmer Diner' Promotion

By Terry Boughner

[Phoenix, AZ]— Foster's, a Gay nightclub in Phoenix, Arizona, is promoting a series of theme evenings called "Dahmer's Diner" to run for eight consecutive Friday nights beginning the first Friday in March. According to the bar's owner, Jay Foster, the evenings are intended for "lighthearted fun" and will feature "drink specials" and a variety of food.

When *Wisconsin Light* first called Foster's on February 19, Chris, a bartender there explained that the intent of the "Dahmer's Diner" promotion was to "make light of a bad situation."

Foster, the owner, told *Light* that he didn't see how the idea could be considered in any way tacky or in poor taste. He failed to see how anyone could be offended by it. He said people who were upset should "get a grip." He added, "We're just playing," and wondered how news of the plan had "gotten so far back east so fast."

When asked to give details of what was planned for each evening, Foster answered there would be "themes,

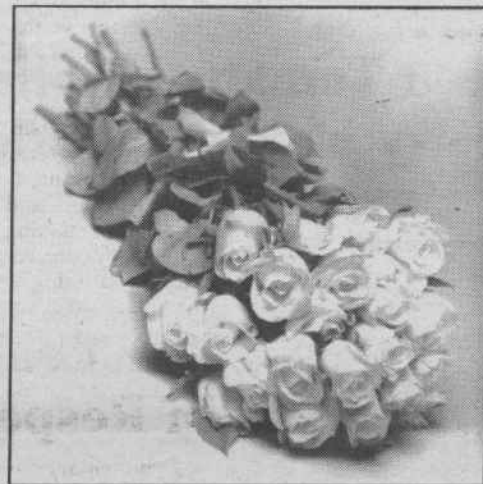
basically" in each of which there would be "bits and pieces of what Dahmer was." This would include, he said, a "refrigerator filled with oranges." He said that posters had been put up in the bar advertising "Dahmer's Diner" and that there would be "further advertising" of the events.

Foster also said that on each of the eight evenings, there would be a cover charge, the proceeds to be given to "various AIDS organizations."

Foster ended the conversation by inviting Milwaukeeans to come to Phoenix. He said: "You must be having a rough time up there. We can show you how to have fun."

The *Light* learned about the Dahmer's Diner" promotion from a cousin of one of Dahmer's victims who lives in Phoenix. The young man indicated he had complained to Foster about the insensitivity of the idea, but that Foster brushed him off, saying: "Everyone's going to be offended by something."

Foster's is located at 4343 North 7th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85013. The phone number is (602) 263-8313.



Make A Promise

SATURDAY - MARCH 21, 1992 - 5:30 P.M.

SIXTH ANNUAL DINNER, SHOW AND AUCTION TO BENEFIT THE MILWAUKEE AIDS PROJECT & SOUTHEAST WISCONSIN AIDS PROJECT

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FEATURING LOEY NELSON
JO ANN DEARING AND
PAT MCCURDY

PRODUCED BY THE
AIDS RESOURCE CENTER OF WISCONSIN

CALL 414.273.1991

Affirmation To Meet First And Third Sundays

[Madison]— The Madison Affirmation group will start to meet on the first and third Sundays of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the University United Methodist Church, 1127 University Avenue in Madison. The next meeting will be March 1. There is free parking behind the church, with the entrance off Charter Street.

Affirmation is a national organization of Lesbian and Gay United Methodists and their friends. These will be informal social meetings with general discussion on the joys and issues of being Gay/Lesbian and Christian. Anyone is welcome to come.

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Make A Promise

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The Light LIVELY ARTS



Richard Felber

THE LOVE THAT DARE NOT SPEAK ITS NAME?—Church-going Ruth (Mary-Louise Parker) and rebel spirit Iddie (Mary Stuart Masterson) become the closest of friends in the film *Fried Green Tomatoes*, based on the novel by Fannie Flagg.

'Fried Green Tomatoes': Shows Rich Tapestry of Female Friendship

By Cynthia Van Vreede

Warning. This review will reveal major plot lines and the ending of the film *Fried Green Tomatoes*.

Finally, a film that shows the wonderful tapestry of friendship and love which is the connecting tissue of women's lives. Fannie Flagg's book *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe* is now on the big screen. And what a movie it is!

Evelyn Couch (Kathy Bates) finds her life dull and her marriage flagging. She gorges herself on candy bars and donuts. While visiting an in-law at the nursing home Evelyn meets Ninny Threadgoode (Jessica Tandy). Ninny is 82 years old and only a temporary resident, waiting for her old neighbor Mrs. Oatis to get settled in. It is during Evelyn's visits that Ninny tells the story of Iddie and Ruth.

Iddie (Mary Stuart Masterson) is a wonderfully unorthodox woman. Grieving over the death of her adored older brother, she lives life on her own, swearing, drinking and playing poker. Yet, Iddie is compassionate and loyal to those she loves.

Iddie's mother sends Ruth Jamison (Mary-Louise Parker), a family friend, to befriend her daughter and try to bring Iddie back to civilization. Ruth is a tender, church-going woman. It doesn't take long for Ruth & Iddie to become best friends.

Later, Iddie rescues a pregnant Ruth from her abusive husband and brings her back to Whistle Stop where they open a cafe. Both women raise Ruth's son, Buddy Threadgoode Jr., named after Iddie's dead brother. Ruth's husband is reported missing and when his truck is recovered from the river near the cafe, Iddie is arrested for his murder.

The continuing saga of Ruth & Iddie becomes a focal point for Evelyn. She uses the women's story to change the things in her life. At first Evelyn tries everything from Total Woman classes to female sexuality groups to try to put some excitement and romance back into her marriage. Inspired by Ruth & Iddie and encouraged by Ninny, Evelyn gets a job, starts to exercise and throws away her candy bars. As Evelyn takes control of her life, her husband finally takes notice of her. And along the way Evelyn and Ninny become best friends.

