

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

# The Wisconsin Light

## Herb Kohl Votes For Anti-Gay Education Amendment

Joins Jesse Helms and 61 Other Senators; Russ Feingold opposes Bill



Becky Furmann

### Daddy and Papa Fill Becky's Life with Love But Crypto Leaves Behind Daily Pain

By Sue Burke

Little Becky Furmann seems to have recovered from cryptosporidium.

One of five children with AIDS afflicted by chronic cryptosporidium in 1993, only Becky is still alive--somehow. Doctors have no cure for the digestive tract parasite, but the bug has disappeared from her stool.

Her Daddy, Ric Furmann, says, "I think she found out it was killing her and I think, whether it was conscious or unconscious, she turned her body on to kill the crypto cells after a year and a half."

Her Papa, Larry Furmann, says, "There's a church full of people that believe that because of prayer she got healed."

A blonde gregarious whirlwind almost 4 years-old, Becky calls out a cheery "Hi" to visitors and asks them to hold her dolls.

One doll, Main Line Linda, has an intravenous line going into her chest just like Becky. Becky got the doll from the nurses at Childrens' Hospital so she could take care of it. Becky shows where she put a Band-Aid over an "owie" Linda got on her arm the night before.

The intravenous line and everything that goes into it, on both Linda and Becky, is

named "Fred." With a name, Ric explained, it's not so scary. There's Big Fred, a nightly bag of nutrition. There's Little Fred, Preemie Fred, Green Fred, Pink Fred, and when she needs pain medicine, there's "giving Fred a drink" of morphine.

Two of the four children who died of crypto were Becky's friends. Crypto damaged her pancreas and gall bladder, which causes the pain and for a while turned her as green as Palmolive dish detergent, Ric and Larry explain. They're trying to help her start eating again now that she's through throwing up.

During dinner preparations, Becky stumbles and bumps her arm. She squeals and points. "It hurts. Here and here." She gets a kiss from Daddy as he walks by. That is not enough. "On my arm. Here and here." Daddy offers kisses and sympathy. "And here. Here." More kisses. Finally, she points to her wrist. "Here. You missed a spot." One more kiss.

"Are you happy now?" Daddy asks.

"Yes, I'm happy," she says with certainty.

The family starts dinner with a prayer. Becky, served at a Sesame Street placemat, fusses with her food for a while, but eats only

TURN TO BECKY, PAGE 12

(Washington, D.C.)- Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) again used the Senate floor as a stage for political Gay-bashing on Monday, August 1, 1994, by proposing an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that would ban federal funds to be used by schools that "carry out a program or activity that has either the purpose or effect of encouraging or supporting homosexuality as a positive lifestyle alternative."

The amendment was introduced and co-sponsored by Senator Bob Smith (R-NH). The amendment passed the Senate on a 63-36 vote.

The Helms/Smith amendment would cut off funds whether or not federal funds were directly spent on the programs targeted by Helms.

The amendment would cover the distribution of instructional materials as well as referral of students to outside organizations.

Programs likely to be affected would include suicide prevention counseling for youth, AIDS prevention programs or curricula recognizing the existence of Gay families.

Wisconsin's Democratic Senators split on the vote. Herb Kohl voted for the Helms amendment.

Russ Feingold voted against the Helms amendment.

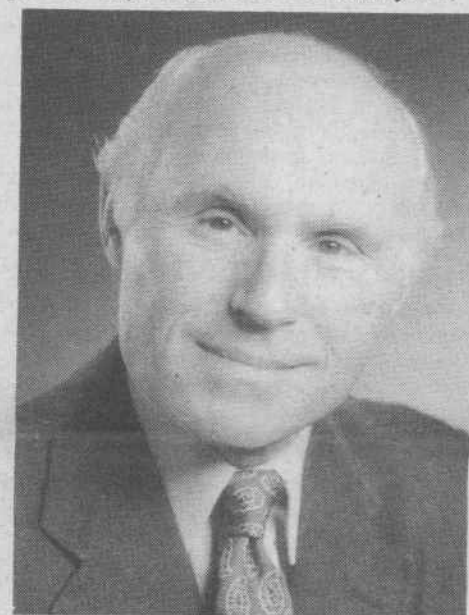
Feingold told *Light* that he had voted against the amendment because it was so broad that it would even prohibit counseling of a student who wanted to commit suicide because he was Gay.

Kohl's office said that Kohl voted for the Helms amendment because "it is not the place of the federal government to encourage any type of sexual activity."

Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-MN) agreed with

Feingold, saying that the Helms amendment would forbid the counseling of Gay students who, he said, are three times more likely to commit suicide as other teens. "We simply can't do that," he said, and called the amendment "very mean spirited."

"The Smith/Helms amendment, if signed into law, will have a direct and disastrous impact on Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual youth,"



Senator Herb Kohl

said Peri Jude Radevic, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).

"Studies indicate," Radevic continued,

TURN TO HERB KOHL, PAGE 11

### State Rep. Barbara Notestein Is Running as the Incumbent in the 19th Assembly District

State Rep. Barbara Notestein (D-Milwaukee) is the incumbent, running for reelection in the 19th Assembly District. She has long been a supporter of Gay/Lesbian interests in the Assembly. She is the author of Wisconsin's AIDS Education Law and has strongly supported efforts to improve Wisconsin's response to the epidemic and to provide adequate funding for AIDS/HIV treatment, education and services.

Notestein, 45, has won recognition for her leadership on a wide variety of women's issues. She has fought consistently to protect a woman's right to choose and has worked to put an end to sexual harassment in the workplace, domestic violence and discrimination against women.

Notestein has been honored as the Wisconsin Women's Network 1993 Stateswoman of the Year, Wisconsin NOW's 1989 Feminist of the Year, and the YWCA of Greater Milwaukee's 1994 Policy maker of the Year.

At the end of this calendar year, Notestein will have served the 19th District in the Assembly for 10 years. She currently serves as the Assembly Assistant Majority Leader, the highest ranking woman in the Assembly leadership.

**Wisconsin Light:** What kinds of issues have you worked on in the Assembly that you consider most important?

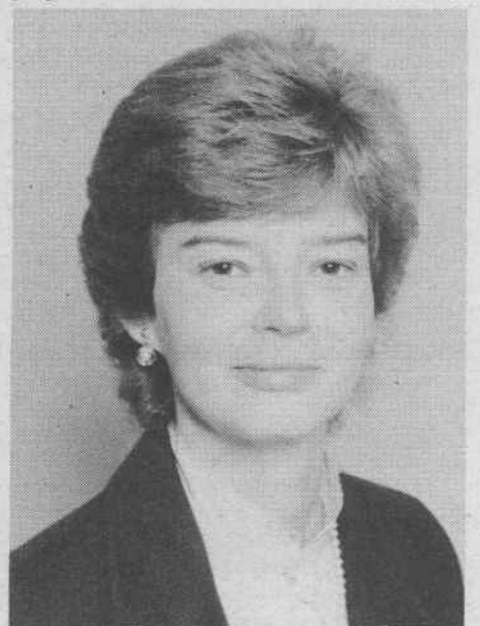
**Barbara Notestein:** I've worked on a lot of different kinds of issues in the legislature. I like my job very much. Without being too immodest, I think I'm good at it. I have spent a good deal of time on civil rights issues and women's issues, and other kinds of things that I think would be of interest to your readers.

**WL:** Tell us something about those.

**BN:** I did some legislation a few years ago to require education regarding AIDS in the public schools and that was passed and signed

into law. There is now a mandate on school districts to provide students with information on AIDS and AIDS prevention.

I sponsored legislation a number of years ago to put into law a ban on discrimination against students in the voc-tech system and the UW system. Part of that bill was to add language that banned discrimination based on



State Rep. Barbara Notestein

sexual orientation. There was nothing in the statutes to deal with that. The hope at the time that that would deal with the whole question of ROTC. Whether it has or not, I don't know.

I've done a number of other things in the area of civil rights and AIDS. This year I

TURN TO NOTESTEIN, PAGE 15

## Fundraiser for Steve Gunderson

(Milwaukee)- A primary election fundraiser has been scheduled for U.S. Congressman Steve Gunderson (R-WI) on Wednesday, August 24, 1994. The reception is being hosted by a committee of people active in the Lesbian/Gay community, including Miriam Ben-Shalom, Dr. Terry Boughner, Jerry Johnson, Doug Nelson, Ron Geiman, Ed Hashek and Scott Evertz. The fundraiser will be held at the Skylight Lounge, 158 N. Broadway, in the Historic Third Ward. The dessert and coffee reception will begin at 7:00 p.m. and run until 9:00 p.m. People interested in attending or making a contribution, should call (414) 291-0453 to request an invitation. A suggested donation is \$100 per person.

## NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### Lesbian Mother's Custody Battle Goes to State Supreme Court

Bentonville, AK-AP- A Lesbian who lost custody of her children plans to appeal to the Arkansas state Supreme Court, her lawyer said. A judge in the last week in July, refused to reverse a decision that transferred custody of the children from Jean Larson of Rogers to the children's father, Michael Larson, of Hiwassee. Victoria Cochran of Rogers, the mother's attorney, said the ruling by Benton County Chancery Judge Oliver Adams ends attempts on the local level to regain custody of Jean Larson's 13-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter. She said a Supreme Court appeal will move forward.

### Group Protests 'Promise Keepers' Philosophy

Boulder, CO-AP- An estimated 500 people marched through Boulder on Saturday, July 30, to protest what they consider the intolerant message of the Promise Keepers Christian Men's organization. Organizers said the "Diversity Rally" was a way to show the Promise Keepers there are alternatives to the teachings of the Christian ministry--and that they are not interested in being "saved by the Lord."

University of Colorado football coach Bill McCartney founded Promise Keepers four years ago in an effort to prompt men to reclaim their leadership roles, stop abdicating their responsibilities to women and become "men of integrity." Promise Keepers distribute a leaflet that includes the Romans 1:32 quote on homosexuality: "Knowing God's righteous decrees that those who do such things deserve to die."

"I am horrified," said Jeff Roush, a Boulder resident, "that anyone in the name of God, in the name of Christianity, says that people deserve to die."

### Needle Exchanges Can Help Fight AIDS

Washington, D.C.-AP- The Institute of Medicine on July 27, called for a lifting of the ban on federally funded needle exchange programs, in an effort to stem the AIDS epidemic. "The weight of evidence suggests that needle exchange does more good than harm," said Dr. H. Keith Brodie of Duke University, who wrote the Institute's study. Forty needle exchange programs currently operate in the U.S., with private and some local funding. The report called the programs "highly promising."

The report also called for a federally funded, national survey of sexual behavior that would give doctors a scientific basis for risk-reducing strategies. It also called for development of women-controlled HIV prevention methods, such as the female condom and spermicides.

### Giants Become First Baseball Team to Fight AIDS

San Francisco-AP- A small, looped red ribbon on their uniforms and an emotional pre-game ceremony on Sunday, July 31, made the San Francisco Giants the nation's first professional sports team to raise funds to fight AIDS. The Giants hosted "Until There's A Cure Day" and will donate part of their gate for treatment and research into the deadly disease.

Peter Magowan, team president and managing general partner, said the Giants embraced the cause because of a "responsibility to the community." He went on to say that AIDS can affect not only those who are Gay or Lesbian, but "anybody, whatever lifestyle, whatever sex, whatever age." Volunteers, many HIV-positive, formed a red loop in the outfield and were joined by players and coaches of the Giants and the Rockies. A crowd of 50,000+ was addressed by Mary Fisher, who is HIV+ and addressed the 1992 Republican National Convention.

### A 'Miraculous Healing' of Homophobia

(Atlanta, GA)- In what has been called a "miraculous healing" of homophobia, the Rt. Rev. Bennett J. Sims, retired Episcopal Bishop of Atlanta, issued the following pastoral document. "As for the wrenching issue of homosexuality, I myself have undergone a shift in conviction. When I called for a ministry of homosexual healing and re-orientation 14 years ago as Bishop of Atlanta, the only response from the Gay community in the diocese was wounded silence. Since then, I have come to know a large number of homosexual men and women, many of them priests.

"I no longer believe, as I did in 1977, that homosexuality is primarily an amenable dysfunction, a stubborn, but changeable deviation from created norms. In my view, it is a matter of bestowed identity, not a self-chosen orientation and behavior pattern."

On Friday, August 26, 7:30 p.m., at Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Indianapolis, Rev. Sims will be the chief celebrant at the Eucharist for Integrity, the LesBiGay justice ministry of the Episcopal Church at the Church's General Convention.

### AIDS Threatening Asian Security

Manila, Philippines-AP- AIDS is threatening the stability of Asian countries, but the crisis can be avoided if governments quickly adopt policies and allocate funds to stop its spread, experts have said. "The HIV epidemic is the enemy of the 'Asian Promise,'" said Peter Sullivan, vice president of the Asian Development Bank. "It threatens much of the progress that has been made over the past two decades and endangers economic growth in countries that have introduced growth-enhancing, economy-wide reforms only recently."

Economist Myo Thant said that in addition to economic affects, AIDS could also threaten the national security of a country by reducing its military's manpower pool. He cited the case of Thailand, where in 1990, 2% of some 32,000 rural youth being screened for recruitment by the army were found to be infected with HIV.

### NJ Governor Urges Stores to Remove T-Shirts

Trenton, NJ-AP- Governor Christie Whitman is call for merchants along the Jersey shore to remove from their stores a T-shirt offensive to Gays and Lesbians. The shirt, with a cartoon of a rabbit, parodies the Trix cereal jingle, "Silly rabbit, Trix are for kids." It makes a derisive reference to the sexual orientation of Gay men. Whitman has written the CEO of General Mills, which makes Trix cereal, urging him to find out whether the T-shirt violates the company's logo rights. Barry Wegener, spokesman for General Mills, said the company is aware of the problem and has already sent letters to shops in Florida and New Jersey.

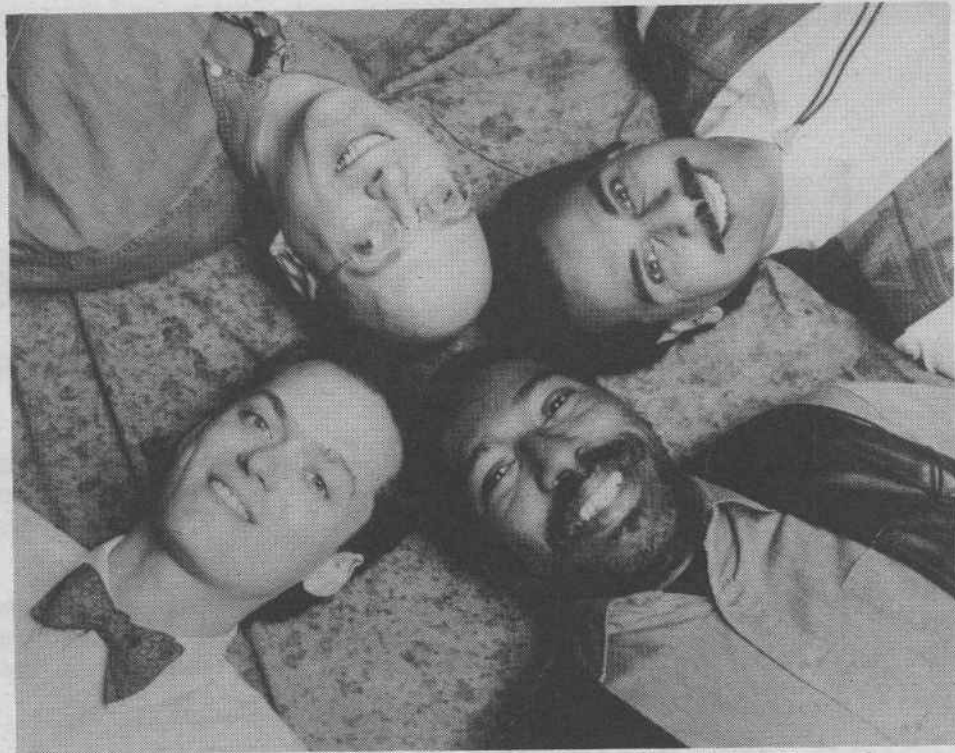
### Manual Calls Gays Demonic, Violent

Twin Falls, ID-AP- Gays and Lesbians are "spawn of the devil" and contribute to the destruction of the family, according to a manual distributed among the Idaho Citizens Alliance (ICA) members. The "debate manual" has been sold to ICA members who are pushing the anti-Gay initiative on Idaho's November ballot.

The manual says "promiscuous sodomite activists are the most violent and irrational group of people on earth." Gay men, it says, are "mostly masochists" and "enjoy getting beaten." Thus, "Homosexual men enjoy getting beaten up by homophobes and Christians." It goes on to say that women belong in the place "God put them" and denounces contraception as wrong. ICA says that "hundreds" of the manuals have been distributed across the Northwest.

### AIDS Action Advocates Arrested at Capitol

(Washington, D.C.)- AIDS activists, including staff members of the AIDS Action Council, were arrested on July 27 at the U.S. Capitol as they protested Sen. Robert Dole's (R-KS) opposition to comprehensive, universal health care reform. Protesters roamed the halls of Congress distributing "Dole Dollars"--imitation \$100 bills outlining Senator Dole's own health insurance status, including his salary (\$133,600), the amount he pays for his health insurance (\$1,215), the amount his employer (the taxpaying public) pays for his health insurance (\$3,645) and the amount of PAC money Dole has taken from the insurance industry and medical establishment since 1979 (\$707,794).



The Flirtations--Top: Jon Arterton, Aurelio Font, Bottom: Jimmy Rutland, Townsend

## The Flirtations and Suede to Headline 1994 MAPFest September 4

By Terry Boughner

(Milwaukee)- The "Fabulous" Flirtations and Suede will perform at a special concert at the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin's (ARCW) 9th Annual MAPFest, a concert and festival to benefit AIDS and to honor the Lesbian/Gay community and friends for the years of support throughout the AIDS epidemic.

Suede is a true entertainer whose musicality and quick wit are unmatched. She stuns her nation-wide audiences with her sensitive styling of a ballad, but the next moment her overflow crowds are laughing over a spontaneous comment sparked by something happening in the crowd.

In addition to her extra ordinary voice, she is also an accomplished self-taught musician and writer on piano, guitar, and trumpet. She holds a double performance degree in classical voice and trumpet.

Suede's music is an intriguing blend of popular jazz and blues styles. She has produced two top-selling recordings on her own label, "Easily Suede Music."