Fried Green Tomatoes, the film, is playful, light and unpretentious. At times it is also somber and serious. The script as written by Fannie Flagg and Carol Sobieski is a good, tight story. Jessica Tandy and Kathy Bates are both Oscar winners and their performances are terrific. Mary Stuart Masterson does a great job in the role of Iddie and Mary-Louise Parker's Ruth is charming and affectionate. Also adding a strong performance is Cicely Tyson as Sipsey, a black woman who works at the cafe.

Are Ruth and Iddie Lesbians? Fannie Flagg says no. In numerous interviews,

Flagg contends the story is about love and friendship and that their sexuality is unimportant. Someone should tell Ms. Flagg that her book *Fried Green Tomatoes* is sold in the 'L' section of many bookstores. And the 'L' doesn't stand for Literature. Believe what you will but I like to think that Ruth and Iddie are Lesbians.

Also a word about the film's ending. Ruth's missing husband ends up in the hog boil and is served as the blue plate special at the cafe. Watching this in light of the Jeffrey Dahmer trial was, shall I say, hard to swallow.

But don't let the ending put you off. *Fried Green Tomatoes* is a most wonderful film, gentle and affecting. It will stay with you for days. And don't be surprised if you have the urge to call your best friend.

Writer's Place In Madison To Host Antler February 25

[Madison]—The Writer's Place in Madison is pleased to host "An Evening With Antler" on Tuesday, February 25, beginning at 8:00 p.m.

The poetry of Antler is sometimes magical and whimsical, sometimes gutsy and elemental, and sometimes all of these at once. His magic is grounded deep in the reality of the earth and its inhabitants.

Called "an Ecological Revolutionist," Antler is a poet who is right for our time. Yet, the importance of his concerns and the scope of his ecology are subjects which transcend themselves into the timeless realm of immortal literature.

These are among the reasons Antler is often compared to Walt Whitman. Indeed, his spirited poems seem to be running and tripping over themselves in Whitmanesque exuberance as they reach to connect and celebrate all aspects of life.

Antler is a Milwaukee native with a burgeoning national reputation whose book, *Last Words* and long poem "Factory," have won the attention and praise of critics and poets everywhere. His poems have appeared in many publications, including *Whole Earth Review* and *New York Quarterly*. Antler recites his poems, mostly by heart, at readings and gatherings throughout the country. He promises a powerful performance.

"An Evening With Antler" will be Tuesday, February 25, 8:00 p.m. at the Writer's Place, 122 State Street, Room 607 in Madison. Admission is \$3 for members, \$4 for non-members. Call (608) 255-4030 for more information.



CONVERSATION AT A DISTANCE—Peter Beckmann and Jack Lee are more than just generations apart in Wayne Frank's one act play *Moon Card*, which is to be presented in Milwaukee by Studio 13 through February 23.

'Moon Card' By Wayne Frank Is A Subtle And Intimate Drama

By Terry Boughner

One of the most exciting things in the theatre is to see the work of a new playwright being presented for the first time. Such is the case with *Moon Card* by Milwaukee Alderman Wayne Frank which is playing through February 23 at the Bauer Contemporary Dance Studio.

The one-act drama tells the story of an old man trying to come to terms with his son's Gayness and his death due to AIDS.

The play is a subtle work that in its course often reaches levels of pathos as we listen to the elderly gentleman, an average Joe, talk of his life and that of his son's to a young and casually homophobic young man.

The older man's life has gone by. There is a whole world out there that he doesn't comprehend. The young man is too

Theatre X's 'Toute Une Nuit' Thru March 1

[Milwaukee]—Milwaukee's Theatre X is currently presenting *Toute Une Nuit* (pronounced "Too Toon We"), a new play written and directed by Mark Anderson. Performances will run through March 1.

Toute Une Nuit is about things that happen in the night. It peers into the private lives of seven people in a bedroom. Some are in love, some are not...some don't even know each other. Anderson describes the play as "a series of unconnected stories that take place in the course of a night, confined to a multifaceted place: the bedroom at night."

Toute Une Nuit marks Anderson's fifth collaboration with Theatre X, having recently appeared as Jean in *Rhinoceros* and in *The Fifteen Minute Christmas Carol*, which he also co-wrote and directed. A Milwaukee resident, Anderson's solo performances tour nationally, including frequent engagements in New York, Seattle and Houston.

The cast of *Toute Une Nuit* includes Theatre X company members Flora Coker, John Schneider, Pamela Woodruff, John Starmer and Deborah Clifton and Milwaukee actors Peter Mulvey and Joseph Rabensdorf.

Toute Une Nuit opened on February 19 and will run through March 1st. Theatre X's dinner/theatre evenings will be offered on Fridays, February 21st and 28th. All performances will be held at Theatre X, 158 N. Broadway in the Historic Third Ward.

The performance schedule is: Fridays, February 21 & 28 — Dinner/theatre at 6:30 p.m. (\$27), 8:00 p.m. curtain; Saturdays, February 22 & 29 — 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. (No 8:00 show on February 29) and Sundays, February 23 & March 1 — 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Sunday performances only — \$12; Friday, Saturday performances only — \$14.

For further information, call (414)278-0555.

wrapped up in himself and his interests to pay much attention. Where each might have helped the other to grow, they stand apart, not once realizing the vast gulf which separates them nor wanting to bridge it.

If the play has a fault, it lies for this reviewer in the fact of wanting that interaction, that growth, to take place and not seeing it happen. Still, it is a fascinating and intriguing piece. Frank is quite skilled and we can only hope to see more of his work.