### The Flirtations

The "Fabulous Flirts", as seen in the award-winning movie Philadelphia are back at MAPFest by popular demand. They are, in my opinion, one of the liveliest singing groups it has been my good fortune to hear.

As one of them, Aurelio Font, told me last year that they started on a street corner in New York City down near Washington Square. They made some \$40 the first night and "bought Chinese," Font said. He paused, then added, "Food, I mean."

Known from New Orleans to Portland, Maine, and from Washington, D.C. to Frisco Bay, their voices have the sparkle of a wickedly fine wine. They are openly Gay and are

proud of it, singing the anthems that some of us heard when we were young, but with the words that we only said to ourselves.

To put it very mildly, the Flirts are not to be missed. Do what you have to do, but get there.

Concert-goers will be able to spend the day enjoying a variety of activities at MAPFest, including the best illusionist performances and musical showcases, a hilarious dog show, raffles, an expanded game arcade, the marketplace and entertainment by the Shoreline Dancers, the Cream City Chorus, Rufus & the Gospel Singing Machine & Co., and the Fest City Singers with highlights from "History, Herstory, Ourstory."

MAPFest's newest attraction--the Dance Tent--will be rocking with everyone's favorite dance tunes from 1:00 to 10:00 p.m.

MAPFest will be held on Sunday, September 4, from noon to 10:30 p.m., at the Performing Arts Center in downtown Milwaukee.

Tickets for Suede and the Flirtations are available at MAP (315 W. Court St.), LAMM (414) 264-2600, AfterWords (2710 N. Murray Ave.), People's Books (1808 N. Farwell Ave.), Outpost Natural Foods (100 E. Capitol Drive) and the PAC Box Office (414) 273-7206. Advance tickets are \$15 which includes admission to MAPFest. Tickets can also be purchased at the door for \$15, not including MAPFest admission.

MAPFest is sponsored by Miller Brewing Company, Bottom Line Travel, the Milwaukee Performing Arts Center, Wisconsin Light and In Step Magazine.

For more information, to obtain a booth in the Marketplace, or to volunteer at the event, call (414) 291-2848.

## Clinton Names HHS Official, Patricia Flemming, as Temporary AIDS Coordinator

(Washington, D.C.)- Moving to fill a gap in his administration's fight against AIDS, President Clinton on August 2, named a temporary replacement for AIDS coordinator Kristine Gebbie, who resigned under fire last month.

The President appointed Patricia S. Fleming, a special assistant to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Donna Shalala, to serve as his administration's AIDS policy coordinator until a permanent replacement is named.

"Patsy Fleming will make sure we don't lose our momentum," Clinton said, claiming his administration has already made "significant strides in the fight against this terrible disease."

"We've increased our budgets for AIDS research, treatment and prevention and have fought hard to provide health insurance for all Americans, regardless of pre-existing conditions," he said.

Fleming said that while progress has been made, "much more remains to be done."

She said she had accepted the appointment "to help smooth the transition" to a permanent replacement for Gebbie.

Fleming said she intends to return to her HHS job once a permanent replacement for Gebbie has been named sometime in the next

two months. And she said she is not herself a candidate for the permanent AIDS appointment.

As reported in the last issue of Light, high placed sources said that Shalala had brought pressure on the White House to have someone who is Gay considered for the position.

To the delight of many AIDS activist groups and others, Gebbie resigned on July 8 because, she said, the Administration had not granted her the tools and authority needed to win the confidence of people living with AIDS.

## Serial Killer May be Coming North

(Springfield, IL)- Police say they have received hundreds of reports that a suspected serial killer who preys on Gay men was sighted in Springfield in the last week in July and may be heading toward Chicago and then north.

The suspect is Gary R. Bowles, 32, charged with murder in the slayings of Gay men in Savannah, Georgia, Maryland and Florida. He is also a suspect in other slayings.

Bowles is white, 5'9" to 5'11" tall, 145 to 165 pounds, with tattoos on both arms, a tattoo of a cross on his left wrist and a cancerous scab on his right wrist.

He has hazel eyes, brown hair, a receding chin, a pronounced Adam's apple and is a heavy smoker.

Bowles is said to frequent Gay bars. Be on the look out for this man.

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# The Light



# LIVELY ARTS

## Appleton's Michael is Still 'Tania' and Now He is Coming Home

By Terry Boughner

A couple of years ago, I had the pleasure of interviewing Michael Scott (a.k.a. Tania Michaels) for the paper. That was in 1990. Now, after several years in California, (Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, to be exact), Tania's coming home.

It was a pleasant August day when I first met him for lunch at M&M's. I remember him as a good looking young man, with a warm, shy, yet somehow intense look about his light, sea-green eyes. I called him a romantic back then. From talking with him recently on the phone, he hasn't changed.

"Tania is a persona," he said then. "She lets me do things I couldn't do in person." Perhaps this explains his great success in L.A., including his recent completion of a movie, *Strange Days*, with Juliette Lewis (Cape Fear and *Kalifornia* fame).

Is he Tania all the time? I asked. He chuckled pleasantly and replied, "A baker doesn't wear his hat all the time." I am reminded of the late, great Divine who said almost exactly the same thing.

Tania, who is originally from Appleton, calls himself an example of "a small town girl who made good."

Not that it was all that simple or easy, it wasn't. His childhood was abusive and he had to grow up quickly. He did theatre at an early age along with some male modeling. But the theatre was and remains, he says, his prime love.

As did Divine, Tania, an actor, has found his vehicle of artistic expression in female impersonation. "Impersonation," he says, "is an art form, not a silicon contest."

Tania is very comfortable as an impersonator and a Gay man. That security is necessary to the entertainer he is. "If straights think you're ashamed of being Gay," he says determinedly, "they'll be uncomfortable" and he wants them to be comfortable and enjoy his

## Johnny Depp to Play Cross Dresser in New Movie, 'Ed Wood'

(New York)- Heartthrob, Johnny Depp, star of *21 Jump Street*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* and other films is now to star in *Ed Wood*, the bio-pic of the cross dressing director, according to the latest issue of *Rewind*.

In an article by Amy Longsdorf, Depp said he spent hours wearing a bra and pumps. "Making the movie, I developed a profound respect for transvestites," he said.

Has he enjoyed all the publicity he's been getting recently because of the role?

Quips Depp, "When you're at a urinal in a men's room and a guy walks in and starts asking about your personal life, at that point, I would say it's a little too much."

art—and learn from it.

Tania is a wild success in L.A., but it hasn't been easy. Can I say that you've "made it?" I ask. He answers that, no, I can't say that because he can't. There's still a long way to go.

Back in 1990, that road stretched out



Tania Michaels

ahead of him a lot farther than now. Since then, he's left Wisconsin and gone on to live in Minneapolis. There he was Miss Gay '90's in 1991 and Miss Gay Minnesota USA in 1992. After that came Hollywood. It was a big jump, but he made it.

Tania will be returning home after being two years away for the annual King Production's Miss Gay Wisconsin-USA Pageant at the Pivot Club in Appleton on September 10-11, 1994. Not only will this be a homecoming for him, but it will also be a celebration of his/her tenth anniversary as Tania Michaels.

I remember wondering just how Tania Michaels was and deciding at the end of the interview that he was a young man with an artist's future ahead of him.

That future is now.



Best Film—Jon Voight (left) and Dustin Hoffman in *Midnight Cowboy*

## 'Midnight Cowboy': A Gritty, But Timeless Ride where Bohemia Meets Times Square

By Dolores Barclay

When *Midnight Cowboy* opened in 1969, it largely drew attention because it so boldly went where no other studio release dared to go. Its themes of Gay life, hustling and drug use, and its casual nudity and raw language made a potent brew for those times.

Twenty-five years later, much of what is seen in the Academy Award-winning movie is no perceived as tame: Two decades of naked bodies, copulating couples and a chain of four-letter words has anesthetized us.

No matter. The shock is gone, but the painful realism and the universality of a human bond make this movie a film for all ages.

With Joe Buck (Jon Voight), a bright-eyed but dim Texas country boy who hopes to make his fame and fortune by hustling women in New York, and "Ratso" Rizzo (Dustin Hoffman), a gimpy, seedy little con man, British director John Schlesinger etches an uncomfortable and harsh tableau of human despair and dashed dreams.

The print made to celebrate the 25th anniversary of *Midnight Cowboy* has been refurbished to brighten up some of the watered colors and tone down some of the scratchiness. The soundtrack, with Harry Nilsson's marvelous theme song, "Everybody's Talkin'," has been converted to Dolby Stereo.

There is an almost documentary quality to it, a gritty but timeless ride through the '60's; downtown bohemia meets Times Square squalor.

Ratso gives us one of the earliest portrayals of urban homelessness, and with Joe, he shows us the creativity that goes into day-to-day survival. It is an odd coupling, one of those incredible screen friendships that touches us, but perhaps not so deeply as it does someone who is Gay.

Lesbians or Gay men are probably the best equipped emotionally to understand the symbiosis between the two. A Gay man particularly would comprehend and feel the special and lovely bond that grows between the two, one that gives the film its immense humanity.

The characters are real: It's difficult to walk any city's streets these days without seeing Ratso Rizzo curled up in a doorway or hacking his way through a second-hand cigarette.

And the Joe Bucks of the world still flock to the Big Apple, many still peeking out from beneath their Stetsons as they strut their stuff outside the Lysol-soaked adult movie houses of Times Square.

Ordinarily, Joe and Ratso seldom if ever meet, much less build a relationship. These two do and therein lies the supreme strength of this movie. This is a love story in the end, that few straights were ever able to see. It is that which is the source of the feeling. It is that which is the source of the tears.

Where the movie doesn't hold up—where it truly is trapped in time—is the party scene with its hallucinatory lights, outfits and music. It featured such '60's staples as Ultra Violet and Viva, both pals of Andy Warhol.

The opening sequence in Texas, and Joe's

cross-country bus odyssey, move very well. Schlesinger masterfully scissors in various seat partners and cuts back and forth from Joe's trip to his uncertain future and his dreary past. And Nilsson's song is the glue that holds it all together.

Voight was a good choice for Joe Buck—the right balance between naiveté and male swagger. But he never utters the obscenities the Joe Bucks of today use with such abandon.

John Travolta couldn't have played this role. He wouldn't dare.

After leaping to stardom in *The Graduate*, as the whining, aimless and pampered Benjamin, Hoffman created another character of great dimension with Ratso. Like Benjamin, it's a persona he's used in subsequent roles, most recently as the petty crook in Stephen Frears' *Hero*.

There are wonderful support performances by Brenda Vaccaro, in her first major screen role as a wild lover, and the brassy Sylvia Miles as a brassy, tacky Eastside matron who has an afternoon fling with Joe. Miles is Joe's first client, and in a memorable scene, she actually gets him to pay her \$20 for a cab so she can meet her husband for dinner.

When first released, *Midnight Cowboy* was given an X rating by the newly created MPAA's Rating Board. There's nudity and a Gay encounter in a movie theater that focuses on John Voight's face. The rating was amended a few years later to R, reflecting how times have changed.

*Midnight Cowboy* opens at Milwaukee's Oriental Theatre on August 12, 1994 for a limited run.

## Auditions Slated for 'Two Gentlemen of Verona' at Boulevard

(Milwaukee)- The Boulevard Ensemble is seeking actors and actresses of all ages and ranges for the first production of its 1994-'95 season. The Ensemble's production is Shakespeare's rollicking comedy, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

Auditions will be held August 27-29 at the Boulevard Theatre, 2250 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue. Auditioners should prepare a classical comic monologue no more than one minute in length. Call (414) 672-6019 for an audition appointment.

The play will be directed by Pat Acerra and will be presented in October.

### Scenes from Acting Workshop

In September, the Ensemble will present performances of scenes from its Summer acting workshop. Scenes will be presented from Shakespeare and Tennessee Williams, as well as from other original works. Funds raised from the performances will go to benefit the Ensemble's first production of the season.

For further information, call Mark Bucher, the Ensemble's general director, at (414) 672-6019.

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FILM



King of Film-dom—A scene from Walt Disney's hit *The Lion King*

**Sexist? Racist? Violent? Homophobic? 'The Lion King' Gets Hit From All Sides**

By David Foster

It's sexist. It's racist. It's homophobic. It's violent. It's even, perhaps a threat to democratic ideals. What kind of depraved entertainment could generate such bitter epithets? A Snoop Doggy Dog video? An Andrew Dice Clay concert?

Would you believe *The Lion King*, Disney's G-rated, coming-of-age saga that's well on its way toward becoming the highest grossing animated film in history? Believe it.

Some parents, psychologists and pundits read between the "lions" and see not family fun, but shocking violence and offensive stereotypes: subservient lionesses, jive-talking hyenas, an anti-Gay Uncle Scar, a father's murder.

"The movie is full of stereotypes," Harvard psychologist Carolyn Newberger complained in an op-ed piece for *The Boston Globe*. "The good-for-nothing hyenas are urban Blacks, while the arch-villain is a cruel anti-Gay parody, speaking in supposed Gay clichés."

The movie's plot, according to some, is a sort of Hamlet-meets-Abbott-and-Costello-in-a-jungle-Gay bar.

After Mufasa is murdered by Gay Uncle Scar and Simba, the heir apparent, runs off, Scar takes over and everything goes straight to hell. In between, there's lots of singing and dancing and a few bad vaudevillian jokes.

Criticism isn't new for Disney. Parents still fret about the death of Bambi's mother. Some feminists are uncomfortable with the

prince-as-savior themes in *Sleeping Beauty*, *Snow White*, and *Cinderella*.

Most recently, Arab Americans and others have denounced the very Gay Aladdin. The former say the movie is racist. The latter complain Aladdin's too Gay.

Ann Adams of Cotuit, Massachusetts, complained about the scene most often criticized: the murder of Mufasa, in which the lion falls to his death as Simba, his son, watches. That scene has prompted some psychiatrists to recommend that preschoolers and sensitive older children not see the film.

Dr. Laurie Humphries, who heads a committee on television and the media for the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry calls the movie "wicked."

Then there's Scar's henchmen, those slobbering hyenas.

Jane R. Eisner of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, found a harmful message in the helplessness of Scar's subjects, who wait for the royal Simba to save them.

"Anybody heard of 'empowerment'?", she asked.

"These people need to get a life," said Disney spokeswoman Terry Press. "It's a story. It's fiction."

Press said the movie's popularity speaks for itself. It grossed \$174.3 million in ticket sales in five weeks.

"People are going back again and again, so it must have some resonance," Press said. "I can't get into addressing everyone's personal concerns with the characters."

**Critic of Boswell's Book Makes Incongruous Interpretations in Order to Avoid the Facts**

Commentary By Geno

The publication of *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* by Professor John Boswell has already stirred up its detractors.

A highly critical article in the current *New Republic* (July 21-28) by Brent D. Shaw now with the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton, contends that the more than fifty early Christian Church liturgies which Boswell claims are ceremonies for same-sex unions between two men "are not texts for marriage ceremonies." Shaw's objections are worth a closer look since they will be used again and again in this controversy. And they often don't make sense.

The descriptions of these rituals as "Offices for Same-Sex Unions" sure as hell sound like marriage ceremonies and have most of the ritual elements found even in today's marriage ceremonies.

The priest bids the two celebrants to join their right hands, to place their hands upon the Gospel, to kiss the Gospel and exchange a kiss with the priest and one another. The declaration of love and fidelity which the two men make is similar in tone and language to marriage vows taken down through the ages. A public feast followed the celebration.

But Shaw declares that these were not marriages since they make no mention of the procreation of children. Duh! It sure would make sense to bid two men to go forth and be fruitful, wouldn't it?

Yet Shaw mentions, but passes over the fact that these same-sex liturgies are found in the same sections of the prayer books as the ceremonies for heterosexual marriages. He even accuses Boswell of running together a same-sex union with a man-woman ceremony which follows it. But that surely proves how close the two liturgies are in form and content.

Even though so closely associated with heterosexual ceremonies, describing these same-sex unions as marriages causes difficulties, especially for homophobes.

Boswell does call these ceremonials "Gay marriages," but he uses the term sparingly, preferring "Same-sex unions" or celebrations of "the Union of Two Men."

Shaw translates the Greek *adelphopoiesis*

as "creating brothers," and he therefore suggests that these rituals were similar to the joining of brotherhoods and incongruously mentions Mafia ceremonies for joining that organization. Oddfellows and, yes, the Mafia feature trowels, knives, swords, the sharing of blood, and very different sentiments from the spiritual vows found in the ecclesiastical documents.

Shaw suggests that the liturgies Boswell has published in his book in the original Greek with his translations into English might be some form of adoption, but adoption ceremonies follow in the manuscripts after the rites of heterosexual marriages.

The word "family," however, causes him problems since he admits that from Roman times, an unmarried man, his servants and slaves, and his household, was designated as family. Today, "family" has included a wide variety of relationships and two men joined in a same-sex union could easily fit that rubric.

Well, then, just what were these same-sex unions and what purpose did they serve?

The Church does not blithely inaugurate and perform elaborate public ceremonies like these for frivolous reasons. Boswell has uncovered 55 of these detailed liturgies, a rather large number considering that many more similar documents probably existed but did not survive.

Boswell has put these liturgies into the context of their times (4th to 6th Centuries A.D.), and has traced historically various aspects of marriage and family formation, a twelve-year dedication to his task. He has done his research most thoroughly in 412 closely reasoned pages.

He is said to be terminally ill and may not be able to join the fray when negative arguments are put forth, though he has tried to anticipate many of them in his book. It is up to all clear and right thinking individuals to be alert to a critic like Shaw who often seems to argue against the very facts he cites or makes incongruous interpretations in order to keep from facing the facts of the documents themselves. Boswell, read him.

**'The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert': No Freedom Riders On This Bus**

By Steve Warren

"Are you Gay?"

A simple question, and a fair one to ask of Stephan Elliott, who wrote and directed *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, in which three drag queens, one a transsexual, cross Australia in an old bus, bitching and lip-synching all the way.

His answer makes me glad I waited to ask until after enjoying his film and half an hour of interview time.

Now 30 (but he probably still gets carded), Elliott is Hollywood's flavor of the month, and he knows it. "They want me desperately," he says. "Offers are pouring in. But they want me to do their scripts their way. They say they want me because I'm fresh and original and quirky, but then they won't let me be fresh and original and quirky."

Elliott grew up making super-8 movies and rose quickly through the ranks. His first feature, *Frauds*, was shown in competition at Cannes last year, winning him the go-ahead to make *Priscilla*, which he says he "churned out in about ten days" enroute to Cannes and rewrote only slightly during rehearsals.