Moon Card is part of a Playwright's Festival being presented by Studio 13 at the Bauer Contemporary Ballet, 727 N. Milwaukee Street. It features Peter Beckmann and Jack Lee. It has been running since February 6th. Final performances are Saturday and Sunday, February 22 and 23 at 8:00 p.m.

Milwaukee Rep Sets 'Salesman' March 1-April 5

[Milwaukee]—The Milwaukee Repertory Theater (MRT) is presenting Arthur Miller's American classic *Death of a Salesman* from March 1 through April 5.



RIC OQUITA

The Pulitzer Prize-winning drama chronicles the final days of Willy Loman, a traveling salesman who searches his soul for the reasons why he has not been able to obtain success and the happiness he seeks. At age 63, exhausted and with his spirit broken, he's haunted by his relationship with his sons, wife and business associates. Driven by his fears and sense of failure, he seizes on one final desperate act that he hopes will give his life meaning.

MRT Associate Artistic Director Kenneth Albers plays Willy Loman, Linda Stephens plays his wife, and their sons, Biff and Happy, will be played by Gregory Steres and Ric Oquita. The play is directed by Artistic Director John Dillon who has previously directed this Arthur Miller classic in Japan.

Death of a Salesman previews February 27 through February 29 and runs March 1 through April 5 on the Powerhouse stage, 108 E. Wells Street.

Great Lakes Film & Video

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GAY & LESBIAN

FILM and VIDEO Festival

MARCH 6-12

FRIDAY

MARCH 6

7:30pm Union Cinema

WE'RE TALKING VULVA

Canada, 16mm, 5 min, 1990
Shawna Dempsey
An outrageous feminist romp concerned with the care and feeding of happy female genitalia.

CROCODILES IN AMSTERDAM

Netherlands, 35mm, 88 min, 1989
Annette Apon
This unusual women's buddy film from lesbian director Annette Apon has a magical, realistic, anything-can-happen quality. Though the relationship between Gina and Nina is not identified as lesbian, their affection for one another is intensely portrayed. And, as Nina explains, if you don't see crocodiles in Amsterdam, "lack of sighting doesn't mean they don't exist."

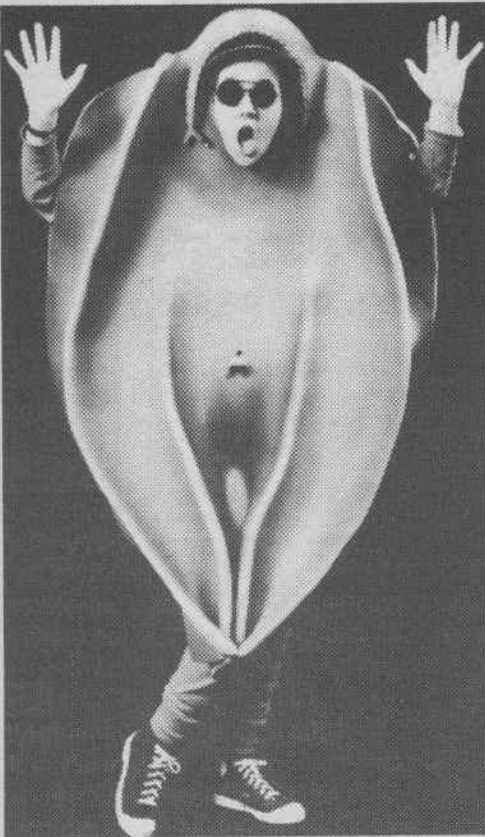
9:30pm Union Cinema

IN WISCONSIN THE BLIND CAN HUNT

USA, 16mm, 7 min, 1989
Art Stone
While Art Stone has never been to Wisconsin, he sets his poetic exploration in Wisconsin where blind people "learn to hunt."

MASSILLION

USA, 16mm, 90 min, 1990
William Jones
In this film, the director goes back to his home town to explore his childhood and his sexuality.

**SPONSORS**

This program was made possible by a grant from the Cream City Foundation. Additional support was provided by IN STEP.



SATURDAY

MARCH 7

7:30pm Union Cinema

NICE GIRLS DON'T DO IT

Canada, 16mm, 13 min, 1990
Kathy Daymond
This film explores the history of female ejaculation while providing a do-it-yourself guide.

MY FATHER IS COMING

USA/Germany, 35mm, 82 min, 1991
Monika Treut
Vicky is fresh to New York and trying to assimilate into the quirky New York East Village culture when she receives disastrous news: her father is coming to visit. He is under the impression that Vicky is a successful, married actress. The plot thickens when Vicky becomes involved with her lesbian Puerto Rican friend Lisa and meets a handsome admirer with a steamy secret.

9:30pm Union Cinema

GUS VANT SANT'S DIARY

USA, 16mm, 12 min, 1984-1987
Gus Vant Sant
In these four brilliant black and comic snapshots of gay life, the director of *Drugstore Cowboy* and *My Own Private Idaho* explores the darker parts of Portland, Oregon.

ECCE HOMO

USA, 16mm, 7 min, 1989
Jerry Tartaglia
Ecce Homo ("behold man") employs optically printed footage taken from Jean Genet's 1950 gay classic *Un Chant D'Amour* and gay porn movies to counteract AIDS hysteria.

NO SKIN OFF MY ASS

Canada/Germany, 16mm, 75 min, 1990
Bruce La Bruce
A gay punk hairdresser sets out to seduce a baby-faced skinhead in this sweetly erotic film by a Toronto underground filmmaker.

SUNDAY

MARCH 8

6:00pm Union Cinema

DRY KISSES ONLY

USA, video, 75 min, 1990
Kaucylia Brooke and Jane Cottis
A transgressive look at the cultural icons of femininity and feminism through lesbian films. Clips of Hollywood films are interwoven with tongue-in-cheek critical commentary, gossip column revelations, and "lesbian on the street" interviews.

7:30pm Union Cinema

HOMO PROMO

USA, 35mm, 70 min, 1956-1991
curated by Jenni Olson
Sex sells in Hollywood... and when Hollywood sells homosex it's a pitch with a wild punch! *Homo Promo* is a collection of "coming attractions" that are often more entertaining than the features they're promoting.

TUESDAY

MARCH 10

7:30pm Fine Arts Theater

VOICES OF LIFE

USA, video, 32 min, 1991
Patrick Wright
A challenging documentary about three people living with AIDS and how the media portrays them.

OVER OUR DEAD BODIES

Great Britain, 16mm, 84 min, 1991
Stuart Marshal
This film explores Queer and AIDS activism in New York, San Francisco, and London. While the film celebrates the real successes of AIDS activism, it also describes the terrible toll of the epidemic and the community's need for both mourning and political activism.

The Union Cinema is located on the corner of Kenwood & Maryland in the Student Union, 2nd floor.

The Fine Arts Theatre is located on the corner of Kenwood & Downer in Mitchell Hall, room B-91.



WEDNESDAY

MARCH 11

7:30pm Fine Arts Theater

L IS FOR THE WAY YOU LOOK

USA, video, 24 min, 1991
Jean Carlomusto
This captivating tape is an exploration into the variety of struggles lesbians wage to reclaim significant historical events and images. Videomaker Jean Carlomusto interviews a variety of women who talk about the women they admire and look to as role models.

FILMS BY MARION RIGGS

In these two films, the director of *Tongues Untied* explores what it means to be both black and gay. In *Anthem* (9 min, 1990) he uses the video music format and in *Affirmations* (10 min, 1990) his style is more dream-like.

BILLY TURNER'S SECRET

USA, 16mm, 26 min, 1990
Michael Mayson
Billy and Rufus live together and share everything, except Billy's secret - he's gay. Rufus isn't ready to deal with it: the only thing he hates more than a faggot is a pushy woman.

FILMS BY AARIN BURCH

In *Dreams of Passion* (5 min, 1989) and *Spin Cycle* (5 min, 1991), Aarin Burch investigates relationships, blackness, and filmmaking.

**LOCATIONS:****TICKETS:**

Tickets for individual shows are \$5.00, \$3.00 for UWM students.

Festival passes good for all shows are \$30.00

All tickets will be sold at the door.

Please call 229-6971 for more information.

THURSDAY

MARCH 12

7:30pm Fine Arts Theater

SEX AND THE SANDINISTAS

Great Britain, video, 25 min, 1991
Lucinda Broadbent
An eye-opening documentary about the intertwined relationships between radical politics, the influence of the church, and being gay or lesbian among the Sandinistas.

DRAG IN FOR VOTES

USA, video, 23 min, 1991
Elspeth Kydd and Gabriel Gomez
This video documents Chicago's mayoral "drag" candidate Joan Jett Black's campaign.

KHUSH

Great Britain, video, 28 min, 1991
Pratibha Parmar
Khush is an Urdu word meaning "ecstatic pleasure" as well as "happy and gay." *Khush* was shot in Britain and India and intersperses real life experiences with dream-like fantasies.



THE MOST UN-TALKED ABOUT SUBJECT OF OUR TIME!!!

NGLTF Charts Course of Activism, Reforms In 1992 Election Year

Commentary By Peri Jude Radecic

This year will certainly prove to be one of the most explosive years for Lesbian and Gay civil rights organizing. If we capitalize on the opportunities and challenges 1992 holds, we could move our civil rights agenda far forward.

This is a year for electoral change, a time to make our voices count at the ballot box. A year to elect more openly Gay and Lesbian officials. A year to replace the bigots who vote with Jesse Helms and William Dannemeyer. A year to elect a president who will respond to our needs and concerns.

This is the year in which the U.S. government releases its first twelve months of hate crimes data, and begins the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This is the year Congress intervenes to force the U.S. military to rescind its homophobic policy.

The staff at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) has developed a 10-point action plan to help guide our movement forward. It's a scheme to take advantage of opportunities when they arise, yet to continue the long range planning and cultivation of other ideas and projects.

Don't Let the Right "Take America Back." We must keep the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) free of anti-Gay censorship amendments and assist state and local arts advocates. We must counter Far Right organizing through grassroots coalitions and support local Gay groups facing civil rights repeal battles.

Counter Hate Crimes. NGLTF will publish its annual report on anti-Gay violence and victimization, sponsor an anti-violence roundtable at our Creating Change Conference in November and produce a hate crimes organizing manual for activists. The bashing must stop!

Make Gay and Lesbian Voices Heard in the 1992 Presidential Elections. Gay and Lesbian Voters Organized in Coalition for the Elections (VOICE '92) will coordinate demonstrations, delegate caucuses, press conferences and other activities at and before the political conventions. NGLTF will also survey candidates, prepare background papers, testify at platform hearings and meet with campaign officials.

Expand the Civil Rights of Lesbians and Gay Men and Our Families. We must have hearings and sign up sponsors for House Resolution 271 and Senate Resolution 236 urging President Bush to repeal the U.S. military's discriminatory policy.

We must push the Cracker Barrel "family style" restaurant chain to stop firing Gay employees and institute a non-discriminatory employment policy.

We must demand our representatives co-sponsor the Federal Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Act. NGLTF will defend the District of Columbia's Domestic Partnership ordinance on Capitol Hill and produce a Gay/Lesbian families organizing manual.