The characters, Elliott says, were based on real people. Cyndi Pastel, who inspired Tick/Mitzi, played by Hugo Weaving, went to Cannes with the filmmaker, bringing along his six-year-old son. In the film the boy is played by a nine-year-old who, Elliott says, "had a ball" making it. His script has the boy's mother come out as a Lesbian while Tick is off exploring his own Gayness, to show how accepting and open-minded the boy is.

Another child in the film created a problem. In a wonderful flashback to the childhood of the other transvestite, Adam/Felicia (Guy Pearce), he's almost molested by his uncle. Gramercy Pictures wanted to cut the scene for American release, Elliott says, but "I really dug in my nails over this one."

*Priscilla's* characters represent a new wave of drag queens that's come along in the last few years: "They don't do Shirley Bassey and Barbra Streisand anymore. Even the drag queens got tired of the old way and became more extreme. They had to. The women they were trying to impersonate had disappeared."

Finding his stars was no easy task. Elliott talks as if he wanted straight actors all along ("I wanted to really surprise the audience by casting people no one would suspect"), but later admits his initial call was for real drag queens. "None of them showed up," he says, "except for one, who threw up on the casting couch. Two days into the casting we knew this wouldn't work."

So he went the other way, casting Pearce, a macho Aussie TV heartthrob, and Weaving, known for hetero roles. For the transsexual Bernadette, Elliott says, Terence Stamp, who wound up in the part, was "way down on the list because I thought, no way would he ever do this...Here we have a man who's been taking women's clothes off for years, and now he has to put them on."

"I chose three actors who absolutely threw themselves into it," the filmmaker goes on. "I could see in the screen tests that most actors were too frightened of what people would think, and they held back. The moment I smelled fear, that was it."

In the film, the drag queens evoke a variety of responses in rural towns they pass through. The reality was different. "The country's grown," Elliott says. "They didn't care." As for Sydney, where the journey begins, he calls it "an incredibly cosmopolitan, tolerant city. You can do anything in Sydney."

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Stamp, who hadn't been to Sydney in 20 years before starting the film, confirms: "One of the things that make Sydney so wonderful is their total acceptance of their third-sex community."

Initial audience reactions to *Priscilla* stunned Elliott, who says he knew people would be entertained by the comedy but didn't expect them to be moved by the tender moments.

The San Francisco International Film Festival brought Elliott a dual surprise. "The crowd was insane!" he reports. "They gave the picture a standing ovation." But then, at a Q&A session, "militant Gay groups started in on me. They said there was not enough about issues, not enough about AIDS...I told them, if you want to see that movie, you make it. I made the one I wanted to make."

"The Gay movement has suddenly become powerful and their agenda is being shoved down people's throats," Elliott says. "I believe in it. I believe it's gonna happen, but not overnight. The kiss on 'Melrose Place' will happen, but not this year. You can't change people that fast. I made a deliberate effort to take it slow, to make a picture that could reach a huge audience. If I'd made it their [the activists] way, it would have been shoved into art houses and only queens would have seen it."

Aside from Tick's Lesbian wife, the only two females of any consequence in *Priscilla* are both caricatures. Asked why there were no "normal women" in his film, Elliott responds, "Most of the Gay men I know are misogynistic. They have very little contact with women."

*Priscilla* obviously had considerable Gay input, but the only person who is acknowledged to be Gay is Strykermeyer, a founding member of new-wave drag troupe "The Scary Fairies Show"; he's credited as hair and make-up artist and Executive Drag Consultant.

But what about Stephan Elliott, who knows Gay people well enough to portray them accurately on screen and supports the "Gay agenda," even if he's less impatient than some of us about seeing it realized?

"Are you Gay?" I ask him point-blank. "I don't know," he says, looking me in the eye; "and I don't particularly care. There's a bit of Hugo Weaving's [Bisexual] character floating around in me..."

The answer might have been different in Australia a year or two ago, before those Hollywood offers started pouring in.

Stephan Elliott wants to entertain, not make bold statements. And that's his right. But somewhere there has to be someone with his ability to entertain, who will also make those statements for us. They must be made.

**Cream City Chorus to Sing with Barry Manilow at State Fair**

(Milwaukee)- If you're planning on attending the Wisconsin State Fair on August 12 to see Barry Manilow in concert, you'll be getting an added treat--back-up music provided by the Wisconsin Cream City Chorus.

Last year, the Chorus was invited to sing back-up for Manilow's Greatest Hits tour at the Marcus Amphitheater. Apparently he liked what he heard, because this year the Chorus has been invited to join him again. Those who attended the Chorus's Spring concert, *No More Walls* have heard the Chorus's reprise of his song, "Let Freedom Ring."

With the State Fair performance as a warm-up, the Cream City Chorus will be continuing rehearsals for the Fall '94 season the following Wednesday, August 17, at the First Unitarian Church of Milwaukee, 1342 N. Astor.

Those interested in joining or just checking them out, stop by from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

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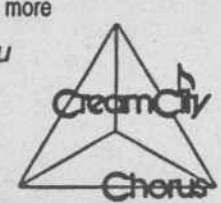
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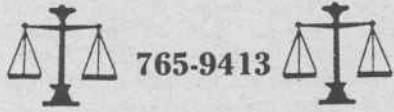
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## Getting Votes Is More Important for Senator Herb Kohl Than Saving Lives

Commentary By Bill Meunier

With his vote to deny troubled Gay and Lesbian school children help from school counselors, Senator Herb Kohl, went over the edge. He should be kicked to the curb like the dog he is, Herb Kohl should get no help, and no votes from the Gay and Lesbian community or its friends and allies.

On August 1, 1994, Senator Herb Kohl forever, linked himself with the most vicious forces of homophobia. On that day he voted for one of the most insidious, odious and homophobic resolutions ever to come out of the mouth of Jesse Helms.

The Helms resolution said that no school or school district could receive federal funds if it teaches that "homosexuality is a positive lifestyle alternative" or if it distributed or taught from materials that did so or even if it referred a student to an organization that affirms "a homosexual lifestyle."

If this resolution becomes law, school psychiatrists and counselors can not even tell troubled Gay and Lesbian students that there is nothing wrong with them. Human Sexuality classes can not teach that homosexuality is normal and acceptable for some people and of course Gay and Lesbian clubs are out of the question.

Just as he did when he voted to deny us equality in the military, Herb Kohl came up his lame excuses. He claims his vote was a vote against promoting sexual activity in the schools. What clap trap, what an insult to our intelligence.

Does saving the life of a troubled teen promote sexual activity? If Kohl really meant what he said, then he doesn't know what he's doing. He should be drummed out of the Senate for terminal stupidity.

Where does the line get drawn by this legislation? Would telling students that Gay bashing is wrong constitute "supporting homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle?" Do psychology text books have to be thrown away? Do all of the Gay and Lesbian Student organizations have to leave the campus?

When Herb Kohl and the other homophobic bigots voted the Helms way, they told every Lesbian and Gay person in this country they believe we are inferior. They don't want an America where students learn that being Gay is equal to being straight.

To them getting votes was far more important than people's lives, winning an election outweighs everything else.

Senator Russ Feingold correctly understood all of the implications of this legislation. He voted against it. But then again Feingold is man of integrity. Kohl isn't.

Feingold works to represent ALL of the people of Wisconsin, Kohl doesn't. Feingold has principles, Kohl has an election to win.

There are those who may say that like other Helms' amendments this one will be knocked out before final passage of the bill. All of this is just election year posturing they will say. That is nonsense. If we can't expect our elected officials to vote against something as obviously wrong as this amendment then there is no reason to keep them in office.

Furthermore Kohl has deep pockets. He can buy the next election, and he has a wide lead he enjoys in the polls.

Ever since his vote to support the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" sellout, Kohl has been closely watched by Gays and Lesbians. Many of them had decided to vote for him holding their nose while they do it. The reasoning was that despite his vote against opening up the military, Kohl was still preferable to his likely Republican opponent, State Rep. Welch.

That reasoning went out the window when Kohl voted to put a death sentence on countless suicidal Gay and Lesbian teens seeking help through their schools. That reasoning went by the boards, when Kohl voted against teaching students that there was nothing wrong with being Gay.

When confronted over his vote on the military, Kohl said that he shouldn't be judged on just one vote. He asked that we judge him on all of his votes on our issues. Judgment has now been passed. Herb Kohl would need a 100 story ladder and a strong telescope just to see the bottom of the decency scale.

One has to wonder how many young teens reaching the realization that they are Gay, grow even more troubled by this vote. How many of those who admired Kohl will now view themselves as beyond hope thanks to his concern for votes.

We have right to demand that those who seek our support refuse to help or vote for Herb Kohl and that INCLUDES politicians who make endorsements. Would they support someone who voted to bar schools from saying being Black, or a Union member, or Jewish, or Hispanic is acceptable. If not they shouldn't support Herb Kohl for what he did either.

Its time we put them on notice. The word needs to go out to the Norquists, Soglines, Chvalas and Obeyes of our state. Sharing a platform with or endorsing Kohl will be seen by us as supporting a homophobic bigot and we will act accordingly.

For those looking for an alternative, Matt Gunderson, a supportive Republican is in a tough primary fight for the Republican nomination. Gunderson may look like a long shot, but he is the only moderate in a field of very conservative candidates.