Advocate for AIDS/Health Care. The U.S. government's response to AIDS continues to be characterized by indifference, stigmatization, lack of leadership and the hugging of "AIDS babies." NGLTF will support legislative and government agency action through the National Organizations Responding to AIDS Coalition, assist in the planning of the 1992 International AIDS Conference and help organize AIDS media activists.

Organize Toward the 1993 March on Washington. We want one million Gays, Lesbians and bisexuals in the nation's capital April 25, 1993. NGLTF will assist in the organizing and planning for the event. Mark your calendars now.

You can be part of our plan to move our agenda forward. Vote. Demonstrate. Write to your elected officials. Join NGLTF and you local Lesbian/Gay or AIDS advocacy organization and fight the forces of prejudice. The year is ours for the taking.

Editor's Note: Radecic is the NGLTF Deputy Director of Public Policy. You can contact NGLTF at (202) 332-6483.

Dignity Service Set For March 6

[Milwaukee]- Dignity/Milwaukee will sponsor a Healing and Reconciliation Service at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, March 6, 1992 at the home of Joe Zopp, 709 E. Juneau Avenue, Apartment 611. The event will include a potluck supper. For further information, please call (414)273-7501 or 873-1849.

POLITICALLY SPEAKING

Results of the February Primary Are Not Too Appealing for Gays

By Bill Meunier

What you see is what you get. And what we saw in the February 18 Primary wasn't all that appealing.

Milwaukee's Gay and Lesbian community put most of its organized effort into Paul Mathews' campaign for County Executive. Mathews lost and lost big to County Board Chairman Tom Ament and State Senator Joseph Czarnecki.

Czarnecki ran a bunch of commercials talking about how he has "brought people together," and wants to show "leadership." These spots used a tinted lens that projected a fuzzy image of Czarnecki. The image was about as fuzzy as his platform. Hopefully, Czarnecki will tell us all what he would do to "bring people together," and where his "leadership" would take us.

Ament is a supporter of Gay and Lesbian rights as is Czarnecki, but unlike Czarnecki, Ament has publicly spoken out on our behalf.

The Milwaukee Mayor's race was also interesting. Norquist, who despite his veto of Pride Parade funding should still be considered supportive of Gay and Lesbian Rights got 50% of the vote. But his closet challenger, Greg Gracz, polled nearly 40% of the vote despite being out-spent about 40 or 50 to one.

Some Lesbians and Gays may not be too happy with Norquist right now, but our relationship with the incumbent is sheer bliss compared to the state of mind we would be in should Gracz win.

Exit polls showed that many Norquist voters supported him because they didn't think anyone else in the race had the experience and qualifications to be Mayor. Expect Gracz to try and change their minds on that point. Norquist's showing was not very good given the media blitz he put on.

Gracz would like to see the City brought back to the days when the police led by Der Fuehrer Harold Breier reigned supreme. The police of course would like

to see this too and that's why the Milwaukee Police Association has provided Gracz with such strong support.

Speaking of Breier, his daughter Sue is sitting in the catbird's seat in Milwaukee's 14th Aldermanic District. With all the votes counted, she led the incumbent Lesbian and Gay Rights supporter Chris Krajniak by a healthy margin. We need Sue Breier on the Common Council about as much as we need poisonous mushrooms. Here's hoping that Lesbians and Gays in the Bay View area put in some time and help Krajniak.

Meanwhile, over in New Hampshire and for much of the country Democrats were wringing their hands. Paul Tsongas was the official winner but most experts count their party as the loser. Tsongas, simply put, excites the party faithful about as much as the idea of nominating Dan Quayle.

Many Democrats were hoping that Bill Clinton would recover from the draft and adultery allegations. While Clinton is not as big a supporter of Gay and Lesbian rights as Tsongas, he is probably more electable in a race against George Bush.

The notion that someone else will enter the race and steal the nomination away from Clinton is not realistic. The deadline for filing has already passed for over one half of the delegates. In other words, what you see is what you get.

And if what you see is not looking all that great, you may want to consider getting involved in some campaigns for the general election. Remember, it could get worse.

Pro-Lesbian and Gay Rights incumbents that need and deserve help (other than those already mentioned, they are Alderman Don Richards from Milwaukee's Northwest Side, Alderman Paul Henningsen, in Downtown and West Town area, East Side Alderwoman Lorraine McNamara-McGraw, and West Allis County Supervisor Tony Czaja.

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TRIAL Continued from Page 1

While being sentenced for sexual assault in May, 1989, Judge William Gardner asked Dahmer if he had a sexual problem. Dahmer replied: "Definitely." "Is it a matter of preference — sexual preference?" asked the judge. "Yes, I am a homosexual. I admit that. It's not easy to admit," said Dahmer.

Guilt and Repression

After Dahmer was convicted of the sexual assault, probation agent Donna Chester was assigned to his case. On June 11, 1990, she wrote of her visit with Dahmer: "Client still appears to be very depressed. Client states he knows he prefers male partners but client feels very guilty about this."

After a meeting with Dahmer on January 22, 1991, six months before his arrest, Chester observed: "Client has admitted to self he is Gay. Told agent that's the way he is so 'fuck it.' Client appears to still be struggling with this."

Several people who talked to Dahmer in Milwaukee's Gay bars over the years said he expressed both racist and "extremely homophobic" attitudes. He was very defensive about his own homosexuality and expressed contempt for queens, especially black queens. Several of the victims fit that description.

The issue of homosexuality everyone was doing their best to downplay came into sharp focus during the testimony of court-appointed psychiatrist George Palermo. In clear, matter-of-fact tones, Dr. Palermo stated: "I believe Jeffrey Dahmer killed his victims because he hated his homosexuality."

Palermo said Dahmer repressed his homosexuality because he feared the disapproval of his family. This repression, in Palermo's view, ultimately turned to hatred and led to the killings.

Dr. Palermo's view was reinforced later by Judge Gram, who commented after Dahmer's sentencing: "I believe what we had was a homosexual who could not accept the fact that he was a homosexual." He killed the men he invited home, said Judge Gram, to "destroy the evidence."



JUDGE LAURENCE GRAM, JR.

I understand that the comments by Dr. Palermo and Judge Gram can be twisted and utilized by homophobes. But each man's tone was compassionate and their remarks came in the context of an honest, non-judgmental search for some rational basis on which to understand Dahmer's tortured psyche and anti-social behavior. Their observations cut through the psychobabble which dominated the trial and came closer to the truth than many of us might like to admit.

Hate Crime? What Hate Crime?

Another angle of the case relating to hate crimes completely ignored by the mainstream press is that both District Attorney McCann and Gerald Boyle have troubling histories with litigation regarding hate crimes.

Despite the fact that the majority of Dahmer's victims were Gays and men of color, McCann did not charge him under Wisconsin's hate crimes statute, which adds a "penalty enhancer" for crimes based on race, national origin or ancestry, sexual orientation, religion or disability.

In the cases of several men murdered by Gay bashers in the last few years in Milwaukee, hate crimes charges were not filed. The assistant district attorneys handling the cases of Dennis Owens and Ricky Roundtree admitted their ignorance of the statute or cited the "extraneous" nature of such charges when larger felonies were involved.

The feeling among Gay activists who monitored these cases is that D.A. McCann is not educating his staff

members about the hate crimes law, so the statute is not being enforced.

For his part, Gerald Boyle served as defense attorney for Brian G. Brown Jr., the police cadet who was accused of assaulting a Gay man after allegedly calling him "faggot" in Appleton, Wisconsin in 1990.

Boyle argued that the case had nothing to do with sexual orientation and challenged the constitutionality of the state's hate crimes law. The law was upheld by a judge, but Boyle's client was later acquitted.

An attorney familiar with both McCann and Boyle, who wished to remain anonymous, offered this candid opinion: "Jerry and Mike wouldn't acknowledge a hate crime if it came up and bit 'em in the behind." He said he thought neither McCann nor Boyle believe the hate crimes statute is "good law."

Truth and Confusion

The most keen observations about the hate crime aspect of the Dahmer case that I heard came from photojournalist Cheryl Franklin who covered the trial daily. About the denial by the principal players in the trial that race or homosexuality were factors in Dahmer's crimes, Franklin said: "Their own racism lies in their denial." She then added in a wry tone: "They want the truth, but they don't want to be confused with the facts."

The facts are that of the fifteen homicides Dahmer was charged with, ten of the victims were African American, two were Hispanic, one was Asian, one was Native American and one was white. Many, though not all, were Gay.

The failure to acknowledge the racism and homophobia in Dahmer's murders is just one aspect of the broader denial of these evils surrounding the whole case. While Dahmer is certainly responsible for his criminal acts, to a lesser extent, everyone is implicated in this. The City of Milwaukee, its institutions, its people — including its Gay and black communities — have blood on their hands.

Blood on Our Hands

What of the racism and incompetence of the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) which failed to follow up on missing person report?

What of the insensitivity of police officers who turned young Konerak Sinthasomphone back into Dahmer's clutches, threatened to arrest witnesses who had summoned help and dismissed the wrenching pleas of Glenda Cleveland?

What of the priorities of the MPD which was launching raids on strip shows at Gay bars while Gay men were disappearing from those bars one by one?

What of the historic repression of the Gay and black communities by the MPD?

What of the disgraceful retreat of the Milwaukee School Board which, in the wake of a "holocaust" of Gay and minority youth, turned its back on comprehensive services for Gay teens?

What of the silence of most political and religious leaders who failed to condemn the crimes?

What of the homophobic response of the black and Hispanic communities which, with a few noble exceptions, failed to rally behind the victims' families?

What of the racism of the Gay community which failed to recognize a pattern in the slow disappearances of men of color, some fairly well known like Eddie "The Sheik" Smith, "Demetra" Straughter, Tony Hughes?

(What of some Gay bars' practices of raising the cover or asking multiple IDs of people of color when they patronize the predominantly white bars?)

We are all implicated. And denying the racism and homophobia surrounding this case in a desperate attempt to salvage the "image" of Milwaukee contributes nothing to the healing process everyone is now touting.

Fire-Bell in the Night

In an earlier commentary on the Dahmer case, I called it a "fire-bell in the night" in terms of racism and homophobia in the city of Milwaukee. The phrase is Thomas Jefferson's.

In 1820, after passage of the Missouri Compromise, Jefferson said of slavery: "But this momentous question, like a fire-bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror...It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence...every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper."

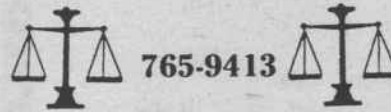
The challenge for Milwaukee is not "to put the Dahmer case behind us" but to learn its awful lessons and to redress the many grievances it so dramatically exposed.

Is Milwaukee up to that challenge? Will Milwaukee ever respond to the fire-bell in the night?