Gunderson's nomination would give us a real choice in November. Matt Gunderson would make a good Senator and he wouldn't be giving us lame excuses every time a vote on our interests came up.

Even if Gunderson doesn't get the nomination, it would still be better to let the Republicans win Kohl's seat in November and put a real Democrat in office in six years. It would be better to bounce him out on his ear.

Kohl has had his chance. Let him and our friends know how you feel. Call Kohl's local office and tell his minions that he has forfeited his claim on your vote.

No Gay or Lesbian with any amount of self-respect should do any less.

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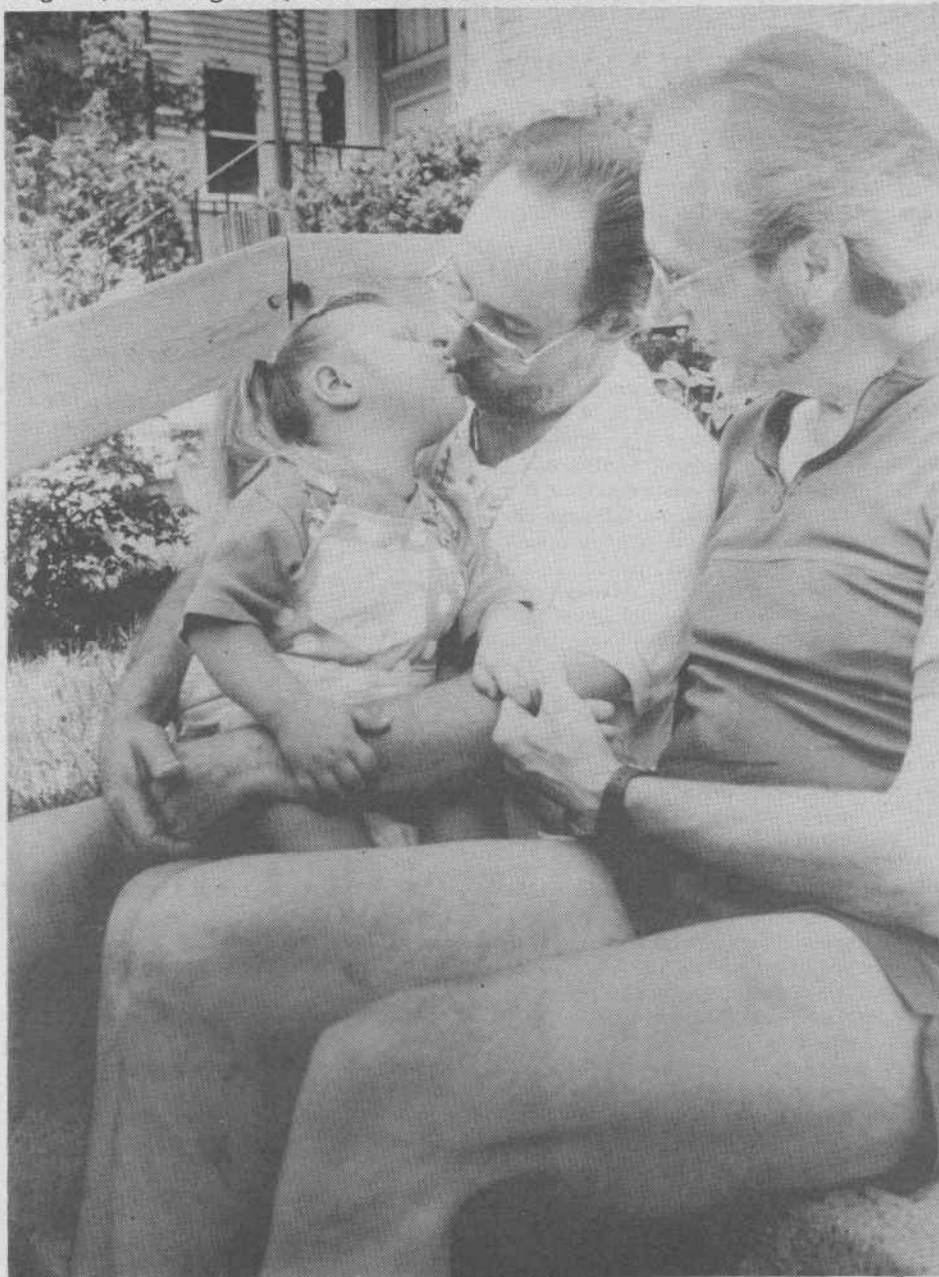


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Becky Furmann, Ric and Larry

**BECKY**

Continued from Page 1

a few grains of rice.

She knows her family is a little different, Larry says, but she's proud of her parents. "She tells people, 'I don't have a mama because my mama's sick but I got a Papa and a Daddy.'"

Both Papa and Daddy are lean men with bifocals, graying beards, thinning hair and deep smile lines. They have been together for eight years. Their Bay View home has a few antiques on high shelves and a few toys strewn around the living room floor. A friendly German shepherd named Kelly helps them keep an eye on Becky.

Ric had always wanted children. Larry didn't. Still, they wanted to do something for AIDS children, so in 1989, they moved to Atlanta to open a home for parents and children with the disease. "We lost our shirts," Larry recalls, and they moved back to Milwaukee.

A little later, Ric happened to be holding a baby with AIDS. It just looked right to Larry. They promptly volunteered to become foster parents of children with AIDS. The Milwaukee County Department of Human Services responded warmly, even after learning they were a same-sex couple.

Usually it takes more than six months to get a foster home license. They were licensed in only two months. Immediately, a Milwaukee AIDS Project worker called to see if they'd take a little girl. Sight unseen, they said yes.

Then they saw her, Larry laughingly recalls: "The most beautiful little bald-headed girl you ever wanted to see. Absolutely gorgeous. Big blue eyes. Her Daddy picked her up and she looked at Daddy--and put a finger all the way up his nose." That was three years ago.

At Human Services' request, they adopted her a year ago. Because of state laws, only one of them is the legal parent, but the court knows she really has two parents. During picture-taking after the procedure, the judge told Becky he wanted to stand between her "two fathers." As part of the adoption, Ric and Larry combined their last names into "Furmann."

They have agreed to publicity, not to turn Becky into "the crypto poster child," although that happened, they say, but to try to encourage people to be careful about AIDS. And one more reason:

"We're hoping that there could be other people out in our community that would be wonderful caregivers to kids but never thought it would be possible," Larry says. "We never had any idea of how much she would give us."

Their best support has come, not from the Gay community, but from their church, Bay View United Methodist. When they first told the minister about their plans to become foster parents of an HIV-infected child, the minister said they would reveal "Where Christ is or isn't" in the church.

Slowly, with education, the congregation united in support, helping with meals or money when necessary. One mother, initially opposed Becky's presence, now lets Becky hold her new baby. Three times a week, Becky attends four-year-old kindergarten at the church school.

She's a normal little girl except for Fred, that line in her chest. It's a big exception. "Everything is Fred," Ric says as he and Larry prepare for Becky's bedtime by methodically filling seven hypodermics of various medications for injection into Fred or the Big Fred bag.

Ric stays home full-time to care for Becky. A nurse used to come in five days a week, but that stopped and now Larry stays home too. Becky needs care day and night. Sometimes they feel a little isolated. It's hard to find a registered nurse to provide respire care so they can get an evening out.

Becky has almost died three times. Her T-cell count is about 8. She can't tolerate AZT. "Both of us would gladly give our own lives for her. Realistically, we don't know how long she's going to live. We try to live daily," Larry says.

"We've done the mechanics," he continues. "We've developed the celebration of her life along with our pastor and bought cemetery plots and all that type of stuff, but we can't be prepared for the emotions."

Last Christmas, Becky suddenly called her Daddy over in a serious voice and told him, "I'm going to die."

She knows about death because friends have died. Since then, she and Larry have had deep talks about when she "goes out," as she describes death. Larry remembers one talk in particular.

"She told me one night that she wanted to see Jesus. She told me, 'I want to tell him that I love him and I want to hold his hand so I'm not afraid.'"

"I said, 'Honey, I'll be happy you'll be with Jesus and have no more tummy pain, but I'll be very, very sad when you have to go.'"

"And she said, 'Papa, I'm not going for a while.'"

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**For Milwaukee's 'Shepherd Express' It Was a Very Near Thing**

(Milwaukee)- Can you imagine the Shepherd Express controlled by some conglomerate out of Tampa or Baltimore? Can you think what it would be like if Milwaukee's chief alternative paper were taken over by Pat Robertson and his group?

None of this is as far-fetched as it sounds. The paper, a long-time fighter for progressive ideals, came close, very close, to death. In fact, as of 5:04 p.m. Friday, July 29, 1994, the paper was effectively dead.

Marty Genz, publisher and one of the founders of the Shepherd had determined back in March to sell the paper to out-of-town interests. Negotiations had begun. The only problem was that Genz neglected to inform the employees who retained right of first refusal on the sale of company stock.

It was when a couple of prospective buyers showed up at the offices that the employees found out. They offered to match any outside offers. That was ignored.

On July 24, the company's board of directors suspended Genz and changed all the locks.

On Friday, July 29, Editor, Doug Hissom was served with a court order prohibiting the staff from putting out the paper.

On Saturday, July 30, paper employees and friends gathered in a parking lot next to the Shepherd's offices. A more earnest and dedicated group it would be hard to imagine.

Ed Garvey, lawyer for the employees told them that "this was all about if the Shepherd would be locally controlled or not."