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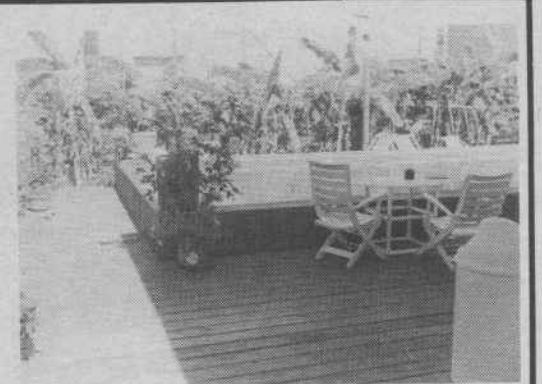
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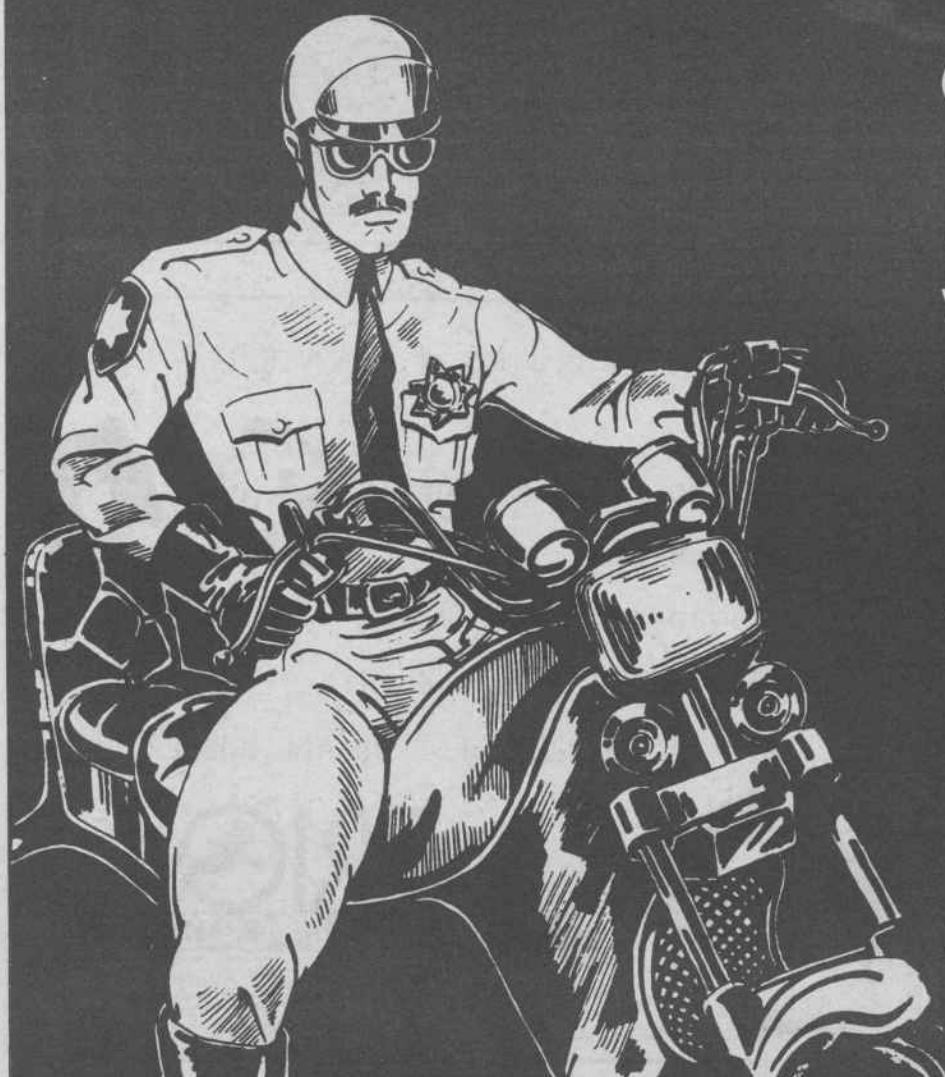
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Families Glad To See Justice Done As Dahmer Heads To Prison

DAHMER

Continued from Page 1

Throughout the reading of the verdicts, Dahmer sat impassively, with no trace of emotion.

In his closing statement, Dahmer's attorney, Gerald P. Boyle, had depicted the killer as a man so mentally impaired he was out of control. "His willpower was gone," said Boyle. "He was a runaway train on a track of madness, picking up steam all the time, on and on and on..."

But in remarks to the press after the verdict was announced, D.A. McCann said of Dahmer: "I don't believe he was a rolling train. I think he was the engineer of the rolling train...and could have stopped doing what he did."

The jurors apparently agreed.

"Smart Con Artist"

Juror Karl W. Stahle said of Dahmer: "He had plans and he had just one thing on his mind: to satisfy his ego and to satisfy himself. He didn't even think of anybody else, any feelings of anybody else...I think he was a very smart con artist."

Stahle noted that Dahmer was of above average intelligence and had planned most of the killings in advance.

Dahmer admitted to police that he knew before he went out for the evening whether he planned to bring a victim home. He described powdering sleeping tablets in advance so he could drug his victims when they arrived. Dahmer also admitted to police he acted out of his own "warped, selfish desire for gratification."

Juror Elba C. Duggins was asked how she coped with the gruesome details of Dahmer's crimes, which included drilling holes and pouring acid into the victims' skulls and defleshing their bodies. Duggins admitted that on one occasion she left the presence of her fellow jurors, went to her room and cried.

Teresa Smith, sister of victim Eddie Smith, known in Milwaukee's Gay bars as "The Sheik," said she was "overwhelmed" by the verdict.

Smith thanked the jurors and McCann: "I thank them so much because they brought back the faith that I lost in the justice system. I hope that something like this never, never happens again."

"Bringing in Justice"

Shirley Hughes, mother of Tony Hughes, a deaf man well known in the city's Gay bars, thanked God, McCann and the jury "for bringing justice in for us...I just knew this man was not insane."

Tony Hughes knew Jeffrey Dahmer for several years, and Dahmer had actually dined at the Hughes' family home. This fact did not come out in either the trial or the press. Shirley Hughes and other families' members resented the implication that all the victims were young hustlers who recklessly accepted a one time offer of money and sex from Dahmer.

The verdict also helped to defuse some of the racial tensions which have surrounded the case.

Fritz Spence, a social worker who counseled many of the victims' families, said of the verdict: "Had it gone the other way, there could have been chaos in this town. People were upset over only one minority on [the jury]. It didn't represent the rainbow coalition at all. So this [the verdict] will help Milwaukee alot."

Geraldine Martin, sister of Anthony Sears, also talked about healing: "Now we have to get our lives back together and we have to start living. This trial has been a turn-around for the whole city of Milwaukee. Maybe we can all start working together and living together."

(Please see separate article in this issue for Gay/Lesbian community reaction.)

Nightmare Not Over

Despite the verdict and sentencing, the "Dahmer Nightmare" as many Milwaukeeans call it, is not over yet.

Several of the victims' families have filed billion dollar civil lawsuits against Dahmer to ensure that he never profits from his crimes or his life story.

Other families have sued the City of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Police Department for negligence and wrongful death in failing to detect Dahmer's lengthy murder spree.

On five different occasions, Milwaukee police had contact with Dahmer but allegedly failed to fully investigate his actions. The most prominent of these incidents involved officers returning the naked and fleeing Konerak Sinthasomphone back into Dahmer's

custody. Dahmer killed the boy moments after police left.

The officers fired for dereliction of duty in that incident have appealed their terminations to the city's Fire and Police Commission. A hearing on those appeals is expected in late April or May.

Dahmer has admitted that he "just plain fooled" the officers that fateful night last May, and their testimony at his trial has won them new public sympathy.

However, witnesses whose concerns the police repeatedly dismissed the night of the incident, including the heroic Glenda Cleveland, are expected to testify before the Fire and Police Commission. That all these witnesses were African American, that young Konerak was a Laotian immigrant, and that the white officers only listened to Jeffrey Dahmer that night and kept few notes to record what happened is expected to renew charges of racism and incompetence on the part of the Milwaukee Police Department.

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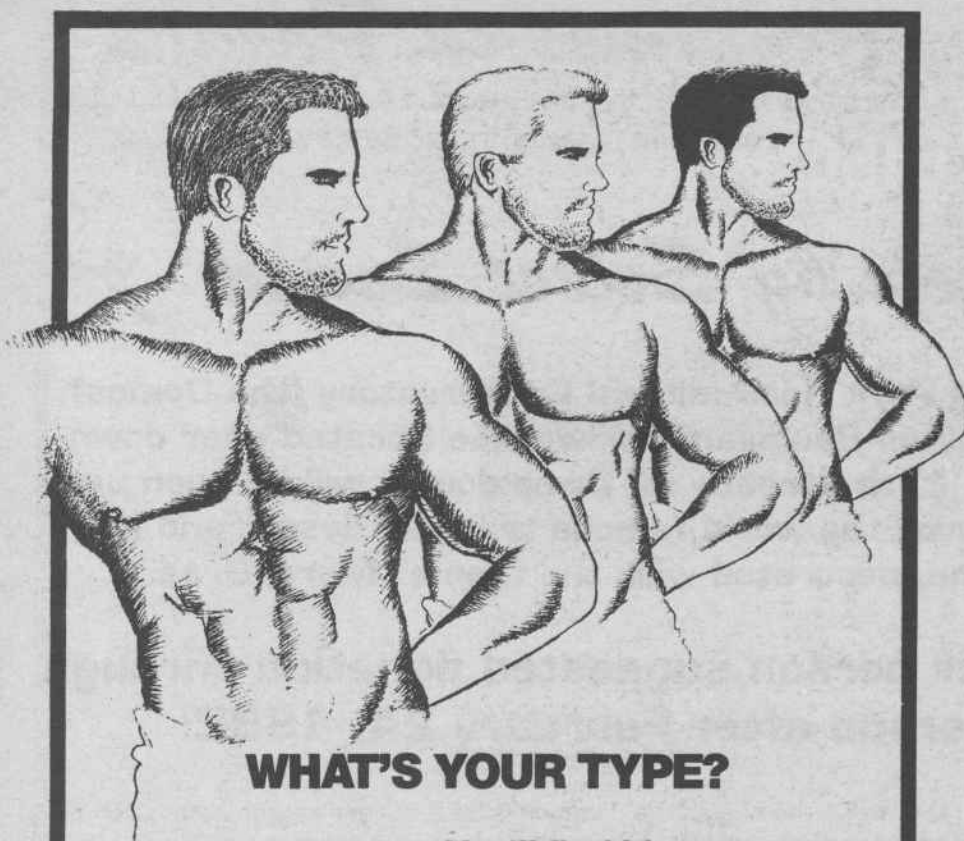
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February 24, 1992. \$25 per person after February 24, 1992!

Tickets now on sale at the Wisconsin Light and In Step offices. Or through the mail. The suggested donation is \$22.50 per person before February 24; \$25 per person after February 24 or at the door. Complete the order form below and mail it with your check or money order payable to MLGPC to: MLGPC, P.O. Box 93852, Milwaukee, WI 53203. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope to receive your tickets by return mail. Orders for tickets received after February 24 will be held for pick-up at the door.

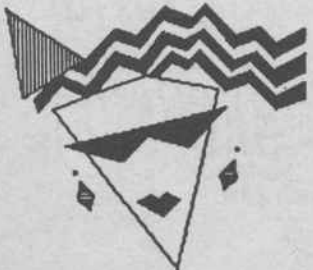
Please send me _____ ticket(s) at \$ _____ each = \$ _____ enclosed.

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