"The last thing anybody wants," Garvey said, "is to see the Shepherd sold to Pat Robertson or anyone else. We want to make sure it's independent."

Hissom spoke to the crowd, giving a speech that no one questioned, came straight from the heart.

At that point, no one knew if there ever would be a Shepherd Express again. It's important to remember that.

"Everyone," Hissom said, "keeps saying why would you want to by that [the Shepherd], you know. There's no assets to newspapers. But that's what bean counters don't understand, what newspapers are."

"Newspapers are the people. They're the readers of the paper. People who count money for a living can't see that. So, if they don't want to take our money, we'll start another paper. It may not be called the Shepherd Express, but it'll be the Shepherd Express. It'll

just have another name.

"We're gonna go and do it again. We're goin' put up with no money again. Everything all over again."

"The paper's a living thing," Hissom said, now in tears.

As one observer noted, "It was the single most moving statement of belief and dedication to the ideal of the art of journalism that I have ever heard."

On Sunday afternoon, Scott Kerr, the paper's news editor, called Wisconsin Light. "We did it!" he said. The excitement in his deep voice was impossible to conceal. "It was a victory for the workers. For once the workers won."

**Are You a Stranger in Madison? You Have a Friend in The United**

(Madison)- Madison in August for many of us means change, saying "good-bye" to old friends and "hello" to new ones. An organization like The United can be an essential part of how an individual pieces together the puzzle of arriving in a new town, or discovering a part of Madison she never knew before.

This is especially true as another semester of school begins. A friendly face at The United can supply information on housing, jobs, support groups and Queer positive spaces in town. The United can assure you that the LesBiGay community is a proud and essential part of what makes Madison a great place to live.

Stop by The United's offices at 14 W. Mifflin on the Capital Square and browse the Madison Gay/Lesbian Resource Center lending library. Don't forget to ask for a '94/95 Directory and a monthly social calendar.

For 16 years, The United has protected the rights of the LesBiGay community. It is not a government agency with a never-ending supply of funds. The United makes things happen with the incredible support of volunteers and money raised through individuals and grants.

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# POLITICALLY SPEAKING

## Baloney, B.S. and Outright Bull

By Bill Meunier

Wisconsin has a rarity in this next election, a Gay Republican candidate. Scott Evertz, is running for the State Assembly.

Despite my fear that the Republicans may manage to take control over the State Assembly, I read Mr. Evertz's comments in the last issue of *Wisconsin Light* with as open a mind as I could. I hoped that Evertz would convince me that he should be elected. And I honestly DO want to see more Gay and Lesbian candidates in BOTH parties. What I read was a disappointment.

Evertz said that he is running because we need to elect officials who vote our way 100% of the time. Yet he refused to categorically state that he would support Tammy Baldwin's Domestic Partnership Legislation. When a candidate uses the word "if" he/she is hedging. Mr. Evertz said "If that is the legislation that stands the greatest chance of passing, I would support it, but I still favor same sex marriage."

"The greatest chance of passing" as compared to what? And is there any reason that we shouldn't allow people the opportunity to choose between registering as domestic partners or getting married? Sounds like Mr. Evertz wants to legislate morality. It seems he thinks same sex relationships sanctified with marriage are better than those that are just registered.

Evertz said that he had a problem with Domestic partnership legislation because it doesn't allow heterosexual couples to have the same benefits as Gay and Lesbian couples. Huh? Any Domestic partnership that I am aware of, covers straight AND Gay/Lesbian couples. Does Evertz think we are so foolish that we don't know that? Or does his statement show his lack of understanding and knowledge about the fight for equal rights?

Perhaps that's what his Republican masters told him and being a good loyal party member he believed them.

Evertz also said "I don't know that I was comfortable following the 1992 convention in Houston, but I would maintain that the Pat Robertson part of the Party is a very small proportion of the party and in Wisconsin its a

very, very small proportion."

Really now Mr. Evertz. You don't KNOW if you felt uncomfortable when confronted with the sight of thousands of Republicans screaming with joy as Pat Buchanan and others declared war on us? If Evertz doesn't know if he was offended and made uncomfortable by what happened in Houston you have to wonder what would have to happen to make him certain.

While Evertz may claim the number of homophobic Republicans are small in number, the opposite seems to be true. Fewer than 10% of the Republicans in Congress voted to open up the military. One of the most homophobic Congressmen of all time, Newt Gingrich is in line to take over the Minority Leader's post in the House of Representatives.

And homophobic platform planks have been routinely passed without debate by the national party at every convention.

Evertz also claimed that he knows of some "ultra conservative Republican legislators" who are supportive of Gay and Lesbian rights. Which rights would those be? And who are these secret allies? Perhaps Evertz needs to define what he means by the word "supportive."

These "supporters," have been awfully quiet about that support. Frankly I think he is naive or he needs to redefine what he means by the word "supportive." Saying that you won't vote to put us in camps does not translate into supporting our rights.

Like a typical politician running on behalf of a homophobic political party, Evertz played a few other games with his comments. He said that "Some of my more conservative friends in the Republican party have indicated they would be more in favor of same sex marriage legislation instead of Domestic Partnership legislation."

The implication here is that conservative Republicans would support Same Sex Marriage Legislation. The reality is something else. Note Evertz didn't say these people would actually support same sex marriage legislation, only that they preferred it to Domestic partnership. I am sure the fact that Same Sex Marriage Legislation would never pass and Domestic Partnership Legislation might has nothing to do with that preference. NOT!

And let's not forget Evertz's statements about those good old "Republican values," like

concern about crime, or taxes or "dozens of other issues." Of course everyone knows that Democrats aren't in favor of lower property taxes, love crime, and are against the general public on "dozens of other issues."

It would be nice to tell you that Mr. Evertz is an exciting Gay man who would be asset to us if he was elected. It would be nice, but it would be more B.S.

I hope that we see more Gay and Lesbian Republicans running for office. Certainly there we could use the help. There are some very good people in the Log Cabin Club who would have been good candidates worthy of the support of the Gay and Lesbian community. Unfortunately, Mr. Evertz isn't one of them.

### NOTESTEIN

Continued from Page 1

sponsored a bill that died in the Assembly Education Committee because the legislature is getting more conservative. The Republicans are more conservative. The Democrats are more conservative. But it was a piece of legislation that required that when schools talked about sex education, that they do so in an accurate way.

They have started using curricula in some school districts around the state and country that is very inaccurate and uses a lot of stereotypes, both about sexual behavior of women and about men. They have included misinformation about the use of condoms and they certainly have included misinformation about Lesbians and Gay men.

**WL:** Do you plan to introduce that bill again?

**BN:** Yes, I'm hoping to reintroduce it and see if we can go with it.

This session I also began working on something that I hope that can still be pursued, but the legislature is such that it may be difficult.

There was a decision rendered by the State Supreme Court called the "Norman Decision" that said that essentially landlords could discriminate against people when they determined who they might rent to. I want to develop some legislation and am now working with Rep. [Tammy] Baldwin [D-Madison] to ban that kind of discrimination. My concern again is that I'm not sure the climate is good in the legislature to pass this.

I've met with some of the Republican leadership and they're not real interested in it. I'll see where we can go with that.

I've sponsored and co-sponsored legislation to deal with universal health care coverage and have made sure with Rep. [Tim] Carpenter [D-Milwaukee] and others that that includes coverage for AIDS. There will be no denial for a pre-existing condition.

I've also done a lot of work in the area of women's rights. I am emphatically pro-choice. I have voted that way. I have sponsored legislation that demonstrates that.

My opponent was, back in the '80's, the Development Director for Wisconsin Right to Life. He was a paid employee for them.

I support the legislation that would repeal the criminal statutes relating to abortion. I oppose parental consent legislation. I have sponsored legislation to provide public funding for abortions.

I've done a lot of work on sexual harassment specifically related to women, but it is also very true that men are harassed on the job as well. Women sometimes forget that. I am going to continue working on that in the next session.

I have a very strong commitment to the idea that Gay and Lesbian people are a tremendous resource in our community and they should be treated as such.

**WL:** Would you support Rep. Baldwin's domestic partners legislation?

**BN:** I know she's looking at the same-sex



marriage bill as well as the domestic partnership bill. I will support either one. I will support both. I talked to her yesterday. She's still drafting both of them. I will be of help to her in any way that I can.

We need to do more in the state and nation in terms of AIDS research, more in terms of treatment, more in terms of services for people in the AIDS community, and more to ensure there is no discrimination against people living with AIDS.

It's fundamental to me that people of all sorts have talents and are valuable and we should invite them to participate in our society.

**WL:** Can you win this race?

**BN:** Yes. I respect what Scott is doing. I understand that his goal is to run as an out Gay man, but he's picked the wrong district in the sense that this [the 19th] is not a Republican district. It is a district that is predominately Democratic. Republican candidates are not viable in this kind of a district.

I count among my supporters leaders in the Lesbian and Gay community. They know my record over the years. I am optimistic that most of them will stay with me.

**WL:** Any candidate, I think, is looking for "eager hands." Are you?

**BN:** Yes. People who would like to volunteer can call me at my home at (414) 963-2188. I'm looking for people to help in all aspects of the campaign.

**WL:** Do you think the Republicans will take over the Assembly this time?

**BN:** I don't see a scenario in which they Republicans take over the Assembly. We've got people who have "fire in their belly." I expect we're going to win several seats in Dane County. It's going to be a tough year, but I think we'll hold the Assembly and there's a good chance we'll recover the Senate.

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## Why Does Mainstream Media Treat Right Wing Christian Groups With Kid Gloves?

Commentary By Al Geiersbach

I can't understand why the press is so gentle with the so-called "Religious Right," the so-called "Conservative Christians." The best I can think is that editors and reporters are simply ignorant of what is actually being done by these Fundamentalist-evangelicals, or "Christians" as they style themselves.

Conservative Christians are handled with kid gloves by the news media, yet when there is even the mildest criticism of them, they complain that they are victims of nazi-like persecution. This appeal to martyrdom is belied by the scurrilous propaganda that these "Christians" publish. Those who circulate the sort of distorted, hate-filled propaganda that emanates from conservative Christian sources are themselves more likely candidates of the "nazi" label than are those whom they accuse.

Consider the case of "filthy homosexual practices." It has now become the habit for conservative Christians, in their speech, letters, printed material, video tapes, and radio and TV broadcasts, to accuse homosexuals of "filthy practices," such as "feces eating." When these Christians resort to numbers in an attempt to lend credence to their charges, their claim is that something like 92% of homosexuals derive sexual pleasure from "feces eating."

Compare this "feces eating" propaganda with some of Hitler's anti-Semitic propaganda, such as the film, *The Liberal Jew*, which, among many other vile distortions, alternated a picture of an evil looking man with a large, hooked nose, with a picture of a scraggly rat crawling around. Compare and decide who is the nazi and who the victim of the nazi in America today; decide who deserves to be handled with kid gloves.

As Jews have been victims of the "blood libel" spread by certain Christians in certain periods of history, so Gays and Lesbians are now victims of the "feces libel" that is being spread today in America by conservative Christians who claim to "love their neighbors as themselves."

The "feces libel" originates from the work of the Josef Goebbels of the conservative Christians, Dr. Paul Cameron, a 54-year-old psychologist who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado. Cameron's original attempts to vilify homosexuals have been carried forward and developed by California physician Stanley Monteith in the video tape *The Gay Agenda*, and in the fund-raising videos promoted by Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, D. James Kennedy, and other Christian propagandists.

Today, conservative Christians widely circulate Cameron's many libels against Gays and Lesbians in the growing body of printed literature and video tape propaganda that attempts to influence voters to deny Gays and Lesbians protections from discrimination in housing and employment. It is reported that conservative Christians have raised millions of dollars marketing hatred.

Cameron started his campaign of anti-Gay vilification in Lincoln, Nebraska, where he operated as ISIS, the Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality. Among his activities while operating in Nebraska was the issuance of a series of anti-Gay pamphlets such as "Murder, Violence and Homosexuality." This typical Cameron pamphlet, with a 1984 copyright, shows on its cover a picture of a young girl cowering in a corner, a look of terror on her face, her arms raised to fend off an attack from a male holding a large hatchet above her.

Cameron was expelled from his professional organization, the American Psychological Association, in 1983. The American Sociological Association warned its members against him and denounced his representation of himself as a sociologist. The Nebraska Psychological Association dissociated itself from him and his activities.

Cameron moved from Nebraska to Washington, D.C., and moderated his propaganda, giving it a more academic cloak. Pamphlets similar to "Murder, Violence and Homosexuality" are still being issued by Cameron's Washington, D.C. group, the Family Research Institute, but he has toned them down and changed some of the scurrilous pictures.

Cameron's connection with "feces eating" originates in a large survey he did of sexual practices in 1983. The study had a phenomenally high rejection rate of 52.5% and was so flawed in other respects that it has never been published in a reputable scientific journal.

Cameron resorted to the pay-for-publication "vanity" journal, *Psychological Reports*, to publish his data in a number of articles, and he now gives his hate pamphlets a cloak of respectability by citing his own publications in that journal.

The main source of the conservative Christian statistics vilifying Gays, and the origin of the data that developed into the "feces libel," is Cameron's 1989 *Psychological Reports* paper, "Effect of Homosexuality Upon Public Health and Social Order." It is of interest because it shows the process of distortion that has been progressively used by con-

servative Christians in arriving at "the filthy homosexual practice of feces eating."

One of the major flaws with Cameron's data is that he only had 41 survey respondents who identified themselves as homosexual men, and only 25 homosexual women. No reputable researcher would attempt generalizations about an entire population from such a small number, but that is exactly what Cameron did. Indeed, Cameron added Bisexuals to his "homosexual" group in some cases to make the numbers look worse.

The responses of heterosexuals to Cameron's survey questions showed that what conservative Christians have come to label "filthy practices" are not confined to homosexuals. To give maximum force to his campaign to vilify Gays and Lesbians, Cameron could not publicize the numbers showing the large participation of heterosexuals in these activities, so he resorted to the trickery of showing percentages instead of actual figures.

In Cameron's pamphlets he often doesn't even show percentages, let alone the actual numbers of respondents easily derivable from his published paper, but only invidious comparisons, such as that "homosexuals are 6 times more likely to engage in sex with animals." This approach allows him to avoid showing the percentages as well as the actual numbers of heterosexuals engaging in "filthy practices."

By not quantifying heterosexual participation at all, Cameron induces the impression that these "filthy practices" are overwhelmingly a homosexual phenomenon, which is in fact, the exact opposite of the truth as shown by his own numbers.

Conservative Christians start at the level of Cameron's pamphlets, with their invidious and distorted comparisons based on the misuse of highly unreliable data. Conservative Christians do not bother to check the validity of the fig-

ures they use in their propaganda. Worse still, they have resorted to progressively more demonizing terminology to accompany their faulty numbers as their propaganda has gone through new editions and stages of development.

For example, Cameron's original 1989 paper did not talk of "feces eating." The actual question Cameron asked in his survey was whether the respondent had ever engaged in "oral-anal contact." In the hands of conservative Christians, "oral-anal contact" has been twisted over the few years of evolution of their propaganda to "feces eating." And that perversion of Cameron's work typifies the way in which conservative Christian propaganda has evolved from promotion of "family values" to the highly successful money-raiser that the libel of "filthy homosexual practices" has become for them.

Cameron's own work shows that "feces eating" (oral-anal contact) can in no way be fairly characterized as a "filthy homosexual practice." If anything, it is more accurately termed a "filthy heterosexual practice."

In Cameron's survey, as the 1989 *Psychological Reports* paper indicates, he found 51 male and female homosexuals who admitted to having engaged in oral-anal contact. But he also found 1006 heterosexuals who admitted the same thing. That is, of 1057 survey respondents who said they had participated in what conservative Christians call "feces eating," 95% identified themselves as heterosexuals.

By their hateful actions, conservative Christians make themselves unworthy of "kid glove" treatment, and they certainly are not entitled to the cloak of the martyr.

### LETTERS

Continued from Page 4

### Praise for Evertz

TO THE EDITOR:

I was very pleased to see the front page coverage given to the announcement of Scott Evertz's

candidacy in the 19th Assembly District. We need to have more Gay and Lesbian people running for office. The fact that he is running as a Republican is even better. It presents to the public a diverse view of our community.

We already have one great openly Lesbian legislator and adding a Gay man would show the political establishment and the straight community, that we are willing to fight for our own rights—not just rely on "friends" to fight for us. We can hardly expect others to stand up for us if we aren't willing to stand up for ourselves.

Just look at a certain U.S. Senator who, when running for election, courted our votes and claimed to be "Nobody's Senator but yours." Then, just a couple of short years later, voted for a resolution which declared Gays and Lesbians to be incompatible with military service. This is what we call a friend?

There are other examples in the Wisconsin legislature of those who are our friend when they want our votes and then vote in the interest of their own career and not our rights! Electing openly Gay and Lesbian legislators is the best way to see to it that our rights are represented in Madison.

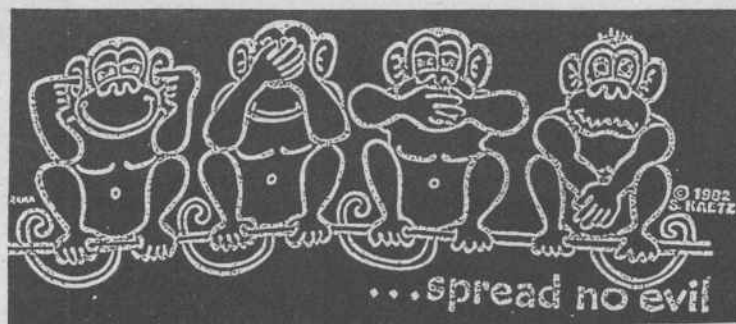
I called Mr. Evertz after the article in the July 21 edition of *Light* to volunteer to help his campaign. We talked about a number of issues that are important to me, including crime. As a resident of the east side, I know first hand the effects of crime in my neighborhood. A number of houses have been broken into, a car was stolen, and even a rape occurred within a few blocks of my house in the last year.

I'm afraid to go out of my house sometimes. I really like living here. The people (most of them) are great, and I'm comfortable in a diverse neighborhood. But I'm going to move elsewhere unless something can be done to get criminals off my streets and into jails. I believe Scott will work effectively to do that.

I hope that you will print this letter because I want to encourage my neighbors on the east side to vote for the only openly Gay candidate running for the state legislature this Fall (except for Tammy Baldwin who's already there).

Debra Nelsen  
Milwaukee

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